



# SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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## CM's reaches West with Jan Seva Abhiyan, urges youth to explore entrepreneurship

**GYALSHING, 22 APR (IPR):** The 11th day of the 32-day public outreach campaign of the Chief Minister, the Jan Seva Abhiyan, reached Bermiok Gyalshing constituency in West Sikkim today.

The Chief Minister was accompanied by Ministers, MLAs, Zilla Panchayats, Head of Departments and officials from different departments.

The event, coinciding with International Earth Day, the Chief Minister spoke on different government initiatives being implemented in the State to make Sikkim a 'nature's hub and an ecological paradise'.

He spoke about the government's decision to ban plastic bags, firecrackers, use of firewood and the State-wide organic mission which, he said,



have made Sikkim 'environment friendly'.

The CM, while addressing the people of Bermiok-Gyalshing constituency, said they held all power in Sikkim and should work together with the government in

making Sikkim a model State.

Addressing the gathered students, the Chief Minister urged them to be good human beings and keep up with the 'ever-evolving, technology-dominated world'.

"I want all the students of Sikkim to be technologically sound and updated while at the same time being grounded," he added.

He also informed the youths about the Chief Minister's Startup Loan and urged them to explore entrepreneurship opportunities in the State and avail the scheme provided they work hard and honestly.

Speaking on the demands put forward by the public, the Chief Minister declared that the Bermiok-Martam Secondary School and Bedong Primary School will be upgraded to Senior Secondary and Junior High School level respectively.

Also, the construction of guest house at Boje was sanctioned by the Chief Minister. Similarly, all needed infrastructure and developmental requirements like roads, drinking water facilities, electricity and others will be provided phase-wise and on priority basis, the Chief Minister assured.

## HC scanner leads SPCB to seal Pristine Life Science pharma unit

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 22 APR:**

After the Sikkim High Court scanner revealed contravention of Environmental Protection Act, 1986 and Hazardous & Other Wastes Management Rules by pharma units operating in Sikkim, the State Pollution Control Board, in a first, sealed one such unit here.

On the report of Amicus Curiae, Manita Pradhan, pointed out severe instances of violation of these laws and rules, the High Court directed the SPCB to seal the Pristine Life Science Pharma Unit.

The unit was polluting right under the supposed watch of the State Pollution Control Board despite the local people having made several complaints about dumping the untreated hazardous chemicals by the unit. This was eventually brought to the notice of the High Court.

Pristine Life Sciences,

located opposite Bhanu Park on NH-10 in Singtam, East Sikkim, it is informed, has not properly installed or maintained the Ion-Exchange filtration equipment and is also alleged to have dumped and buried hazardous wastes like Effluent Treatment Plant sludge, rejected finished products and expired raw materials behind the factory premises.

This hazardous waste was not being treated through the Effluent Treatment Plant, which is in contravention to the provision of Section 8 of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and also the provisions of the Hazardous and Other Wastes (Management & Trans-boundary movement) Rules, 2016.

It is also being contended that Pristine Life Science used contaminated and dirty water from the jhora to manufacture medicines and other drugs.

## NMSHE scientists come up with glacial lake volume and area equation

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 22 APR:**

A scientific team from Sikkim State Climate Change Cell under State Council of Science and Technology has come up with a glacial lake volume and area (VA) equation based on the scientific interventions carried out at South Lhonak Lake, a press release from Department of Science & Technology and Climate Change, informs.

The team involved in the development of the empirical equation comprises of RK Sharma, Pranay Pradhan and NP Sharma.

The team worked

on four years of intensive field as well as multi-temporal satellite data based studies to come up with the volume area equation in order to calculate the storage volume of other potentially dangerous glacial lakes in the Sikkim Himalaya and Indian Himalaya as a whole, the release reads.

The principle investigator to the project was Additional Director, Department of Science, Technology and Climate Change, DG Shrestha.

The scientific paper, entitled 'Remote sensing and in situ-based assessment of rapidly growing

turn to pg05

## Include ancient Indian traditions in education system: Dalai Lama

**NEW DELHI, APR 22 (PTI):** Tibetan spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, today called for the revival of the ancient Indian traditions and for integrating them with the modern education system, saying doing so would help fight issues such as war and global warming.

The 82-year-old monk was delivering a lecture on 'Role of Ethics and Culture in Promoting Global Peace and Harmony' in New Delhi. The programme was organised by Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, which aims to preserve the history of the Indian independence movement, and Antar-Rashtriya Sahyog Parishad, a non-political society founded in 1978 with an aim to keep close interaction with people all over the world.

"Serious discussions on how to include the ancient Indian traditions in educational system should begin. India has the capability to combine modern education with its ancient traditions to help solve problems in the world," the Dalai Lama said.

The greatness of the Indian civilisation is its spiritual brotherhood and harmony, he said, adding, it has produced the greatest philosophical thinkers and preachers who gave rise to the Nalanda tradition of Buddhism based on reason and logical conclusion.

A vast amount of what came to comprise the Tibetan Buddhism, stems from the teachers and traditions at Nalanda.

Nalanda is known for its Buddhist sites and monuments.

The Nalanda University, which attracted students and teachers from across the Indian subcontinent as well as China,

turn to pg02

## SKM questions Chamling Govt's commitment to education

**Thumbs down priorities pointing out HRDD has highest number of adhoc employees**

**SAGAR CHETTRI  
Gangtok, 22 Apr:**

Sikkim Krantikari Morcha, at a press conference held here today, claimed that the people of Sikkim were 'suffering due to the failure of the educational policy of the State Government as it has been practiced over the past 24 years.'

The party further said that the government lacks 'transparency and far-sightedness' in the education sector.

Addressing the press conference, SKM spokesperson, Jacob Khaling, said that many primary schools have shut down and enrolments in government



schools have fallen in the past few years.

He mentioned that although being an important department, the Human Resource Development Department has the highest number of adhoc and MR employees in the State, suggestive of the lackadaisical approach of the government towards education.

Accusing the State Government of 'ignorance,' Mr Khaling said that poor infrastructure in many school and colleges of the State have caused the low enrol-

ment of students.

He pointed out that Degree Colleges in Gyalshing and Mangshila are still functioning out of rented buildings and temporary campuses even after sanctioning of crores of rupees by the Central Government for proper infrastructure facilities.

Mr Khaling further contended that the Sikkim Democratic Front Government has taken the education sector 100 years back in its 24 years of the governance.

"We protest such educational system in the

State and appeal the government to provide education as per the needs of the present world," he said.

SKM student's front chief convener, Karma Tashi Bhutia, while mentioning that students have been suffering due to absence of proper campus, questioned the silence of two Members of Parliament of Sikkim on the delay in the construction of the central university campus. He further said that SDF government was not serious in the human resource development.

in SummitTimes next Tuesday

# "...but the rain failed us"

## CLIMATE CHANGE IS GETTING REAL FOR SIKKIM'S FARMERS

There is the data, and then there are the realities on ground. In Sikkim's case, both point towards a perceptible change in weather patterns which are being felt most acutely in the farms and fields. In the sixth instalment of the Spotlight series, **TSHERING EDEN** delves into how climate change is changing the haats in Sikkim...

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## SPYC and SPCC support SU student's 'genuine demand'

### SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 22 APR:**

Sikkim Pradesh Youth Congress and Sikkim Pradesh Congress Committee, through a press release, have extended support to Sikkim University students demanding early completion of their campus at Yangang.

The political organizations have criticized the government's 'inability' to construct a permanent campus for the State's premier and only central university despite the 10 years that have passed since it was established.

"In the background of several private universities having been allowed to establish campuses in Sikkim, some of which have already shut down operations leaving the future of many students in disarray, the Sikkim University is the only hope for numerous students working hard to chalk out a brighter future for themselves," the release reads.

SPYC and SPCC have urged the government to expedite the matter in establishing a permanent campus for Sikkim University and work towards strengthening it.

"The SPYC and SPCC fully support the genuine demands of the agitating students," adds the release.

## Include ancient Indian traditions in education system: Dalai Lama

**Contd from pg01**

Central Asia, and Tibet, was the most important Buddhist centre of learning in ancient and medieval India.

Citing quantum physics, which describes nature at the smallest scales of energy levels of atoms and subatomic particles, the Dalai Lama said the concept was explained 2,000 years ago by the Indian philosopher Nagarjuna.

"Buddha was an ancient Indian scientist. I consider myself as half monk and half scientist," he said, referring to his deliberations with scientists.

Terming war, terrorism and religious violence products of materialism, the spiritual leader expressed his sadness over the violence against the Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar.

The Rohingya, who had lived for centuries in the Buddhist-majority country, are one of the most persecuted people in the world. Myanmar had denied them citizenship since 1982, effectively rendering them stateless. Nearly 70,000 Rohingya people had to flee Myanmar to Bangladesh after a surge in violence and military crackdown on in August last year.

The programme was the first the Dalai Lama participated in the national capital, since an event to mark 60 years of his exile in India was cancelled and another was moved to Dharamshala in early March. He was to attend both the events.

That development had happened in the backdrop of a media report that the Indian government had directed its senior functionaries to skip events organised by Tibetans.

# CJ visits Temi Tea Estate, returns impressed

### SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 22 APR:**

Chief Justice Satish Kumar Agnihotri visited Temi Tea Estate today and inquired after various aspects including workers welfare schemes initiated by the Temi Tea Board.

The CJ, while interacting with the Board members, appreciated the initiatives taken by the Board for workers, it is informed.

He also inspected the Tea production unit.

Managing Director, Temi Tea Board, Mrinalini Srivastava, explained the various aspects of

the State-government owned tea estate including welfare schemes for the workers and their families.

Principal Secretary, Commerce & Industries Department, Arvind Kumar, briefed the Chief Justice about state government initiatives and support for development of the Tea Board.

The CJ was happy to hear that women comprise 85 per cent of the workforce at the tea estate, including the head of the Board.

At present more than 400 workers are engaged in plucking of tea leaves.



## SDF-South gets cracking on party prez's 11-pt direction

### SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 22 APR:**

Sikkim Democratic Front party's District Working Committee, South Sikkim, carried out a series of events from 13 to 22 Apr with different frontal organizations of the party to discuss the 11-point direction given by SDF party president, Chief Minister Pawan Chamling, a press release from the party informs.

The committee, in all



its sessions, met with the newly appointed party workers and took stock of the present activities of different frontal organizations along with

taking suggestions and advices from party workers to prepare a working action plan.

The new framework of the working structure

for all the frontal organizations has also been drawn upon in order to build a stronger and more effective communication system to devise

and strengthen the functioning of the District Working Committee and Sikkim Democratic Front, the release informs.

The DWC is set to present its detailed working action plan, as per the suggestions and advices placed by the party workers, during the sessions at the district-level conference scheduled to be held on 28 Apr in Namchi, South Sikkim, it is informed.

## USFC impresses in Nepal, reaches quarterfinal round of Mai Valley Gold Cup tourney

### SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 22 APR:**

United Sikkim Football Club has reached the quarterfinal round of the 04th edition of the Tuborg International Invitational Mai Valley Gold Cup Football Tournament being held in Ilam, Nepal.

In its first game on Saturday, USFC outplayed Sankata Club, Kathmandu, by a solitary goal. Sanjay Chettri scored the winning goal for USFC in the first half.

USFC goalkeeper, Urogen Pintso Sherpa, was adjudged as the Man of the Match. He received cash prize of Rs 10,000 with a trophy.

USFC senior manag-



er, Arjun Rai mentioned that USFC players registered victory with their wonderful performance against one of the best

clubs of Nepal.

He added that all the players are fit and set to give a tough fight in the quarter-final. USFC will

take on Tribhuvan Army Club, Kathmandu in the quarter-final match on 25 Apr.

## Shaoli Mitra quits as chief of Paschimbanga Bangla Akademi

**KOLKATA, APR 22 (PTI):**

Theatre personality Shaoli Mitra today resigned from the post of chairperson of Paschimbanga Bangla Akademi, a state-run regulatory body that promotes Bengali language, citing "lack of infrastructure and difficulties in performing duties".

Mitra said she was forced to send her papers to the information and cultural affairs department and Education Minister Partha Chatterjee as no steps were taken to improve the infrastructure despite government assurances in March.

The WB Bangla Akademi is the official authority on Bengali language and is responsible for compiling dictionaries and promoting the language.



## SKM youth coordination meet held at Lingee

### SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 22 APR:**

Sikkim Krantikari Morchha's Tumin-Lingee constituency unit conducted a youth coordination meet at Lingee in South Sikkim today, a press release informs.

The youth meet was attended by general secretary (in-charge zone 1), Neelu Chettri, spokesperson Jacob Khaling, youth members, party officials and Constituency Level Committee members.

The meet nominated 50 active youth members of the area for execution of the party's programmes and policies, it is informed.

The release further adds that two active Sikkim Democratic Front youth officially joined SKM party during the meeting.

While highlighting the party's ideology of 'Democratic Socialism', the leaders explained that democratic socialism means blending of socialist and democratic methods to build an acceptable and viable political and economic structure.

## SDF party functionaries meet in Mangan

### SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 22 MAR:**

A high-level Sikkim Democratic Front meeting was held in Mangan today.

The meeting was attended by Member of Parliament [Rajya Sabha], Hishey Lachungpa, Zilla Adakshya, Nemday Lepcha, Upadakshya Thinay Bhutia, party officials and supporters from the district, a press release informs.

The party members stressed the need to hold party meetings from grassroots level to reach the most people.

The members also stressed upon fixing the price of organic vegetables.

MLA [Kabi Lungchok], Ugen Nedup Bhutia, in his address, urged the party members to get ready for the 2019 general elections.

He asked all the panchayats to coordinate with the senior members for proper execution of party policies and meetings in their respective areas.

He also urged the party functionaries to complete all the pending works in the district.

The MP, in his address, thanked the Chief Minister for visiting North Sikkim and fulfilling the demands placed by the public.

He urged the party workers to follow the example set by SDF party president, Chief Minister Pawan Chamling, and work towards the development of Sikkim.

He also stressed upon timely completion of sanctioned projects in the district.

## 19 new members included in CPI(M) central committee, 2 new faces in politburo

**HYDERABAD, APR 22**

(PTI): CPI(M) today included 19 new members into its central committee and another two new faces into the politburo, the highest body of the Left party, on the concluding day of the five-day party congress in Hyderabad.

The new 95-member central committee - including the 19 members (one seat has been kept vacant for a woman candidate) - elected the politburo, which included two new faces. However, a member - A K Padmanabhan - was dropped from the politburo.

Sitaram Yechury, who was unanimously elected the general secretary of the party for a second consecutive term, listed out the names of the 19 new central committee members:

Suprakash Talukdar, Arun Kumar Mishra, K M Tiwari, K Radhakrishnan, M V Govindan Master, Jaswinder Singh, J P Gavit, G Nagaiah, Tapan Chakravarty, Jiten Choudhury, Muralidharan, Arun Kumar, Vijoo Krishnan, Mariam Dhawale, Rabin Deb, Abhas Roy Choudhury, Sujana Chakraborty, Amiyo Patra, Sukhwinder

Singh Shekon.

The new members in the politburo are: Centre of Indian Trade Unions leader Tapan Sen and former MP Nilotpal Basu.

Though Yechury managed to get his "minority report" on the party's political line incorporated in the draft political resolution at the congress, the new central committee still has more members from former general secretary Prakash Karat's faction.

Yechury's line regarding whether or not CPI(M) should involve Congress to take on BJP, had faced a major challenge.

The party leadership yesterday chose a middle path by deciding to amend the official draft by omitting the crucial phrase "no understanding" with the Congress, which was a victory of sorts for the "minority view" held by Yechury.

Interestingly, Yechury and the faction supporting his political line were in minority at the previous party congress held in Visakhapatnam in 2015, but he had managed to get elected as the secretary general for the first time then.

## Rhenock College NSS unit conducts blood donation camp



### SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 22 APR:**

The National Service Scheme unit of Rhenock Government College organised a blood donation camp on 20 Apr at the college premises.

The camp was carried out in collaboration with a team of medical experts

headed by Dr CM Sharma from STNM Hospital's Blood Bank Unit, a press release informs.

Students, teaching and non-teaching staff members along with the locals participated in the camp and donated a total of 65 units of blood.

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**Gangtok on Monday, 23 Apr**  
**Temp:** 26°C / 12°C  
**Forecast:** Times of clouds and sun with a shower or thunderstorm around in the afternoon.  
**Sunrise:** 05:04 AM  
**Sunset:** 6:04 PM

**National Lok Adalat settles 29 cases**  
**SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 22 APR:** Sikkim State Legal Services Authority (Sikkim SLSA), under the aegis of National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) today organized National Lok Adalat.

A press release from SLSA informs that 10 Lok Adalat benches comprising of Lok Adalat Judges and 'Other Persons' were constituted in all the four districts of the State. Pre-Lok Adalat sittings were also held to identify cases to be taken up during the National Lok Adalat. As informed, 29 cases were settled from 52 cases and Rs 21,96,865 was awarded by various benches. The cases constituted Criminal compoundable offences, Negotiable Instruments Act cases under Section 138, Bank Recovery Cases, Motor Accident Claims Tribunals [MACT] cases, matrimonial disputes, labour disputes cases, land acquisition cases, electricity and Water Bills (excluding non-compoundable), service matters relating to pay and allowance and retiral benefits, revenue cases and Civil Cases. The release further informs that Sikkim SLSA has scheduled to conduct the next round of National Lok Adalats on 14 July, 08 Sept and 08 Dec this year.

# Auditions begin for Sikkim's Dancing Icon S02

**YOUGAN TAMANG GANGTOK, 22 APR:** After the successful run of the first season of 'Sikkim's Dancing Icon' in 2017, the much-appreciated dance contest is back with its second season. The first edition of 'Sikkim's Dancing Icon' featured dancers from Sikkim only. However, the organizers have decided to take the competition to the next level this time around by inviting dancers from Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Siliguri as well. The first round of auditions was held at Nepali Sahitya Bhawan in



Gangtok on 21 Apr. From a staggering 122 hopefuls, only 81 made it to the next round. Auditions for the other districts of Sikkim, Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Siliguri are sched-



uled to be held later this month. After the auditions, the selected contestants will compete in the mega audition, the dates for which will be announced later.



The finale of the competition is likely to be held in the month of September and will be judged by one of India's most celebrated dancing icons, Dharmesh Yelande (DID 2 fame).

The winner of the Sikkim's Dancing Icon Season 2 will be awarded with a trophy and cash prize. The audition in Gangtok was judged by Founder/ Director, CID Dance Studio, Ranipool, Shristi Pariyar, Director, Deconstruction Monster Dance Academy, Gangtok, Suraj Malick. The competition is divided into junior and senior category.

## 17th Chief Minister's Gold Cup Archery Tournament begins

**SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 22 APR:** The 17th Chief Minister's Gold Cup Archery Tournament 2018 officially kicked off today at Sikkim Archery Association [SAA] archery field in Tathangchen. 17 teams from Sikkim, West Bengal and Bhutan are participating in the tournament organized by the SAA. In the inaugural match, Sichey registered a convincing win over Penden Cement from Bhutan 102 points to 04. The inaugural function of the tournament was attended by former MLA, Kunga Zangpo Bhutia, as the chief guest, while Sikkim Olympic Association member, BK Roka, was present as the guest of honor along with SAA president, TT Bhutia, and other executive members. On Monday, Namchi



will take on Garuda Blue in the second match of the tournament. Other participating teams are Kabi-Lungchok, Garuda Red, Navey, Mangam, Maenamla, Red Bull

and Sotak from Sikkim, Todhay Jorbas and Bhutia Youth Kalimpong from West Bengal and Samtse, Southern Bulls, Holiday and Yangtse Tours & Travels from Bhutan.

The winning team of the tournament will receive cash prize of Rs 01 lakh with trophy while the runner-up team will receive cash prize of Rs 50,000 with trophy.

## Holy Cross student comes first in national-level quiz comp

**SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 22 APR:** Rishal Pandey Chettri, a student of Class X at Holy Cross School here, has received a cash prize and citation from Dr. Ambedkar Foundation under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment for securing first position in a quiz competition organized by the Ministry on 'Indian Constitution, the Constituent Assembly and Works of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar', a press release informs. Rishal was declared the winner from Sikkim and Andaman and Nicobar region. One of the key members of Wandering Souls of Sikkim, Rishal is dedicated to ignite and empower young minds of Sikkim by conducting interschool quiz competitions in Sikkim. He was also the quizmaster for the recent inter-college quiz competition organized last month, the release informs.



## Governor Patil calls on Maharashtra counterpart



**SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 22 APR:** Governor Shrinivas Patil called on the Governor of Maharashtra, C. Vidhyasagar Rao, at his official residence at Malabar Hills, Mumbai on 21 Apr, a press communiqué from Raj Bhavan informs. Mr Patil presented a coffee table book, 'Splendors of Sikkim' during his courtesy call to the Maharashtra Governor.

## Sikkim Police beats defending champs Aakraman FC



**REBYNA RANA GANGTOK, 22 APR:** The first quarterfinal match of the ongoing 02nd Mahendra Karki Memorial Invitational Football Tournament 2018 was played today between Sikkim Police and defending champi-

on's Sikkim Aakraman FC. Sikkim Police beat Sikkim Aakraman FC 3-2, advancing further to the semi-final round of the tourney. Dawa Lepcha scored one goal and Bir Bahadur scored two goals for Sikkim Police while Sikkim Aakraman's Ashish Chettri scored two goals in the 09th and 35th minutes of the match. On 21 Apr, Apex FC beat Siniolchu Football Club, Namchi 3-2 to secure its berth in the quarter-final round of the tournament.

## KASS wraps up second phase of painting initiative



**SINGTAM, 22 APR:** Krypton Arts Society of Sikkim [KASS], Singtam, completed its second phase of painting drive at Bardang Secondary School, East Sikkim today. "The paintings we did today were themed on International Earth Day," KASS members revealed. The team is scheduled to head towards Aritar for the third phase of the drive. The team had previously led a painting drive at Lower Tanak Primary School, South Sikkim on 14 and 15 Apr. [from YOGEN THATAL]



### Kutshe Shegu

The 49th day Kutshe Shegu of Late Norbu Tshering Lepcha who left for his heavenly abode on 15 March 2018 falls 02 May 2018. All friends, well-wishers and relatives are requested to join us in offering prayer for the departed soul at our residence, Chamkong Lee (Ruvong, Hee-Gyathang, Dzongu, North Sikkim. We would also like to extend our gratitude to all those who stood by us during our time of bereavement and regret our inability to thank them individually.

Pemlu Tsh Lepcha (eldest son) 9734365676,  
Songmit Lepcha (eldest daughter) 9593822460,  
Dr. Sonam Rinchen Lepcha (younger brother) 9647884804,  
Dathup Lepcha (younger brother) 7407015920



Invest in Learning

Because that is what education is really about

At around this time last year, the State Government had made the ambitious announcement to revolutionise education in Sikkim starting with primary schools and building up from that. This was a well intentioned initiative and welcome because it identified the beginning of schooling as the most important years for learning. For far too long, primary schools have received only token attention and funds when these should have been the focus area. Hopefully, that is what the government plans in its latest move, but in the year that has passed, although there have been a few reasons to hope, at the institutional level, one still does not spy the excitement that could effect a major change. Hopefully, concerted efforts are underway which will surprise everyone.

And then the State is also putting together a State University. It is unclear what will be unique about this institution or what missing component of higher education it will provide a fillip for, but there really cannot be any complaints about more places of learning and there cannot ever be too many of them so long as they are about learning and not dispensing degrees, or worse still, jobs by favouritism. And please, don't impose employability as a criteria for the courses unless they are technical and skill-imparting trainings. Make the institutions genuinely about learning and then the graduates will automatically become sought after human resource for any sector they wish to join. Instil a keenness for learning, and you will have students who can adapt and pick up skills and expertise for any job that catches their fancy. Obsess over imparting employable skills and you will never succeed because the job market is huge and ever changing. It needs people with aptitude, not necessarily skills because those can be picked up on the job as well. Give the young confidence and they will be ready for the world. Constrict them into school uniforms when they should be discovering and expressing themselves more confidently in their college years and you are only producing order-takers for times which require independent thinkers.

One also hopes that the current interest in revolutionizing education is not limited to civil engineering projects. Where so much money is expended on infrastructure, not enough attention is being paid to the education that these improved infrastructures impart. Education is introduced in every speech as an empowering tool and if it were really so, students from underprivileged families would not drop-out from school in such huge numbers. The mid-day meal scheme is all very fine if it is malnutrition that the planners intended to address, but if they thought this would keep children in school, then they should have invested in teachers and learning tools first and finally on an effective monitoring system to keep teachers on duty and classrooms about ideas and learning. And more importantly, the planners should invest on fashioning a syllabus that is contemporary and prioritises learning, not memorising. Students drop out from school not because they cannot afford it, but because they cannot understand how education empowers them. It carries no relevance either for them or their families. Those from underprivileged families will drop out of school and the better heeled will drop out from college. More students drop out because they want to start working at improving their lives, learning by rote does not open their minds to the appreciate how education offers a way out; but, if schools encouraged students to think for themselves, analyse information and situations, they will understand what education means and then struggle to stay in school.

What this requires is not just for the syllabus to change, but also how subjects are taught in our schools, the manner in which learning is evaluated. There are those who believe that the Indian education system is the best, pointing out the achievers that our schools and colleges export. And therein lies proof of the drawbacks – the better minds still need to go abroad to deliver. As a nation, India produces a lot of educated people, but when it comes to thinkers and visionaries, people who give the world the next big idea, even when their nationality is Indian, are products of education systems that are not on our shores. So yes, let's invest in infrastructure, make sure that a well-provided-for school is the vicinity of every habitation, but also simultaneously, let's invest thought into how this infrastructure can work with a syllabus and pattern that makes thinkers of the next generation, not just note-takers.

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

Opinion

Organic Consequences

SD TSHERING

The inconsiderately cruel ban on non-organic vegetables has many effects on the citizens of Sikkim other than limiting the choice of vegetables to Ningro and Simrayo. There are many sociopolitical and legal fallout of the ban as well.

The greatest casualty of the order has been the abrogation of a citizen's fundamental right of privacy and choice. The Maharashtra High Court, in its order on the beef ban case, observed, "As far as the choice of eating food of the citizens is concerned, the citizens are required to be let alone especially when the food of their choice is not injurious to health. As observed earlier, even a right to sleep is held as a part of right to privacy which is guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution of India. In fact the State cannot control what a citizen does in his house which is his own castle, provided he is not doing something which is contrary to law. The State cannot make an intrusion into his home and prevent a citizen from possessing and eating food of his choice".

The Supreme Court, on 24 August, 2017, said "nobody would like to be told what to eat or how to dress" while ruling that these activities come under the realm of the right to privacy.

The government ban on non-organic vegetables on the pretext of health reasons in absence of any medical test proving that non-organic vegetables from Siliguri are causing health problems in the state is unjustified.

The other reason given by the State that farmers would earn more from organic vegetables seems to be based on speculation rather than facts. The latest data showing the prices paid by SIMFED to farmers at the field and the price at which it is sold in Gangtok clearly shows that the benefit is only to the organization and not to the farmers. Farmers in Sikkim have never got a fair price for their produce and only the middlemen have earned the profits from their labour.

The effect on health from the ban on non-organic vegetables may prove more harmful than beneficial. In relation to many developed and developing countries consumption of vegetables and fruits in India is low. Consumption of fruits and vegetables is abysmally low among middle and high-income groups in urban India, according to a survey conducted by the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (IC-



Items	Procurement at field by SIMFED (12/4/2018)	Rate at Lall bezer
Potato	Rs 18 per kg	Rs 40
French beans	Rs 40 per kg	Rs 70
Butter beans	Rs 45 per kg	Rs 80
Carrot	Rs 30 per kg	Rs 120
Cabbage	Rs 15 per kg	Rs 40
cauliflower	Rs 35 per kg	Rs 80
Brinjal	Rs 25 per kg	Rs 80
Bitter Gourd	Rs 25 per kg	Rs 80
Broccoli	Rs 45 per kg	Rs 120
Drumstick	Rs 25 per kg	Rs 100
ladyfinger	Rs 25 per kg	Rs 80
palak	Rs 12 per bitta	Rs 30
Rayo Sag	Rs 12 per bitta	Rs 30
Dhania patla	Rs 6 per bitta	Rs 10
Green pea	Rs 20 per kg	Rs 50
Raddish	Rs 15 per kg	Rs 50
Tomato	Rs 25 per kg	Rs 30
Green Chilly	Rs 50 per kg	Rs 80
capsium	Rs 50 per kg	Rs 160
Ziggini	Rs 25 per kg	Rs 50
Ghiraula	Rs 25 per kg	Rs 50
banana	Rs 20 per dozen	Rs 80
papaya	Rs 20 per kg	Rs 80
Guava	Rs 20 per kg	Rs 60
orange	Rs 40 per kg	Rs 100
Cucumber	Rs 50 per kg	Rs 120
Potal	Rs 40 per kg	Rs 80

NSS 68 round Household per capita consumption			
Items	Sikkim	All India	
potato	1.364	1.921	
Onion	0.54	0.832	
Tomato	0.674	0.561	
Brinjal	0.157	0.458	
Radish	0.135	0.137	
Carrot	0.038	0.06	
Palak/others	0.988	0.601	
Green Chilly	0.133	0.155	
lady finger	0.149	0.194	
Parwal/Potal	0.152	0.162	
Cauliflower	0.371	0.285	
Cabbage	0.681	0.232	
Gourd/Pumkin	0.281	0.346	
Peas	0.042	0.1	
beans	0.127	0.104	
Other vegetables	1.181	1.615	
Banana	1.814	3.588	
Orange	1.37	0.295	
Apple	0.21	0.038	

RIER) in five Indian cities.

The survey shows that the younger generation is consuming even lesser nutritious food than older people, primarily due to lifestyle choices.

Non-communicable disease (NCD) risk factor survey carried out in seven states using WHO 'STEP' approach under integrated disease surveillance project (IDSP) showed that people consumed vegetables four to seven days and fruits two to three days in a 'week'. Fruit consumption was higher in urban areas but no difference was noticed in vegetable consumption across rural-urban divide. Lack of availability of fruits and vegetables round the year and their high costs were cited as important reasons of lower consumption. Studies have shown that low consumption of vegetables and fruits in India is associated with many nutritional and related diseases.

NSSO data on consumption of vegetables in Sikkim shows that it is

below the national average. Malnutrition affects children the most according to the NHFS report, resulting in stunting which is indicative of chronic or cumulative nutritional deprivation in early childhood. The stunting rate for Sikkim is 28% and wasting rate is 5.1 %.

Anemic prevalence among women between ages 15 to 49 is 35.25% and among men it is 15.7%. The biggest concern on India's tuberculosis map is Sikkim with an increase of 11 percent of new tuberculosis cases which are to be found multi-drug resistant (MDR), a figure which stands more at par with Mumbai. People who are malnourished or underweight are more likely to get tuberculosis and are also more susceptible to reinfection or relapse of TB after treatment. Malnutrition leads to decreased immunity. TB patients need a diet of leafy, dark-colored green vegetables for their high iron and B-Vitamin content and antioxidant-rich, bright-

ly-colored vegetables, such as carrots, peppers, and squash, and fruits, like tomatoes. Nutrient deficiencies as well as diet-related chronic diseases could be prevented best by diets largely based on plant foods, such as well-balanced vegetarian diets

The experiment in Sikkim will have to be seen if it is successful after the failure in Kerala and Assam which also tried to restrict pesticide sprayed vegetables. Both states failed in their endeavour due to the protest from neighboring states supplying the vegetables and also due to the shortage of vegetables inside the state. For the moment citizens of Sikkim will have to bear the high cost and limited choice of vegetables till they find their voices to protest against the dictatorial diktat which has curbed their fundamental right of privacy and choice.

[The writer is a retired Director, Department of Economics, Statistics, Monitoring and Evaluation, Govt of Sikkim]

Nobel Prize Crisis: Flurry of withdrawals rocking Swedish Academy's showpiece literature award

THOMAS KAISERFELD  
theconversation.com

The Swedish Academy is in trouble. The body which bestows the annual Nobel Prize in Literature has been hit by the withdrawal of a number of its members after a row over allegations of sexual abuse and harassment. The crisis came to a head after the decision of the permanent secretary, Sara Danius, to step down on April 12, prompting King Carl XVI Gustaf to intervene, promising reforms to enable to academy to continue.

The academy's rules don't allow for members to resign, so disenchanted members withdraw from active participation. Danius's withdrawal is the first by a permanent secretary in more than 230 years. It means there are only 11 active members of the academy and the rules require that new members must be elected by 12 members.

The Swedish Academy was established in 1786 to promote the Swedish language by setting standards and developing poetry and other forms of linguistic expression. For a century and more, this was where writers rubbed shoulders with high-ranking officials and aristocrats. But for the past century, the 18 members of the Academy have tended to be well-known writers and academics – a fine family name is no longer enough for entrance.

But apart from this small modernisation in the interests of promoting equality, the Swedish Academy has remained surprisingly stable. There have been scandals and expulsions, most notably that of founding member, Gustaf Mauritz Armfelt, a director of both the Royal Opera and the Royal Theatre in Stockholm, who was excluded twice – both times for political reasons when Armfelt was forced to flee the country in fear of his life. Another prominent exclusion was that of politician and aristocrat

Count Henning Hamilton who resigned after financial wrongdoing.

But overall the academy has been remarkably stable and, when Alfred Nobel's will stipulated in 1895 that the Nobel Prize in Literature should be decided upon by "the academy in Stockholm", the organisation received an enormous boost in prestige as well as a financial boost that has allowed it to fund the Nobel Library.

SCANDAL ERUPTS

The current crisis actually has its roots in a row as far back as 1989 when members Kerstin Ekman and Lars Gyllenstein left their chairs after a majority of the academy voted against a proposition to submit an appeal to the Swedish government to engage against the fatwa issued by Iran against Salman Rushdie for his controversial novel The Satanic Verses. In 2015, another member, Lotta Lotass, left her chair for personal reasons.

After Gyllenstein's death and replacement by Kristina Lugn, this meant that only 16 of the 18 members of the academy were now actively involved in its work. These included five women including Danius the permanent secretary and the poet Katarina Frostenson whose husband Jean-Claude Arnault is reported to have been the subject of numerous complaints of sexual harassment and abuse. These go back as far as 1996 when there is evidence that a young artist called Anna-Karin Bylund contacted the then permanent secretary Sture Allén (confusingly, the permanent secretary actually holds the office for a limited term which varies) with allegations of sexual harassment against Arnault. No action was taken at the time.

Towards the end of 2017, in the wake of the Weinstein scandal and the #MeToo movement, 18 women came forward in the Swedish press with further allegations against Arnault, who is not only

married to an Academy member but runs the Forum, a club for artists in Stockholm which is subsidised by the Academy. There were also allegations going around that the names of several winners had been leaked in the past, although there is said to be no record of odd betting patterns in Sweden. In the UK, Ladbrokes is reported to have suspended betting on one occasion after large amounts of money were placed on the eventual winner. Arnault's lawyer Bjorn Hurtig told Reuters that his client denied all the allegations, including that of being the source of leaks.

TURMOIL

According to reports of the affair, moves to expel Frostenson were frustrated by the Academy's dominant conservative male faction, led by Allén and literary scholar Horace Engdahl (also a former permanent secretary), which voted against the measure on the grounds that it would be unfair to punish Frostenson for the perceived crimes of her husband. Three members: novelist Klas Ostergren, literary scholar Kjell Espmark and historian Peter Englund duly resigned and Danius stood down as permanent secretary and withdrew from active participation, as did Frostenson.

The affair would not have attracted so much international interest but for the Swedish Academy's role in selecting the recipients of the Nobel Prize. And now, thanks to all the resignations, the existence of the Academy itself has been put in jeopardy. All eyes are now on the king and his possible reforms to reach some kind of solution that can secure the future of the Nobel Prize in Literature.

[the writer is Professor at Division of History of Ideas and Sciences, Lund University]



Two Army personnel killed in Arunachal as road caves

**ITANAGAR, APR 22 (PTI):** Two Army personnel were killed and another went missing when a vehicle of the Madras Regiment skidded off the road and fell into the Kundil River in Lower Dibang Valley district early today, official sources said.

Four other officers also sustained minor injuries in the accident, they said.

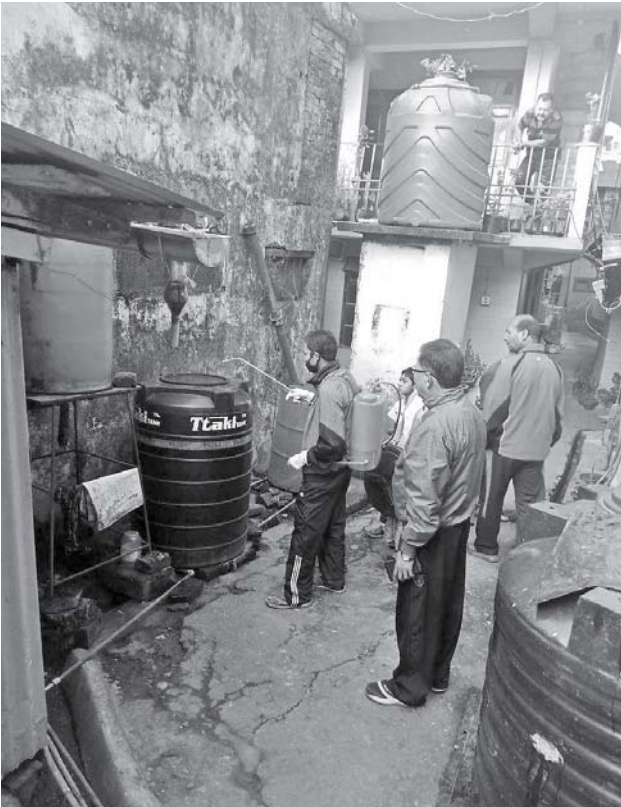
The vehicle, with 18 personnel on board, was patrolling the Idu village area of the district, near China border, around 2.30 am when the road suddenly caved in, Lower Dibang Valley Deputy Commissioner Mitali Namchoom said.

The driver lost control on the wheel and the car fell into the river, she said, adding that the area is prone to landslides.

The district administration, along with police and Army officers, is undertaking rescue operations, Namchoom said, adding that two bodies have been retrieved so far while the third is still missing.

"The bodies have been sent to the hospital and search is on for the missing personnel," she said.

The NDRF battalion, stationed at Changlang district, has left for the accident site.



KPG Municipality fogs wards to prevent mosquito breeding

**SUMMIT REPORT**  
**KALIMPONG, 22 APR:**

Mosquito menace in several localities of Kalimpong has forced residents to stay mostly indoors after dusk. To prevent mosquito borne diseases

like malaria and dengue, the Kalimpong Municipality yesterday fogged Ward No. 1, 2 and 11. Larvae of dengue-carrier mosquitoes was also found in Ward No. 03, the residents informed.

SSB completes border deployment along Nepal, Bhutan with over 54000 troops

**NEW DELHI, APR 22 (PTI):** In order to strengthen security along India's eastern frontier, the SSB has finally completed the deployment of over 54,000 personnel along the open and crime-prone borders with Nepal and Bhutan.

The border guarding force has been sanctioned a total of 55 battalions for border operations by the government a few years ago as part of its primary task to secure the 1,751-km Indo-Nepal and 699-km Indo-Bhutan borders.

Officials said a total of 34 battalions of the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB), at 511 operational border posts, have now been deployed along the Nepal border front that runs across the states of Uttarakhand, Ut-

tar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal and Sikkim.

Similarly, 20 full battalions of the paramilitary, at 158 operational border posts, have now been deployed along the Bhutan border that runs along the states of West Bengal, Sikkim, Arunachal Pradesh and Assam, they said.

These figures have been accomplished in the recent past, officials said.

One remaining battalion, that comprises over 1,000 personnel, is kept as a reserve, they said.

SSB Director General Rajnikant Mishra confirmed the development to PTI, saying this was a task that had to be completed on priority.

Officials said the enhanced manpower would

be deployed for patrolling, surveillance and operationalising the full-fledged intelligence wing of the SSB that was sanctioned to it by the Union Home Ministry last year.

While the Nepal border is prone to cross-border crimes of human trafficking, smuggling of narcotics, arms and wildlife products apart from illegal cross-overs of criminal and terrorist elements, the Bhutan border is also vulnerable to similar illegal activities.

The fresh boots on the ground, they said, would help in better dominating the vast border areas that comprise all kinds of natural features such as forests, high-altitude locations, rivers and plains and would also help in

keeping a better vigil on border activities and enhanced interaction with the local population.

The SSB, they said, has been sanctioned a total of 734 border posts on these two open borders and it has operationalised 669 till now.

The remaining border posts are being established on mission mode, they said.

The SSB has been sanctioned a total of 73 battalions and apart from the border duties, its other units are deployed for anti-Naxal operations in Bihar, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh and a few others for counter-insurgency duties in Jammu and Kashmir and northeastern states.

New start-up incubation centre to bring scientific innovations to consumers

**KOLKATA, APR 22 (PTI):** In a bid to convert research innovations into practical application, the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER) here is set to start an incubation centre that will allow researchers to translate science into marketable products.

RISE (Research Innovation and Scientific Entre-

preneurship) Foundation at IISER, will be a no-profit no-loss company, the institute said in a statement.

The initial funding of Rs 13 crore has been sanctioned by the government's Department of Science & Technology via the National Initiative for Developing and Harnessing Innovations - Technology Business Incubator

(NIDHI-TBI) scheme.

RISE Foundation will be primarily engaged in the translation of fundamental science research in the institute into direct applications and products," it said.

The start-up, which

will serve as an incubation centre, will initially strive to enhance entrepreneurship in the eastern and north-eastern part of India which will create new job opportunities and strengthen the economy of the region.

50 IIT alumni quit jobs to form political party

**GUNJAN SHARMA**

**NEW DELHI, APR 22 (PTI):** A group of 50 alumni from the prestigious Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) across the country have quit their jobs to form a political party to fight for the rights of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes.

The group, which is waiting for an approval from the Election Commission, has named their outfit Bahujan Azad Party.

We are a bunch of 50 people, all from different IITs, who have quit our full-time jobs to work for the party. We have applied to the Election Commission for an approval and are meanwhile doing ground work, Naven Kumar, a 2015 IIT Delhi graduate, who is leading the group, told PTI.

The party members, however, do not wish to jump the gun and aim for the 2019 Lok Sabha elections.

We do not wish to do a hurried job and end up being reduced to just one of those small political outfits with big ambitions. We will begin with contesting the 2020 Bihar Assembly elections and then aim for the next Lok Sabha polls, Kumar said.

The group, which includes members mostly from the SC, ST and OBC communities, feels that the backward classes have not received their due in terms of education and employment.

All set with a poster which has pictures of B R Ambedkar, Subhas Chandra Bose and A P J Abdul Kalam, among others, the party has already begun a social media campaign.

Once we have the registration, we will form small units of the party which will start working on the ground for our target groups. We also do not wish to pitch ourselves as a rival of any political party or ideology, Kumar added.

Scion opposes Tripura govt move to convert palace into museum

**AGARTALA, APR 22 (PTI):** The state government's decision to develop the century-old 'Puspavant Palace' into a museum has come under fire from Pradyot Kishore Debbarma, Tripura's royal scion and the grandson of last king Bir Bikram Kishore, who termed it as a move to "hijack indigenous heritage".

The Tripura government has recently issued a notification to announce that the 'Puspavant Palace', which served as the official residence of 16 state governors since 1972, is set to be transformed into a museum and research centre dedicated to Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore.

Governor Tathagata Roy has shifted to a new Raj Bhavan building, which he inaugurated on April 18 at the capital complex here.

"I am against the renaming of any old monuments or palaces. It is sad to hear that the government of Tripura will be renaming the Puspavant Palace (governor's house) to Rabindranath Tagore museum," Debbarma said.

Samarjit Bhowmik, the secretary of Rajbhavan, however, clarified there was no question of changing the name of the palace, but it would be converted into a museum for Tagore.

When pointed out that the state does not intend to rename the palace, Debbarma said, "They are trying to hijack everything culturally. Eventually, they would rename



the palace. I want to know why the historical place would be made into a museum. Let it remain as it is."

Tagore was a great friend of the maharajas of Tripura and the government is unnecessarily trying to drag the bard into the controversy, he said.

Debbarma equated the present government with the erstwhile Left Front rule that had tried to convert the Ujayanta Palace into a museum.

"How is this government different from the Left Front government, which tried to do something similar with Ujayanta Palace. If the government wants to build a museum for Rabindranath Tagore, I am willing to do-

nate land for it, but remodelling the Puspavant Palace is not a good idea."

The Joint Action Committee of Civil Society (JACCS), an organization of the state's indigenous people, has also issued a statement two days ago to say that it strongly condemns the BJP government's decision to overhaul the royal abode.

The palace was built by King Birendra Kishore Manikya in 1917 and his statue should be installed in front of the palace, JACCS general secretary Anthony Debbarma suggested.

Pannalal Roy, who conducted a research on Tagore's relation with the Manikya kings of Tripura, said the bard has visited the state seven times and stayed at the palace in 1925 as the guest of Bir Bikram Kishore, the last Manikya king.

Tripura was elevated to the status of a full-fledged state in 1972, and since then, the palace, built on 1.76 hectares of land, served as the Raj Bhavan or the governor's house.

"The Puspavant Palace has been identified as a heritage building not only because of its association with royalty, but also because Tagore and other great personalities had stayed here as royal guests," the Raj Bhavan secretary added.

Women's safety: Little has changed in 'National Capital of Rape' since 2012, say experts

**KISHOR DWIVEDI**

**NEW DELHI, APR 22 (PTI):** Debates over the safety of women have kicked up a dust, but done little to ensure their security, students and professionals say, stressing nothing has changed in the national capital after the 2012 brutal gangrape that briefly sparked some soul-searching and led to a new law.

Delhi reported 15,319 cases of crimes against women in 2014, 17,222 in 2015 and 15,310 in 2016, data collected by the National Crime Records Bureau stated.

It won the dubious sobriquet of the "national capital of rape" when the city registered the maximum number of 1,996 rape cases in the country in 2016, up from 1,893 in 2015.

But women stressed that little had changed since people came out to the streets in protest against the rape and death of a paramedical intern in 2012.

"Ask any girl, and she would tell you what happens with us daily in public spaces. People stare at our body, they wrongly brush past us,

we are subjected to abuse and we get intimidated," said a 23-year-old MA student who did not wish to be identified.

These violations occurred in places that ranged from Metro trains and DTC buses to shopping malls and colleges, she said.

And they regularly took place on social media sites.

"I was even threatened on Facebook for not reciprocating to somebody's sexual advances," she said. "What business do people have in asking if I am a virgin or if my 'seal' is intact?"

Her parents worried about her safety every time she went out of the house, she said, adding that venturing out after 8 pm for her was a strict "no".

"But every other day we keep hearing news of rape or molestation that happens not only to young women but to children, too," she said.

After the gangrape of the paramedical student on board a bus in Delhi on December 16, 2012, the Supreme Court had upheld death for the four accused in the case it

described as the "most brutal and diabolical".

In its wake, the government amended the criminal law in April 2013, bringing stricter punishment for crimes including rape, sexual harassment, voyeurism, stalking and acid attacks.

"Even after the amendments, the ground level enforcement is really bad," said Anahita Bakshi, a public relations professional based out of South Delhi.

The 25-year-old professional said most women would say they felt unsafe if asked about the way the city treated them.

Sharper laws have been brought in, but few believed they had made a difference.

"Nothing has changed even six years after the Delhi gangrape case with respect to women's safety and the psychological fear that we have to deal with. The only change, perhaps, is that the situation has worsened," said the postgraduate student, advocating death penalty for rapists.

After the nation-wide public outrage over the Kathua and Unn-

ao cases, the Union Cabinet yesterday gave its approval to the promulgation of an Ordinance with the death penalty for those who raped children up to 12 years of age.

President Ram Nath Kovind today promulgated the Ordinance.

Delhi Commission for Women chairperson Swati Maliwal too was on a hunger-strike for 10 days, demanding death for rapists.

However, victims and experts believed the death penalty could not be a deterrent to rape and crime against women unless the political leadership showed a commitment.

"The decision (by the Union Cabinet) is a mere 'lollipop' given to the people ahead of the general elections," said the father of the 2012 gangrape victim.

Talking to PTI, he said it had been four years since the lower court and the high court awarded the death sentence to the rapists and murderers of his daughter, ordered upheld by the Supreme Court.

"When the government has not been able to hand down punishment to the culprits in this case

what do we expect for others," he said, claiming that the government was not going to punish them.

He also stressed the death penalty would not deter people against such crimes, and added that the Union Cabinet's latest move was insensitive towards children above 12 years.

"And what if the accused of a rape turns out to be a juvenile? Will he face the gallows," he asked.

Supreme Court lawyer and rights activist Vrinda Grover also asserted that nothing had changed since 2012 in the levels of violence, mindsets of people, the legal system or in the political class.

"And the reason it hasn't changed is that the law requires a certain orientation for people to change the way they look at the law, look at women," she said.

One of the problems, she held, was that the political leadership was not committed to creating circumstances where women were equal citizens and could enjoy the freedom of liberty.

Referring to the Kathua and Unnao cases, Grover said the re-

sponse from the political leadership came only after society had expressed extreme anguish and anger. An eight-year-old girl was raped and killed in Kathua in Jammu, while a teenager in Unnao in Uttar Pradesh said she had been gang-raped.

"Unless there is a commitment by political leadership there won't be any changes in the system," Grover added.

The lawyer, who is opposed to the death penalty, said the country had "very low levels" of conviction because of the shortcomings in the legal system.

"The investigation and prosecution is not the way it should be. And the problem is that it (the death penalty) is the only answer that the political class has -- whether it is the Delhi Commission for Women or the Prime Minister...," she said.

"Death sentences are going to bring no change in our lives. These are gimmicks and we are fed up... they are playing politics over the bodies of women," she said.



# Bindra biopic aims to inspire youngsters to take up shooting as sport

**MUMBAI, APR 22 (PTI):** In a country where cricket is a religion, makers of the proposed Bollywood biopic on former world and Olympic champion Abhinav Bindra hope the film will encourage youngsters to consider shooting seriously as a sport.

Bindra became the first Indian to win an individual gold medal at the Olympic Games -- he achieved the feat at the quadrennial event held in Beijing in 2008.

Indian target shooters fared pretty well in the recently concluded Commonwealth Games in Australia.

Young shooters Manu Bhaker and Anish Bhanwala shined in the Gold Coast Games along with experienced marksmen like Heena Sidhu and Tejaswini Sawant.

"This year Indian shooters picked up a lot of gold medals and it is entirely because of Abhinav as



he showed the path. His gold medal has inspired entire generation of shooters. Abhinav's achievements

are inspiring.

"One of our main motivation to make the film is that more young

people should get inspired to take up shooting as a profession. I think Indians can become a world power in shooting," sources close to the makers told PTI.

Bindra is actively involved in the biopic being made on his extraordinary journey, that will have actor Harshvardhan Kapoor playing his part.

"Abhinav is aware of everything that we are doing. Anytime there is a significant development in the script, we run it through him. He is very happy in terms of the way the story has been made," the sources added.

Bollywood filmmakers are smitten by the journey of sports personalities and movies like on former Indian track-and-field sprinter Milkha Singh and cricketer MS Dhoni, only reflect the love the Hindi cinema has for sports.

The yet-to-be-titled movie is being adapted from Bindra's autobiography

-- 'A Shot at History: My Obsessive Journey to Olympic Gold and Beyond'.

"Ours is a unique biopic, the format of the biopic is different. We can't reveal what is the uniqueness. Though it is adapted from a book, which Abhinav himself has written, but the way it has been adapted it is unique. We are presenting the narrative in a different way. It is not a standard biopic format," the sources said.

When asked can one expect to see Abhinav himself in the film, the sources revealed, "Of course, but how we are planning to do it we can't talk about it."

The real life father-son duo of Anil Kapoor and Harshvardhan will be sharing screen space for the first time in the 35-year-old Bindra's biopic.

Currently, Harshvardhan is busy with his upcoming film "Bhavesh Joshi" and once the film releases" on

May 25, the actor would begin his full-fledged training in shooting for the biopic from June.

"He does prep work in between when he gets time. Harsh is very passionate about authenticity. He wants to be close to Abhinav's style as far as possible for which he has been consulting this great woman shooter of India Suma Shirur," the sources said.

Anil would be seen playing the role of Abhinav's father in the movie.

"He (Anil) has spend sometime with Abhinav's father just to get acquainted with the story and pick up nuances for his character. For the father's character there are more Punjabi touches and Anil ji is would be getting it."

The film is likely to go on floors from October and major portions will be shot in Punjab and a chunk of it will be shot abroad as well.

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3819 3848 3885 3979 4125 4209 4210 4254 4292 4321

4327 4355 4447 4450 4553 4556 4652 4657 4664 4721

4737 4739 4789 4813 4960 5005 5043 5073 5093 5129

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1834 1855 1871 1880 1893 1905 1932 1939 1968 1992

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4256 4259 4289 4303 4330 4348 4351 4377 4434 4445

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5128 5130 5142 5239 5254 5307 5316 5337 5351 5362

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ARUNACHAL PRADESH STATE LOTTERIES, ITANAGAR.



Weapons inspectors have collected samples from the Syrian town of Douma, where they are investigating a suspected chemical weapons attack. The inspectors, from the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), arrived in the town a week after they first set foot in Syria. The OPCW said in a statement that it will "evaluate the situation and consider future steps including another possible visit to Douma". It added the samples would be analysed in its designated labs.

## Women judokas win four gold medals at South Asian Championship

**LALITPUR (NEPAL), APR 22 (PTI):** India reasserted their supremacy among its sub-continental neighbours winning four gold medals on the opening day of the 8th South Asian Judo Championship.

India's L. Sushila Devi won the gold in the 48 kg category defeating Humaira Ashiq of Pakistan in the final. The second gold was won by Kalpana Devi Thoudam, who beat Maryam of Pakistan in the 52 kg category.

In the 57 kg category, A Anita Chanu defeated local girl Lila Adhikari while H. Sunibala Devi defeated Phupu Lhamu Khatri of Nepal in the 63 kg category to win country's fourth yellow metal. India's men bagged two bronze medals.

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## Daredevils look for home comfort against table toppers KXIP

**ABHISHEK HORE**

**NEW DELHI, APR 22 (PTI):**

Bruised and battered after a string of defeats, Delhi Daredevils find themselves in an 'oh-so-familiar' situation as they seek home comfort against a Chris Gayle-inspired Kings XI Punjab in the Indian Premier League, here tomorrow. Without an iota of doubt, the Daredevils have been the least impressive of all teams in the past few seasons of the cash-rich extravaganza, only managing to finish at the bottom half of the pecking order.

In the last two seasons, the Daredevils ended their campaign at sixth position, were a place down in 2015 and finished last the year before, in 2014.

The story has been similar in the ongoing edition as they struggle with fours reverses from five outings to occupy the last place.

They were done in by the versatile AB de Villiers' smashing knock last night and up next at the Feroz Shah Kotla, Daredevils will be up against the destructive Gayle, who has made a statement with two fifties and century, scoring those runs in his trademark style.

Thanks to Gayle's belligerence, Kings XI Punjab are firmly placed at the top of the order with four victories and a solitary defeat.

Given the form they have shown in the previous encounters, Kings XI Punjab will fancy their chances to continue the momentum against an embattled Delhi Daredevils outfit.

Royal Challengers Bangalore chasing down a target of 175 with two overs to spare, is more of a re-flection of Deredevils' poor team selection rather than helplessness.

To start with, they lost to Kings XI Punjab in their away game, were then subjected to a humiliating defeat by Kolkata Knight Riders, emerged second best against Rajasthan Royals under the Duckworth/Lewis method and faced another reverse at the Chinnaswamy Stadium.

Delhi Daredevils' only victory has come against Mumbai Indians when English opener Jason Roy and the dynamic Rishabh Pant fired.

In fact, wicketkeeper Pant has been their best batsman this season with 223 runs from five games.

Returning to his home city franchise, skipper Gautam Gambhir would look to get his scoring touch back, after a hugely successful stint at Kolkata Knight Riders.

So is the case with the big-hitting Australian Glenn Maxwell, while Shreyas Iyer, who scored a brisk half century against RCB, would look to continue in same vein.

Delhi's bowling has been an is-

sue with Mohammed Shami off colour.

Trent Boult had decent figures in all the matches but likes of Shahbaz Nadeem, Mohammed Shami have flattered to deceive.

The logic of playing Vijay Shankar is still not clear as the team management is not able to send him up the order for lack of power in his shots. Even more baffling is the fact that he has not been called upon to bowl in four of the five games.

The task is certainly going to be difficult when up against Gayle and Co, with the Jamaican forming a deadly opening combination with K L Rahul.

India discard Yuvraj Singh would hope to get some runs under his bat, too, even as KL Rahul is asserting himself as a potent opener in shortest format with two brisk half centuries.

And how can once discount the presence of Aaron Finch, who has the ability to destroy any bowling attack on his day.

All-rounder Ravichandran Ashwin, along with Mohit Sharma, lend depth to the line-up, while the likes of Barinder Sran, Andrew Tye and Mujeeb ur Rahman shoulder the bowling responsibility.



## Aditi tied 9th at Los Angeles, eyes season's first top-10 finish

**LOS ANGELES, APR 22 (PTI):** India's Aditi Ashok made a superb charge on the back nine with two birdies and an eagle 2 on a Par-4 at the Hugel-JTBC Los Angeles Open to close in on her first top-10 finish of the season.

Aditi, playing her second season, shot 2-under 69 to move to T-9 after the third round yesterday. She had rounds of 68 and 73 on the first two days at the Wilshire Country Club.

Aditi had a sedate start with just one bogey on the very first hole on the front nine and that brought her back from overnight 1-under to even par.

She birdied the 10th, but gave that back on 11th. An eagle on par-4 14th set her up nicely and she added a birdie on par-4 16th and ended at 69 to be 3-under for the tournament.

Moriya Jutanugarn (70) and Jin Young-Ko (66) were in shared lead at 9-under 204.

Jutanugarn, the 36-hole leader, got off to a rough start with a double bogey at the first hole and she followed that with another bogey at the sixth. But Jutanugarn sister remained steady and bounced back with a birdie at the par 4, eighth. Then, it was an eagle at the par 4, 14th that ultimately turned around her day.

Jutanugarn trailed rookie Jin Young Ko, who, for the second consecutive day, went low, matching the low round of the day with a 5-under par, 66 yesterday.

Ko and Jutanugarn lead at 9-under par, two-strokes clear of Inbee Park. A little behind are Eun-Hee Ji and Marina Alex who sit at 6-under par.

**CONTACT  
Summit  
TIMES @  
9832556698,  
9832369520**

NAGALAND STATE LOTTERIES		NAGALAND STATE LOTTERIES		NAGALAND STATE LOTTERIES	
DEAR AFFECTIONATE MORNING		DEAR RESPECT		DEAR HAWK EVENING	
Draw Time: 11:55 am onwards Draw No:20 DrawDate on:22/04/18 1st Prize Rs.26.06 Lakhs/- 97D 81974 Cons. Prize Rs.9500/- 81974 (REMAINING ALL SERIALS)		Draw Time: 04:00 pm onwards Draw No:20 DrawDate on:22/04/18 1st Prize Rs.26.06 Lakhs/- 69C 13863 Cons. Prize Rs.9500/- 13863 (REMAINING ALL SERIALS)		Draw Time: 08:00 pm onwards Draw No:38 DrawDate on:22/04/18 1st Prize Rs.26.06 Lakhs/- 98G 87813 Cons. Prize Rs.9500/- 87813 (REMAINING ALL SERIALS)	
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Two Chinese dragon boats capsize in river, 17 killed

**BEIJING, APR 22 (PTI):** Two dragon boats practicing for a race on a river in southern China have overturned, drowning 17 people, authorities said today. The accident happened at about 1:30 PM yesterday when the dragon boats, 18 meters long and with a capacity of 30 passengers each, overturned during the practice session on Taohuajiang River in Guilin, the regional capital. About 60 people fell into the water. Seventeen people were killed after the boats overturned yesterday in southern China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, the authorities said. Eight boats and over 200 people were dispatched for the rescue. Authorities in Guilin said villagers in Dunmu Village organised the practice session without notifying police beforehand. Two organisers have been detained, state-run Xinhua news agency reported.

Suicide attack on Kabul voter registration centre kills 31: ministry

**KABUL, APR 22 (AFP):** A suicide bomber killed at least 31 people and wounded dozens outside a voter registration centre in the Afghan capital Kabul today, the health ministry said, in the latest attack on election preparations. The assaults underscore growing concerns about security in the lead-up to legislative elections scheduled for October 20, which are seen as a test-run for next year's presidential poll. "It happened at the entrance gate of the centre. It was a suicide attack," Dawood Amin, city police chief, told AFP. Health ministry spokesman Wahid Majroh said 31 people had been killed and 54 wounded. The higher toll could not be immediately confirmed, but a police official told AFP on condition of anonymity that at least 25 people had been killed and 70 wounded. Earlier, interior ministry spokesman Najib Danish put the death toll at nine and 56 wounded. He could not immediately be reached for an update. Afghan officials often give conflicting tolls in the wake of attacks and routinely understate the figures. The centre in the heavily Shiite-populated neighbourhood in the west of the city was also being used by people to register for national identification certificates, which they need to sign up to vote. Footage on Ariana TV showed pools of blood and shattered glass on the street. Angry crowds shouted "Death to the government!" and "Death to the Taliban!" There was no immediate claim of responsibility. The Taliban have denied they were involved. A wounded man in a hospital bed wept as he told Ariana TV: "I don't know where my daughters are. God damn the attackers!" A witness to the attack named Akbar told Tolo TV: "Now we know the government cannot provide us security: we have to get armed and protect ourselves."

Swaraj meets Wang, discusses India-China ties



**KJM VARMA BEIJING, APR 22 (PTI):** External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj today met her Chinese counterpart Wang Yi and discussed a host of bilateral issues and ways to step up the pace of high-level interactions to improve the relationship. Swaraj arrived here yesterday on a four-day visit to take part in the foreign ministers' meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). She was received by Wang at the Diaoyutai State Guest House in Beijing ahead of their bilateral meeting. This was their first meeting after Wang was elevated as state councillor last month which makes him the top diplomat of the country in the Chinese hierarchy. He also continues to be the foreign minister. In her initial remarks, Swaraj congratulated Wang on being elevated as state councillor and appointed the special representative for the India-China boundary talks. Wang said the bilateral ties have witnessed

a good development and shown a positive momentum this year under the guidance of the leaders of the two nations. "On the eve of the closing of China's National People's Congress this year, President Xi Jinping received a very important phone call from Prime Minister Narendra Modi." He said the call spurred a positive momentum in the dialogue process between the two countries. "Our two leaders had in-depth exchange of views and reached im-

portant consensus on furthering the China-India relationship. We must work very hard to implement the consensus between our two leaders. "India's membership to the SCO has expanded the organisation's potential and its influence, as well as providing a new platform for the India-China cooperation and I believe that India will make a positive and energetic contribution to the organisation," Wang said. Their meeting is part of efforts by the two countries to step up the pace of

high-level interactions to improve relations, official sources here told PTI before the meeting. Following the Doklam standoff last year both countries increased dialogue to scale down tensions and improve relations with talks at various levels. Swaraj and Wang are meeting in the immediate backdrop of the recent meeting between National Security Advisor Ajit Doval and top official of the ruling Communist Party of China (CPC) Yang Jiechi in Shanghai.

Experts take samples from site of alleged Syria gas attack

**BEIRUT, APR 22 (AFP):** Investigators from the global chemical arms watchdog collected samples yesterday from the site of a suspected gas attack in Syria two weeks ago, after security concerns delayed their probe. Gruesome footage of the alleged toxic attack on April 7 in the town of Douma, just outside Damascus, horrified the world and prompted unprecedented Western strikes on Syrian military installations. Just hours after the joint missile strikes, a team from the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) arrived in Syria to investigate the claims. But they had been unable to access Douma itself, which fell from rebel hands into joint Syrian and Russian control after the suspected chemical attack. United Nations security experts deployed

to the town on Tuesday to check it was safe, but were forced to pull out after an explosion went off and they were shot at. Investigators finally collected evidence from the site for the first time on Saturday, the OPCW said. "The samples collected will be transported to the OPCW Laboratory in Rijswijk and then dispatched for analysis to the OPCW's designated labs," the body said in a statement, adding it could plan another visit. Russia's foreign ministry had earlier announced the inspectors reached Douma after guarantees by Syria and its own forces, and said it expected them to carry out an "impartial investigation". Moscow, a key ally of President Bashar al-Assad, has said its own probe into the events in Douma found no traces of chemical use. Assad's government,

too, has repeatedly denied using toxic weapons, and accused the West of "fabricating" the claim to justify bombing Syria. Medics and first responders in the town say more than 40 people were killed on the night of April 7, reporting foaming at the mouth, pinpoint pupils and difficulty breathing. Investigators reached Syria a week later at the country's invitation, arriving just hours after a coordinated wave of French, American and British missile strikes. But they spent a week in the capital, unable to access Douma just a few miles to the east, even as groups of journalists visited the town on government tours. Western powers slammed Syrian and Russian authorities, saying proof that chemicals were used in Douma was probably being hidden. "It seems likely that this attitude is intended

to make proof and material evidence linked to the chemical attack disappear," Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian said on Saturday, shortly before the OPCW got access to Douma. Analysts say that if toxic chemicals were used, OPCW inspectors would still be able to find important traces in clothes, walls, rocks and soil in Douma, although their potency decreases with time. "Nerve agents like sarin can be present in the environment for many weeks after use and particularly if you look near the site where a weapon has exploded," said Alastair Hay, professor of environmental toxicology at the University of Leeds. Crucial evidence can also linger in victims' blood, urine and organs. "Autopsy samples, if available, will provide invaluable evidence and nerve agents can be

found in many organs," Hay told AFP. The "White Helmets", a Syrian rescue force that works in opposition-held areas, said it had given the OPCW details on the burial site of the Douma victims. But a top official from Jaish al-Islam, the rebel group that controlled Douma during the alleged chemical attack, accused the regime of raiding the graves. The OPCW does not have a mandate to establish who is responsible for chemical attacks. The joint OPCW-UN taskforce that did was shut down by Russia last year after it blamed Syria's regime for another gas attack. Experts say it may take between two and three weeks to analyse evidence collected in Douma. The town was the last in the Eastern Ghouta suburb to fall to Syria's regime, after a blistering two-month offensive

backed by Russia. Since securing Ghouta, Syrian troops have shifted their focus to a pocket of territory in southern Damascus still held by the Islamic State group. Heavy air strikes pounded the Yarmuk

Palestinian camp and adjacent Hajar alAswad district today. Syria's conflict has killed 350,000 people and defied UN peacemaking efforts since it erupted in 2011 with protests against Assad.

Iran threatens to 'vigorously' resume enrichment if US quits nuclear deal

**NEW YORK, APR 22 (AFP):** Iran is ready to "vigorously" resume nuclear enrichment if the United States ditches the 2015 nuclear deal, and further "drastic measures" are being considered in response to a US exit, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif warned. Zarif told reporters in New York that Iran is not seeking to acquire a nuclear bomb, but that Tehran's "probable" response to a US withdrawal would be to restart production of enriched uranium -- a key bomb-making ingredient. "America never should have feared Iran producing a nuclear bomb, but we will pursue vigorously our nuclear enrichment," added the foreign minister, who is in the United States to attend a UN meeting on sustaining peace. US President Donald Trump has set a May 12 deadline for the Europeans to "fix" the 2015 agreement that provides for curbs to Iran's nuclear program



in exchange for relief from financial sanctions. Zarif's comments marked a further escalation of rhetoric following a warning earlier this month from Iranian President Hassan Rouhani that Washington would "regret" withdrawing from the nuclear deal, and that Iran would respond within a week if it did. The fate of the Iran deal will be a key issue during French President Emmanuel Macron's

state visit to Washington beginning Monday, followed by talks with German Chancellor Angela Merkel in Washington on Friday. Zarif said the European leaders must press Trump to stick to the deal if the United States "intends to maintain any credibility in the international community" and to abide by it, "rather than demand more." The foreign minister warned against offering any concessions to Trump. "To try to appease the pres-

ident, I think, would be an exercise in futility," he said. European leaders are hoping to persuade Trump to save the deal if they, in turn, agree to press Iran to enter into agreement on missile tests and moderating its regional influence in Yemen, Syria and Lebanon. If the United States buries the deal, Iran is unlikely to stick to the agreement alongside the other signatories -- Britain, China, France, Germany and Russia --- said the foreign minister. "That's highly unlikely," he said. "It is important for Iran to receive the benefits of the agreement and there is no way that Iran would do a one-sided implementation of the agreement." Zarif, who will attend a UN meeting on sustaining peace this week, warned of "drastic measures" under discussion in Iran. He declined to be more specific, pointing to "what certain members of our parliament are saying about Iran's options."

NAGALAND STATE LOTTERIES		NAGALAND STATE LOTTERIES		NAGALAND STATE LOTTERIES	
DEAR GENTLE MORNING		DEAR PRIZED		DEAR OSTRICH EVENING	
Draw Time: 11:55 am onwards Draw No:20 DrawDate on:21/04/18 1st Prize Rs.26.05 Lakhs/- 836 87240 Cons. Prize Rs.9500/- 87240 (REMAINING ALL SERIALS)		Draw Time: 04:00 pm onwards Draw No:20 DrawDate on:21/04/18 1st Prize Rs.26.05 Lakhs/- 701 77163 Cons. Prize Rs.9500/- 77163 (REMAINING ALL SERIALS)		Draw Time: 08:00 pm onwards Draw No:38 DrawDate on:21/04/18 1st Prize Rs.26.05 Lakhs/- 62G 73034 Cons. Prize Rs.9500/- 73034 (REMAINING ALL SERIALS)	
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**MIZORAM STATE LOTTERIES**

**LABHLAXMI VIRGO**

Draw No:11 DrawDate on:21/04/18

1st Prize Rs.10,000/- 6089

2nd Prize Rs.1,000/- 6516 3rd Prize Rs.500/- 1337

4th Prize Rs.300/- 6491 5th Prize Rs. 205/- 3768

6th Prize Rs.100/-

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6507 6539 6579 6620 6646 6662 6711 6719 6720 6733

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**ARUNACHAL PRADESH STATE LOTTERIES**

**MUMBAILAXMI RAJA**

Draw No:11 DrawDate on:21/04/18

1st Prize Rs.10,000/- 4156 2nd Prize Rs.2,000/- 4039

3rd Prize Rs. 1,000/- 2053 4th Prize Rs. 505/- 4420

5th Prize Rs.200/-

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3775 3838 3902 3967 4028 4085 4120 4127 4179 4200

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5478 5483 5523 5621 5693 5696 5740 5869 5883 5901

6th Prize Rs.100/-

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1201 1204 1209 1213 1226 1227 1245 1289 1332 1344

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1780 1916 1917 1938 1975 1978 1988 2040 2046 2048

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# 'Getting people together for water conservation a challenge'

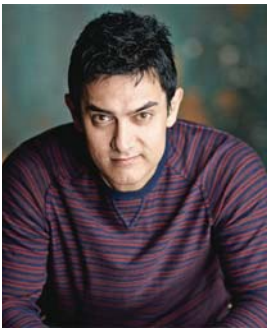
**MUMBAI, APR 22 (PTI):** Actor Aamir Khan has said that gathering people from villages to improve the water situation in Maharashtra was a huge challenge.

Aamir's Paani Foundation aims to impart knowledge and bring about a change at the grassroots level in Maharashtra about water conservation and watershed management.

"The biggest challenge is - people coming together. For example, water can only be stored in a pot which has no holes in it. Until human beings in a community, in the village, come together close (nothing can happen).

"If there are cracks in the society, the water will seep through. You have to remove all the cracks and then come together and then you will grab water," Aamir said in an interview here.

The 53-year-old actor added that the "biggest task is getting peo-



ple together for this cause because society is fractured on many levels".

"... Politically, there are five parties in each village, we have different castes in villages, you have land owners... Some do not have land, some people have land close to the stream, some people have land away from the stream. We had

to convince people that watershed management is actually going to help all of us.

"But certainly it's a challenge that has been overcome by the villagers themselves. We are just training them. That is the beauty of this idea. That the village does things on its own to solve the problem," he added.

At Paani Foundation, which was founded by Aamir in 2016, the team empowers villagers and gives them a sustainable solution for water conservation which is expected to help them for years.

"All the work will be done by the village. They will decide what is the area of their land, how many watersheds fall into it, what is the kind of work they need to do.

"So they make the plan and execute it. We just teach them how to do it. It is a demand-driven exercise. We don't choose villages, villages choose us."

When asked whether this initiative would help prevent farmer suicides, Aamir said it would be a contributing factor.

"Certainly, it will contribute to that. Water is not the only reason for farmers' suicides," he said.

Aamir appealed to students and people living in the state's urban areas to join the initiative, by becoming "jalmitras" (water's true friends) on May 1, which happens to be Maharashtra Day.

People from cities can register on the website of Paani Foundation to work in villages, alongside local residents.

The last date for registration is midnight of April 25.

So far, over one lakh people have signed up and Aamir hoped more people from cities pitched in.

The actor revealed that while women were at the forefront of this cause, men often made excuses.

"Last year, when we went to a village, the women were doing 'shramdhaan' (donating efforts) every day working really hard and the men were lazing around and giving excuses.

"So the women decided that they won't go home. After work, they all told their husbands they are not coming home if they (men) don't come for shramdhaan," he said.

The "Dangal" actor has been getting strong support from the state since water conservation and drought elimination is one of the key projects of the Maharashtra government led by Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis.

"The government has a scheme, Jalyukt Shivar Abhiyaan, which does the same thing. They take 5,000 villages every year and help the villagers by funding some of the activities. We don't take money from the government but we do seek their

help in other ways," he said.

"Like we are using Maharashtra State Road Transport buses. It is a big logistical effort but we do give a lump sum of Rs 50 lakh for this. So the CM facilitated that for us. They are helping us a lot. They are being extremely supportive," the actor added.

Talking about the reports in papers that he wanted to make Maharashtra drought-free in five years, Aamir said, "That's a claim that has come out in the papers. But I never said that. People asked us what is your hope and I said my hope is that in five years we should not be relevant anymore.

"All the villages should know by then how to do this (conserve water). We (the foundation) should become useless in five years and that's what I am hoping for. I am not even thinking of that (other villagers). I am only focusing on Maharashtra.

## Swedish dance music artist Avicii dead at 28

Swedish DJ Avicii, real name Tim Bergling, died at age 28 on Friday, April 20, his publicist confirmed.

"It is with profound sorrow that we announce the loss of Tim Bergling, also known as Avicii," his publicist Diana Baron said in a statement. "He was found dead in Muscat, Oman this Friday afternoon local time, April 20th. The family is devastated and we ask everyone to please respect their need for privacy in this difficult time. No further statements will be given."

Avicii's club anthems include Wake Me Up, Levels, and recently, Lonely Together with Rita Ora.

The electronic dance music (EDM) star, who reportedly made \$250,000 (£180,000) a night on tour, had struggled with some health issues in the past, having his gall bladder and appendix removed in 2014.

He announced his retirement from touring in 2016, partly because of the health problems.



"I know I am blessed to be able to travel all around the world and perform, but I have too little left for the life of a real person behind the artist," he said at the time.

One of the biggest names in dance music of the last 10 years, he had a catalogue full of pumping, uplifting, house smashes

He started his career when he won a production competition held by Pete Tong in 2008. He went on to notch up 11

billion streams on Spotify and was the first EDM DJ to stage a worldwide arena tour

He was nominated for two Grammy Awards and had nine UK top 10 singles, including two number ones

He suffered from health problems including acute pancreatitis, in part due to excessive drinking

He later announced a return to the studio, and released a new self-titled EP in 2017.

The EP, Avicii (01), was

nominated for a Billboard music award for top electronic album just days before his death.

As well as working with the likes of Aloe Blacc and Rita Ora, Avicii collaborated with artists including Madonna and Coldplay.

Other leading electronic artists wrote tributes to Bergling after the news of his death.

Singer Dua Lipa tweeted: "Such sad news to hear about Avicii passing. Too young and way too soon. My condolences go out to his family, friends and fans."

US band Imagine Dragons tweeted: "Working with him was one of my favourite collaborative moments. Far too young. The world was a happier and fuller place with his presence and art."

"No words can describe the sadness I'm feeling right now, hearing about Avicii passing away," offered DJ Zedd, while singer Adam Lambert, who collaborated on the track Lay Me Down, called him "a brilliant composer and a gentle spirit."

## Austin Powers actor Verne Troyer passes away at 49

Mini-Me actor Verne Troyer has reportedly passed away at the age of 49. Details are scarce as to exactly what happened leading up to the unfortunate incident. The actor's family released a statement referencing suicide and depression.

Troyer had been in several well-known films from the beginning of his career. His credits include Jingle All The Way, Men In Black, and Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas. But it was his role as Dr. Evil's clone, Mini-Me, in Austin Powers: The Spy Who Shagged Me that really left a mark on Hollywood, and pop culture in general. Troyer continued his notable career, taking on roles in everything from music videos to television series and even a brief stint in the Harry Potter franchise. Troyer's last role is that of Emperor Bee-



zel-Chugg in Hipsters, Gangsters, Aliens and Geeks, which is currently in post-production.

An official statement was released on Troyer's Instagram account reporting his death. The post commended Troyer for his caring attitude that led him to want to effect real change in the world, largely through his sense of humor. The post con-

tinued to talk about Troyer's limitations due to his size. It was acknowledged that his parents had had doubts about how far he would be able to go. They "often wondered if he'd be able to reach up and open doors on his own in his life," the post reads. The statement then went on to say that Troyer had gone further than his parents had ever imagined he could. His family is asking for charitable donations to be sent to The Starkey Hearing Foundation and Best Buddies in lieu of flowers.

While no cause of death has been given so far, the post does reference depression and suicide. The report states that Troyer had fought "his own battles" some of which he won, but the post says his recent struggles were "too much."

### TOM JONES, KYLIE MINOGUE AND OTHERS SHINE FOR QUEEN'S 92ND BIRTHDAY PARTY

Sir Tom Jones started off the event with It's Not Unusual before Her Majesty took up her seat in the Royal box at London's Royal Albert Hall.

With numerous members of her family around her, she then enjoyed Kylie Mi-

nogoue, Sting, Ladysmith Black Mambazo and Shaggy, among others.

Another of the acts was a George Formby tribute act featuring politician turned entertainer Ed Balls, and comedians Frank Skinner and Harry Hill.

While events were held nationwide to celebrate the Queen's 90th birthday, Elizabeth II usually prefers to spend her birthday in private.

But the concert came at the end of a week that saw Prince Charles approved as her successor as head of the Commonwealth at the end of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting.

The Queen's Commonwealth Trust youth charity, of which her grandson Prince Harry was appointed president this week, was earmarked as the main beneficiary of Saturday night's event.

The Prince was in the audience with his wife-to-be Meghan Markle, and the second in line to the throne Prince William, whose heavily pregnant wife Kate was absent.

At the end of the evening, Elizabeth went on stage to join some of the performers with her son, Charles. He joked that she could not have predicted that in 1948, when he was born, his mother would be sharing a stage with her 70-year-old son.

Charles then led a round of cheers from the audience as his mother acknowledged them with a smile and her trademark royal wave.

Harry also paid tribute to his grandmother. Others who took part in the 5,000-seater show included Craig David, Jamie Cullum, Shawn Mendes and Anne-Marie.

Elizabeth was born on 21 April, 1926, and became queen in 1952 at the age of 25.

**ARIES:** Sex and romance are top priority for you today, Aries. You're looking especially beautiful, you're feeling especially sensual, and you could well attract admiring looks from strangers. You might want to indulge in some new clothes or perhaps new cologne. This is definitely the perfect day to schedule an intimate evening with a love partner. If you can, go for it. It might be a day or two before your schedules mesh, however. Be patient!

**TAURUS:** If you're single, Taurus, tonight you could find yourself longing for a lover from the past and wondering what's happening with this person right now. If you're currently involved, you might be experiencing a temporary separation from your beloved, and could feel

inclined to spend the evening at home. If you choose to do this, entertain yourself with a favorite book or movie. Remember - a watched phone never rings!

**GEMINI:** Are you waiting for a love partner to phone you at work, Gemini? As much as you want to hear from your friend, you could well get so caught up in your work that you wouldn't hear a marching band go by. As you work, be sure to keep one ear tuned to the real world by looking up or getting up and walking around occasionally. Otherwise, you might sabotage what you want the most today.

**CANCER:** Your sensuality is tempered today with a touch of the mystical sort of romantic feeling found in fairy tales, Cancer. This might be unusual for

you, but your current partner is going to love it! If you're single, you're likely to attract a lot of attention and possibly meet someone new and exciting. Take care that you make the effort to see the real person and not just a romantic image. Good luck!

**LEO:** A desire to spruce up your home might start with a thorough cleaning from attic to basement, Leo. You could go through that chore like gangbusters and then do some repairs or go for the fun stuff, such as redecorating with plants or even some new furniture. You can have a lot of fun with this, especially if your partner or friends help out. Work hard and enjoy your day!

**VIRGO:** A love partner could contact you out of the blue, Virgo, perhaps proposing that the two of

you get together tonight - alone. You're in just the mood for this, since you're feeling especially sexy and not particularly afraid to show it. An evening at home or in a dark corner of your favorite restaurant might be just the ticket. Don't be surprised if your friend orders champagne and shows up with flowers! Have fun!

**LIBRA:** Have you been waiting to hear about some funds, Libra, perhaps to create a piece of art, write a book, or make a documentary film? If so, you could have a lot to celebrate today when you receive news that the money is forthcoming! Don't be surprised if there's a delay, however. The project is still going to happen, but just a little later than you'd hoped. All you can do now is be patient.

**SCORPIO:** Someone at your

workplace could suddenly find you very attractive and make no secret of it today, Scorpio. How you respond, of course, is up to you, but if you don't reciprocate this person's feelings, don't respond positively simply because you're flattered. This could cause trouble for you down the line, particularly if this person is in a position of authority. Hold out for the right person!

**SAGITTARIUS:** Your desire to respect and honor the special someone in your life clashes today with an equally strong desire to become a passionate persuader, Sagittarius. The secret to resolving this conflict lies in knowing that the two aren't mutually exclusive. Also, if you're going to make the most of both drives, you need to tune in to your part-

ner's thoughts and feelings. Zero in on what you both want and then go for it! Enjoy your day.

**CAPRICORN:** Have you been harboring a secret desire for someone you believe thinks of you only as a friend, Capricorn? Don't be surprised if you learn differently today. This is a day when hidden passions may suddenly be revealed - and your friend could unexpectedly divulge a covert attraction to you! The only downside is that sometimes it can be a letdown when fantasies become reality. Take note of your reaction before moving ahead.

**AQUARIUS:** Today you could encounter a work colleague and suddenly feel an unexpected romantic attraction, Aquarius. This could catch you off guard be-

cause you never before thought about this person in that way. Before jumping in with both feet, give yourself some time to come down. You're feeling especially sensual today, so this might well pass by tomorrow. Stay grounded for now. If the attraction is still there in a few days, think about it! **PISCES:** A sum of money that you might have been expecting from far away may be delayed, Pisces. This could be frustrating for you, but don't panic. The money is indeed coming. So unless your situation is urgent, just sit back and wait. If you want to check with those who are sending it, by all means do so. However, you'll probably find that the matter is out of their hands. Be patient and hang in there.