

SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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GOOD FRIDAY IN SILIGURI

SILIGURI, 30 MAR: Good Friday holds special significance for the Christian community as it commemorates the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. It is followed by Easter that marks the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. To commemorate the day, processions were organised here at Pradhan Nagar Church in Siliguri to educate people and draw their attention to the day when Jesus died for humanity.

[SMRITA KHAWAS]

*Permission
for Karmapa
visit due to
herculean
efforts of
CM: SDF*

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 30 MAR:

After Sikkim Krantikari Morcha MLA, Sonam Lama, claimed on Thursday that the Centre has granted permission for the 17th Karmapa Ogyen Trinley Dorje to visit Sikkim, the ruling party, Sikkim Democratic Front today also said that the Centre has approved the Karmapa's visit to the State.

In a press release, SDF has said that the five-member Cabinet Committee on Security chaired by the Prime Minister and comprising of other members, Rajnath Singh, Arun Jaitley, Sushma Swaraj and Nirmala Sitharaman, granted the permission on 28 Mar.

The release issued by SDF vice-president [press & publicity], Dawcho Lepcha, mentions that the Home Ministry forwarded the matter of the 17th Karmapa's visit to Sikkim to the Cabinet Committee on Security on 29 Nov last year.

The news has brought happiness in the Sikkimese society and this has been possible due to the sincere and herculean efforts of the SDF government and Chief Minister Pawan Chamling, the

turn to pg02

Vatsalya Mela for SHGs kicks off at MG Marg

GANGTOK, 30 MAR [IPR]: Two-day Vatsalya Mela for Self Help Groups of Sikkim, organized by Sikkim State Social Welfare Board under Central Social Welfare Board, Government of India, began at MG Marg today.

The Mela is being organized to encourage and promote Organic Mission and Skill Development for Sustainable Livelihood wherein 20 SHGs from four districts of the State displayed their products.

The inaugural day of Vatsalya Mela was attended by Minister for Health and IPR Departments, AK Ghatani, as chief guest.

While addressing the gathering, Mr Ghatani said, "We need to fight for women's empowerment, economic freedom



over entrepreneurial development and self-employment. Thus, the State government has provided them with the SHG concept."

He also added that SHGs are one of the most innovative and much needed schemes which

help in accelerating entrepreneurship among women, women's self employment and women's empowerment. The concept has been successfully implemented now in Sikkim and it has become the best tool for social and economic development, he added.

The Minister informed about various issues regarding Organic Mission and said that the State today has crossed many milestones of development under the leadership of Chief Minister to pg02

Foundation stone of Rural Haat laid at Daring



**WANGCHUK BHUTIA
GANGTOK, 29 MAR:**

The foundation stone of 'Rural Haat', a project supported by National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development [NABARD] with NGO Himalayan Educational Society as the implementing agency, was laid at Daring under Temi-Namphing constituency in South Sikkim on 28 Mar in the presence of Zilla Upadhyaksha [South], Bhim Lakhey, as chief guest and General Manager of NA-

BARD, Gangtok, Anjana Lama, as special guest.

Chief guest, Mr Lakhey, in his address, thanked NABARD for supporting the project and helping farmers to sell their organic produce, thus encouraging them towards organic farming.

He urged the farmers and the local public to take full advantage of the facility being provided. He also promised to construct toilet in co-ordination with the Zilla Panchayat under

Swachh Bharat Abhiyan at the Rural Haat premises.

Likewise, NABARD GM, Ms Lama, stated that NABARD has always been in support of rural development. She added that due to the strong commitment of Himalayan Educational Society, this Rural Haat is being established for the benefit and welfare of farmers. She urged the people to use the facility to increase their production and earning and to keep the premises clean.

West Sikkim ranks in health in 'Transformation of Aspirational Districts' initiative

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 30 MAR:**

The NITI Aayog, on Wednesday, launched the baseline ranking for 115 aspirational districts based on 49 indicators across five sectors that include health and nutrition, education, agriculture and water resources, financial inclusion and skill development, and basic infrastructure. With the latest available data from the ministries concerned, NITI Aayog has completed a baseline ranking of 101 districts.

Sikkim's West District has been ranked 4th in the health sector while overall it is ranked 30th amongst 101 districts evaluated for the baseline ranking.

However, in the agriculture sector West Sikkim comes in the bottom 20 ranking 99th out of 101 districts.

The baseline ranking would be followed by delta ranking of these districts from May 2018 based on their "incremental progress".

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had launched the 'Transformation of Aspirational Districts' programme in January to quickly and effectively transform some of the most underdeveloped districts of the country.

The broad contours of the programme include convergence (of central and state schemes), collaboration (of central, state level 'Prabhari' officers & district collectors), and competition among districts.

With states as the main drivers, this program will focus on the strength of each district, identify low-hanging fruits for immediate improvement, measure progress, and rank districts.

Under the programme, identified districts are prodded and encouraged to first catch-up with the best district within their state, and subsequently aspire to become one of the best in the country, by competing with, and learning from others.



More than 200 join SDF at Samman Bhawan

ARPAN PRADHAN

GANGTOK, 30 MAR:

"OTHER PARTY DOES not have any principles, vision or an able leader who can lead the state, so we are joining the ruling SDF party," said a Sikkim Krantikari Morcha worker who joined the Sikkim Democratic Front today.

A large number of people joined SDF in a programme held at the Conference Hall of the Chief Minister's office, Samman Bhawan in Gangtok today.

More than 200 people from SKM, Indepen-

dent Candidate supporters and others from the Syari-Tathangchen Assembly Constituency have officially joined SDF in the presence of the party president and the Chief Minister, Pawan Chamling.

Addressing the gathering, Mr Chamling urged everyone to join hands and work together in the interest of Sikkim and its people. He said that SDF is a pro poor party which works for the up-liftment of the needy.

The Chief Minister said that the opposition

parties are doing nothing but misleading the innocent public and creating confusion over caste, religion and other negativities which is dividing people into many groups.

SDF party is involved in inclusive politics and is very successful in delivering equal rights to all its citizens, said the party president, Mr. Chamling. He urged everyone to understand the principle and vision of SDF before joining the party.

During the programme, the party president to pg03

Man accused of sexually assaulting minor daughter

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 30 MAR:**

A man from Gangyap, South Sikkim, has been accused of sexually assaulting his daughter two years back. The incident was reported to police on 28 Mar by the accused person's wife who said that she had allegedly caught her husband trying to sexually assault their daughter [who was 16 years old the time] two years ago. A case under Protection Of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 has been registered against the accused. The victim on the other hand was sent to hospital for medical examination. The accused has been arrested and is currently in police custody.

The wife was reportedly trying to lodge a domestic violence case at District Family Court against the accused when she revealed the incident.

Vatsalya Mela for SHGs...

Contd from pg01

ister Pawan Chamling. He called for collective participation while executing their responsibilities.

Secretary for Horticulture & Cash Crop Development Department, Khorlo Bhutia, in his address, appreciated the efforts of SHGs in enhancing agricultural production in State.

"As Sikkim has become an Organic State, the responsibility of the progressive farmers and SHGs should be enhanced enormously to ensure sustainability of food and vegetable production in the State," said Mr Bhutia.

He also urged the farmers to take full advantage of the schemes/initiatives and every opportunity provided by the state government.

Chairperson, Welfare Board, Phurmit Lepcha, welcomed everyone and briefed about SHGs.

The programme was also attended by Mayor, Shakti Singh Choudhary, Deputy Mayor, Lassey Doma, Secretary, SJE&WD, Sarala Rai, Director, H&CCD Department, DK Bhandari, progressive farmers and senior officials of government departments.

Permission for Karmapa visit due to...

Contd from pg01

release adds.

The CM had been placing the demand to allow the Karmapa to Sikkim to the Centre and the Prime Minister on his every visit to Delhi and also during the PM's visit to Sikkim, the party has said.

SDF has also expressed deep gratitude to the Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, and the Central government for honouring the long pending demand of the people of Sikkim. The visit of the Karmapa will bring peace, well-being and prosperity for people of Sikkim, the release adds.

Two-day arts workshop for destitute children concludes

JORETHANG, 30 MAR (IPR): Two-day residential creative art workshop for children residing in children's homes of South District was organised by District Child Protection Unit (South), Integrated Child Protection Scheme [ICPS], Social Justice Empowerment and Welfare Department in collaboration with State Institute for Rural Development and Panchayati Raj concluded at SIRD, Karfektar, today.

District Child Protection Officer (South), Roshnita Gurung, highlighted the objective of the workshop as an exercise to facilitate craftsmanship interests in children, which she added will help enhance their skills and talent.

She also stated that integration of arts and crafts into academics can prove to be therapeutic and can boost children's problem solving abilities while also



providing them recreation in between their conventional routine.

The workshop was

conducted by Arts and Crafts instructor, Greendale Academy, Gangtok, Persis Rai who had previ-

ously conducted a similar workshop for children at Namchi.

Twenty-three girls

from various Child Care Institutes registered under South District participated in the workshop.



BBBP awareness programme held in Chungthang

**SUMMIT REPORT
MANGAN, 30 MAR:**

An awareness programme on 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' for school teachers of Lachen, Lachung, Bop, Munshithang, Pegong, Theng

and Chungthang was held on 29 Mar at Village Administrative Centre in Chungthang. The District Child Protection Officer covered topics on POCSO Act, Juvenile Justice Act and sexual harassment. The schemes of BBBP for women,

child, adolescents, health and hygiene, maternal health, hand washing techniques and domestic violence were discussed by Child Development Project Officer, Chungthang, Sonam Lhaden Lachungpa.



BJP national joint secretary on 2-day visit to Sikkim

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 30 MAR:**

Bharatiya Janata Party national joint secretary, Saudan Singh, has arrived in Sikkim for a two-day visit. He was given a warm welcome by State BJP president, DB Chauhan, and leaders and workers of the State-unit at the party office in Singtam, East Sikkim, informs a BJP press release.

The release adds that the State president apprised Mr Singh about the ongoing

activities and programmes and "increasing popularity" of BJP in the State.

Mr Singh encouraged the party workers to work continuously against the "autocratic policies" of the ruling party in the State. He also suggested that the State unit hold dharna every month from the State to booth level in order to expose corruption in the ruling government. Additionally, he assured to provide all support from the national committee of the party.

Parents of missing son accuse police of inaction

SMRITA KHAWAS

SILIGURI, 30 MAR: President of Prakash Nagar [Ward 43], Siliguri, Deb Shankar Sah, has alleged that the local police has remained idle on the case of his missing son, 7-year-old, Sanu Sah, who has been missing for more than three months now.

The troubled parents of the missing child have shared their suspicion over a neighbour being involved in the case. They have already approached the Superintendent of Police, West Bengal, regarding the lack of progress in the search of their missing son. The case falls under Bhaktinagar PS jurisdiction.

Class 12 Eco retest on Apr 25, decision on 10th Maths paper later: Govt

NEW DELHI, MAR 30 (PTI): The re-examination of CBSE's Class 12th economics paper will be held on April 25, while a decision on conducting the Class 10th mathematics paper will be taken in the next 15 days, the government said today.

School Education Secretary Anil Swarup made the announcement after complaints that the question papers for the two subjects were leaked.

The economics paper will be held across the country, but the 10th mathematics paper, if

needed, would be restricted to the Delhi-NCR and Haryana, Swarup told a press conference here.

The Central Board of Secondary Education had earlier announced that retest would held for the both the papers.

Given that the class 12 examination are very important in the context of the future of a child, like for examinations that have to be taken and university admissions, the date for examination has been fixed at April 25, Swarup told reporters.

Bike accident claims one

**YOGEN THATAL
SINGTAM, 30 MAR:**

One 23-year-old male was killed in a road mishap after the speeding bike he was on rammed into a tipper at Kali Kholcha, near Sirwani in East Sikkim today. Another rider sustained major injuries and is undergoing treatment at District Hospital, Singtam.

ECI has received petition seeking disqualification of MLAs: JAC

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 29 MAR:**

Joint Action Committee, which is seeking the disqualification of 14 MLAs, has said that the Election Commission of India has received the petition which was forwarded by the Governor of Sikkim and is considering the case.

Addressing a press conference here today, JAC chief coordinator, Nawin Kiran Pradhan, informed that they have received a letter from the Election Commission of India mentioning that the petition sent by the Governor was received by the commission.

He further informed that the ECI had also sent a letter for the Chief Secretary of Sikkim on 14 Mar 2018 to inquire whether the 14 MLAs have been saved by an Act of the legislature.

"We enquired with the Chief Secretary office about the letter on 27 Mar and the CS office confirmed that the letter has been received and they are working on it," he said.

Mr Pradhan has again sent a memorandum to the ECI along with a copy of the judgment in Pahalman Subba and others Vs State of Sikkim and others of the High Court of Sikkim dated 25 Aug, 2017. He stated that in this case, these 14 MLAs have not only held the office of profit but also enjoyed various benefits. He further added that posts of Parliamentary Secretaries have already been declared unconstitutional so these MLAs should be disqualified.

The committee has sought the disqualification of the MLAs for holding office of profit.

Fresh communal flare-up in Bihar, rioters go on rampage in Nawada

NAWADA (BIHAR), MAR 30 (PTI): In yet another incident of communal flare-up in Bihar, scores of vehicles were today vandalised and a hotel was set ablaze in this district, where members of two communities clashed following reports of desecration of an idol, an official said.

Trouble erupted in Godapur village under the Town police station area, where an idol was found vandalised, following which the members of two communities indulged in heavy stone-pelting, District Magistrate (DM) Kaushal Kumar said.

He added that an enraged mob also went on a rampage on National Highway 31, hurling stones at the vehicles and leaving scores of them damaged. The mob also set a hotel on fire, the DM said.

The police fired 10 rounds in the air to quell the mob that also allegedly manhandled a number of local journalists, who had gone to the spot to cover the incident.

The situation was brought under control, though tension prevailed in the area, the DM said, adding that a heavy deployment of police was in place.

No arrest was made in this connection so far, he added. Nawada is located at a distance of around 70 kms from state capital Patna.

Bihar has witnessed a spurt in communal clashes in the recent past. On March 17, violence broke out in Bhagalpur, where a religious procession was being led by Arijit Shashwat, the son of Union minister Ashwini Kumar Choubey.

On Sunday last, the members of two communities had clashed in Aurangabad over a Ram Na-

vami procession. Similar incidents were reported from Sitamarhi, Nalanda, Sheikhpura and Munger districts over the next few days.

The BJP and the opposition RJD have been trading charges over the issue, blaming each other for the sudden rise in such incidents.

Leader of Opposition in the state Assembly, Tejashwi Yadav (RJD) has alleged that those associated with the Sangh Parivar are fomenting communal passion in the state and that they were "trained" to do so by RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat during his week-long tour of Bihar last month.

The BJP has hit back, with its state unit spokesman Rajib Ranjan issuing a statement, squarely blaming the opposition party for "spreading communal frenzy" and accusing it of trying to "defame" the NDA government in the state.

Meanwhile, Congress Legislature Party leader Sadanand Singh urged Chief Minister and JD(U) chief Nitish Kumar to "reconsider" his party's tie-up with the BJP.

In a statement, he said, "Chief Minister Nitish Kumar must give a serious thought to the revival of the Grand Alliance in Bihar. Political compulsions are preventing him from effectively cracking down on the rioters."

"The state cannot prosper in such an environment. Moreover, the recent incidents have given the government a bad name. The chief minister should reconsider his decision," Singh said, referring to Kumar's exit last year from the "Mahagathbandhan", comprising the JD(U), the RJD and the Congress, after which he rejoined the BJP-led NDA.

Gangtok on Saturday, 31 Mar

Temp: 23°C / 09°C
Forecast: Intervals of clouds and sunshine with a shower or thunderstorm in spots in the afternoon.
Sunrise: 05:28 AM
Sunset: 5:52 PM

More than 200 join SDF...

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ident welcomed all new members and assured that there will be no discrimination between the newly joined party workers and old workers.

The Chief Minister also assured to provide government benefits to all eligible candidates of the area and all pending work, road works and other developmental work will be completed phase wise. He also assured the construction of a gumpa as demanded by the local residents.

Mr. Chamling said that SDF is a party that believes in making the citizen more powerful rather than making the leader powerful.

"We should work in unity to protect Sikkim and its people," he added.

The Independent winning Panchayat candidate of Chongyek Ward no. 4, Chong Donka Bhutia said that she was never an anti party agent but due to misunderstandings she had to contest the election.

Despite offers from other parties, she decided to remain in SDF, she added.

Similarly, a senior SKM worker, Rinzing Wangchuk from the same locality said, "I have worked for the SKM party for almost 5 years now but the party leaders have only used us when in need and specially during the election time and now they have vanished."

The party president, Mr Chamling welcomed all by offering khadas to the new members.

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Tribeny Rai's three short films screened in the capital

REBYNA RANA GANGTOK, 30 MAR:

Artem, a platform for people engaged in the creative field, today organised the screening of three short films directed by Sikkim-based filmmaker, Tribeny

Rai, at the Artem office in Sichey link road, Gangtok.

'For Children Only', 'Yathawat' and 'Chori' were the films screened today.

Hailing from Nandok, near Ranipool, Tribeny studied filmmaking from Satyajit

Ray Institute of Filmmaking, Kolkata.

Her two short films, 'For Children Only' and 'Yathawat' were made by Tribeny during her filming course in Kolkata while she shot her next film 'Chori' recently at her own village in Nandok.



NHPC gives Rs 9.2 lakh as Scholarship Award for school students

SUMMIT REPORT KALIMPONG, 30 MAR:

NHPC TLDP 4 organized NHPC Scholarship Award program in which 13 schools of three circles, namely Kurseong, Kalimpong and Mongpu circle were given cash of Rs 9.2 lakh for the 130 students of different primary and high schools of these three circles.

The program was attended by Chief Engineer, NK Bhardawaj and Senior

Manager, BK Lakra while it was conducted by Manager HR, Pandu Gagarai, school head masters and teachers.

Fifteen youths from the local project area, who were sent for 6 months certificate course on fire fighting at Indian Institute of Fire Engineering, Nagpur, were presented with certificates and mark sheet.

The course fee of these courses was around Rs 9.9 lakh which was borne by NHPC TLDP 4.

Zonal level poets' meet to be held in Guwahati next month

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 30 MAR:

Rastriya Kavi Sangam [RKS], North East region, will be conducting zonal level poets' meet cum poem recitation competition for University students of the eight NE States on 08 Apr at Guwahati in Assam.

A press release issued by State president of RKS Assam, Chandra Prakash Poddar, informs

that top three competitors will be felicitated with cash prizes and mementoes along with certificates for all the participants.

National president, RKS, Jagdish Mittal, will also be attending the event along with State presidents from Sikkim, Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Nagaland, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh and Tripura.

Divya's "Saving Grace" launched

ARPAN PRADHAN GANGTOK, 29 MAR:

A poetry collection, "Saving Grace," by Divya Subba, a 21 year old student of Sikkim University, was launched at a special event here today at Rachna Books. The collection was launched by Divya's father, Prakash.

"Divya was always interested in writing poems and short stories and started writing in earnest when she was in class IV," shared the proud father.

Speaking to SummitTimes, Divya said that she was happy that her first collection is now out and thanked everyone who supported her in

her debut effort.

Meanwhile, her father added, "We recognised her interest in writing and always encouraged her to follow her interest and passion." He also urged every parent to encourage their children in whatever they are interested in and most happy doing.

The launch programme was attended by family members, friends, teachers and well-wishers and included recitals by young poets in English, Nepali and Tibetan.

Divya Subba is the daughter of Roshan and Prakash Subba and hails from Rautey Rumtek, East Sikkim.

AFFIDAVIT

I, Shri Lal Bahadur Gurung, son of Shri Bahadur Gurung, permanent resident of H/No. 2 VIII. Chuba, P.S. Namkhang Police Station, South Sikkim and presently residing at Medzhiphema, Dist Dimapur, Nagaland do hereby solemnly affirm and declare as under –

That I am known as Mr. Lal Bahadur Gurung, son of Shri Bahadur Gurung and a resident of the above mentioned address.

That in some of my important official documents, my name has been recorded as Lal Bdr. Gurung and Chandra Bahadur Gurung instead of Lal Bahadur Gurung.

That the names Lal Bahadur Gurung, Lal Bdr Gurung and Chandra Bahadur Gurung is the same and single person and there are no discrepancies between the above said names.

That this affidavit is sworn for making correction of my name before the competent authority.

I further declare that the statements made by me herein above are true to the best of my knowledge and nothing has been concealed herein.

sd/-
DEPONENT



SummitTIMES

ON TOP OF THE NEWS

informed, inquisitive, relevant



ICFAI law students bag 2nd position at National Moot Court Competition

REBYNA RANA GANGTOK, 30 MAR:

State moot team from School of Legal Studies, ICFAI University, Sikkim, has bagged the runner-up trophy at the 1st National Moot Court Competition, organised by Department of Law, University of North Bengal from 24-25 Mar at North Bengal University in Siliguri.

The State team comprised of Kazi Sangay Thupden [LLB-3rd Year], Arun Shreshtha [LLB-1st year] and Lila Prasad



Sharma [BBA-LLB-3rd year] accompanied by faculty guide/in-charge, Soni Subedi.

Twenty-two teams

from various Universities of India had participated in the competition.

ICFAI University, Sikkim cleared two prelim-

inary rounds with the highest points [79 pts] and the quarter and semi finals with second highest points [76 pts] and highest points [80 pts] respectively.

The finals were presided over by Judges of Calcutta High Court, Justice Protik Prakash Banerjee and Justice Shekhar B Sharaf.

The Sikkim moot team won the runner-up trophy with Kazi Sangay Thupden receiving the award for the Best Speaker.

SummitTIMES

ON TOP OF THE NEWS

The Dalai Lama in Exile

The Precious One is special

On 31 March, 1959, the Dalai Lama crossed into India at Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh after a 15-day journey from Lhasa, completing one leg of an epic journey which continues to this day, starting on his sixtieth year in exile, having spent more years away from home than he spent in Tibet growing up. A lot has changed over the years, the Dalai Lama has aged, China, save the totalitarian instincts, has junked communist ideology for all practical purposes and there are now many more refugee-creating situations around the world. What has not changed though is China's handling of Tibet and the foisting of a situation there which continues to force people to rebel and flee and even end their own lives in protest.

One may ask here, how, despite countries and their leaders wanting to be friends with China, does Tibet still make news; how their situation still makes headlines? Even when the Tibetan Government in Exile goes out of its way to temper down its desire for autonomy in Tibet just so that host India does not get discomfited? Well, because of the Dalai Lama. Tibetans in exile have been refugees for nearly six decades now. Media has lost interest in other exiled people within a few years and communities in exile have "assimilated" in new homes shortly after. And yet, Tibet, its people both within and in exile remain in conversation. How much does one read about the Lhotsampa refugees from Bhutan anymore, for instance?

It is in the manner that the Dalai Lama has led Tibetan aspirations, modulated public debate on Tibet and communicated a nation's desire for greater expression that keeps the movement alive [in the media circles and thus public consciousness]. It is because of the Dalai Lama's personality and the hope he inspires that the aspirations remain alive even inside Tibet. Tibetans in Tibet have never experienced democracy and their world-view now comes distilled from Beijing which is no democrat. And yet, Tibet witnesses uprisings. Rioters, even when they veer away from the Dalai Lama's path of non-violence, hold up his photographs and his flag of Tibet to prove their devotion to him and qualify to become patriots. Distressingly, an increasing number of them are hurting themselves through self-immolation, a desperate act of violence on self in the hope that the world may pay heed. The world, however, is not nearly as engaged as it should be even though the issue remains unchanged.

And yet, the Dalai Lama keeps everything Tibetan relevant. Which is also why China has launched and sustained a concerted effort to demonise him and strong arming countries into ignoring him. China, which routinely humbles India, browbeats the Koreans, stares down USA and generally bullies everyone else, has met with only failure when it comes to challenging the Dalai Lama. It has swamped Tibetans into a minority at home, indulged Tibet Autonomous Region with developmental funds but has utterly failed in quelling the unquestioned devotion the Dalai Lama commands [even if in secret] among the million Tibetans still in Tibet. And this frustrates them. China obviously plans to wait out the 14th Dalai Lama and the Dalai Lama obviously knows this as well. While China continues to unsuccessfully project the Dalai Lama as a "splittist" in the world's eyes, the Dalai Lama is reinforcing the Tibetan spirit in exile – literally forcing democracy on his people, ensuring that they practice it, and grooming alternatives in the religious realm who could deliver the unifying compassion that his people in exile will need in a future without him. When the Dalai Lama stepped on to Indian soil in 1959, very few knew of him or the Tibetans. That is no longer the case even if there is an awkward sidelining even in the host country. The awkwardness results from the fact that the world has not seen a leader who has remained relevant and universally loved for any substantial period of time, and for six decades the Dalai Lama has showed us what selfless commitment means and can deliver. And this journey began on this day back in 1959. Just like the Kundun hence, even this day has become special.

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

The dismal failure of efforts to empower people in the Arab world

JANINE A. CLARK
theconversation.com

The protests that caused the overthrow of Tunisia's authoritarian ruler in 2011 were triggered by a street vendor with no municipal permit to sell his produce who then set himself on fire after being harassed by local bureaucrats.

Throughout the Middle East and North Africa, poor municipal governance and service delivery contributed to the Arab Spring uprisings. These uprisings ultimately led to the arrival of a million refugees on Western shores.

This May, Tunisia will hold its first municipal elections since 2010. Experts are debating whether Tunisia's decentralization law should be passed before the elections to make sure municipal governments have the powers and resources to meet their citizens' needs.

The World Bank and other international financial institutions are implementing decentralization programs to improve municipal political participation and service delivery throughout the region.

But are they working?

DECISIONS REMAIN IN HANDS OF ELITES

My research on authoritarian states in the region finds that decentralization programs simply help keep authoritarian regimes in power and, in municipalities, keep decisions and services in hands of elites.

Political decentralization is the transfer of decision-making powers and responsibilities from central to lower-level governments, including municipal elected officials.

It's also meant to bring public input into municipal decision-making processes. With improved public participation in decision-making, the thinking goes, policies should better support local needs and provide services equally to everyone.

The World Bank and other international financial institutions first promoted decentralization in Latin America after the fall of authoritarian rulers in the 1980s. Decentralization followed democratization.

Yet in most states of the Middle East and North Africa, decentraliza-



tion programs are being implemented while authoritarian regimes are still in place. Authoritarian rulers have long manipulated democratic institutions, such as elections, to stay in power.

WHY WOULD AUTHORITARIAN RULERS GIVE UP POWER?

The answer is that they don't. To stay in power, authoritarian regimes use several clever strategies. Two are particularly important in regards to decentralization.

The first strategy is an unelected administrative system that oversees elected institutions.

Moroccan municipalities are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of the Interior that approves municipal council decisions. The ministry justifies this supervisory role based on its expertise. But in fact, it allows the ministry to facilitate mayors who are supportive of the regime and obstruct those who are not.

The second strategy is the use of patronage. Authoritarian rulers grant privileges and resources to key constituencies or political parties to ensure their support.

In Jordan, certain tribes receive privileges.

In Morocco, privileges go to specific political parties. These privileges trickle down through a party.

ACCOUNTABLE TO THE MOROCCAN KING

The system works both ways. Municipal politicians promise votes to those higher up in the party in exchange for services they can give to those who voted for them. Services are denied

to those who did not vote for them.

Decentralization need not, and does not, affect these strategies. Nor does it necessarily result in less municipal supervision. Instead, supervision is "decentralized" to a lower administrative level.

Here's how it works in Morocco, where the greatest degree of decentralization in the region has occurred: The minister of the interior is no longer responsible for actually reviewing municipal decisions. But governors who are appointed by and accountable to the minister of the interior — and ultimately, the king — do that job.

Responsibilities are either not handed down to municipal governments, or municipal governments only gain partial authority over them.

ONLY HAVE THE POWER TO RECOMMEND

Jordan recently passed a decentralization law and a municipalities law that created new elected provincial and local councils.

But the laws removed authority from municipal councils.

Citizens no longer vote for those municipal councils. Instead they vote for mayors and local councils that are smaller than municipal councils, and have fewer powers. Municipal councils are now composed of local council heads and have fewer powers than previously. Local councils, meantime, largely only have the power to recommend.

The real authority belongs to the executive director, who is appointed by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs. He determines the annual budget and

sends it to the elected mayor.

And under Morocco's decentralization, approximately 70 per cent of the roles and responsibilities of the regions, provinces and municipalities overlap. This confusion gives appointed governors authority over areas that, according to the municipal charter, belong to municipal governments.

IS THE PUBLIC REALLY INCLUDED?

Decentralization programs aim to bring the public into municipal decision-making processes. But neither public participation nor service delivery are necessarily improved.

Moroccan municipalities must create committees for "equity and equal opportunities." Members of the public must be on the committees. The committees' views must be included in municipalities' development plans.

Yet many elected officials are at the same time also heads of civil society organizations such as a neighbourhood development association. They take advantage of this dual role by dominating the committees at the expense of other representatives.

By dominating the committees, councillors are able to put projects into development plans for their own political advantage. Favouritism and inequitable service delivery continue to exist.

THE DANGER OF DECENTRALIZATION

Decentralization can in fact strengthen authoritarianism. While authoritarian rulers can call themselves political reformers, in the eyes of citizens, elected officials appear corrupt and unwilling to improve public participation or service delivery.

Decentralization justifies administrative supervision over elected bodies. The authoritarian regime is strengthened while elected officials and democratic institutions seem ineffective.

International donors like Canada support decentralization by implementing projects to strengthen municipal leadership and administrative capacity.

But are we, in fact, strengthening authoritarianism?

[the writer is Professor of Political Science, University of Guelph]

Why schools become battlegrounds during conflict

SHIREEN DAFT
theconversation.com

Last week, more than 100 girls who had been abducted by the Islamic militant group Boko Haram from a Nigerian school in Dapchi in February were released to their families. But the community was also threatened that if the group returned and found any girls in school, they would be abducted again – and not returned.

Meanwhile, in Syria, conservative estimates are that at least 4,072 schools have been forced to close, used as shelters, or destroyed due to the conflict. And there have been at least 1,292 attacks on schools in the Hama, Daraa, Homs, and Idlib provinces.

While a coalition of NGOs were presenting the findings of their #SaveSyrianSchools project in a public hearing in Geneva last week, another school was bombed in Syria, killing at least 15 children.

These examples reflect broader trends of targeting education across conflict-affected parts of the world. It is estimated that one in four school-aged children in conflict-affected nations are not in school. This is a total of around 27 million children. And girls are 2.5 times more likely to be denied an education.

WHY USE SCHOOLS AS BATTLEFIELDS

There are many reasons why schools and students, despite being protected by international law, are targeted during times of armed conflict and unrest. Students collected together in a school, or isolated travelling to and from school, are prime targets for abduction by armed groups.

Children are often taken to be recruited as child soldiers, or used as human shields or human bombs. Schools are soft targets, and the targeting of children is very effective in campaigns of terror, having a destabilising effect on communities.

Schools and universities are also ideal locations for military headquarters and facilities, and can become central to war efforts. This makes them key military targets for opposing sides.

Schools can be seen by armed groups to repre-



sent state authority, and are therefore key targets in campaigns against the government. This is especially true when the groups disagree with the form of education being provided. This reality is perhaps best illustrated by Boko Haram, which in 2015 committed to the cause of Islamic State and renamed itself the Islamic State of West Africa.

Despite the change, the group remains best known as "Boko Haram", which in the local Hausa dialect roughly translates as "Western education is forbidden". Targeting schools and abducting children is a core strategy of the group, whose extremist beliefs oppose such education as sinful, and particularly object to the education of girls.

Boko Haram's infamous 2014 abduction of 276 girls in Chibok sparked the #BringBackOurGirls social media campaign. According to Human Rights Watch, more than 910 schools have been destroyed by Boko Haram in Nigeria; 600 teachers have been murdered, and thousands have been more forced to flee.

WHAT THE REST OF THE WORLD CAN DO

All children have the right to an education, and that can only be secured when schools are safe places to study. While the world watches and encourages American children rallying to make their schools safer, it's a salient time to remember that 75 million children worldwide experience significant disruption to their education in regions of conflict and

insecurity.

Despite the United Nations declaring attacks on schools as one of the six grave violations that most impact on children during armed conflict, much remains to be done to safeguard education during conflict – particularly for girls.

This is largely because education is not seen as a priority in crisis situations. Its loss is not immediately life-threatening, so it often takes a back seat to other concerns. This forms part of what is sometimes referred to as "the humanitarian-development divide" – the disconnect between priorities during protracted crises. Education is often one of the first services to be lost during a crisis, despite its importance to communities.

Education attracts less than 2% of global humanitarian aid. Many affected countries invest far more on their military spending than they do on education.

While many initiatives and funds exist, there is still a need for greater coordination between government bodies and NGOs to effectively mount a response. And with countries slashing their aid budgets, this will become increasingly difficult.

There may also be a lack of political will to confront this problem by countries not directly affected. In Australia, this is reflected by the government's current failure to endorse the Safe Schools Declaration – an international commitment supporting clear guidelines and reporting mechanisms to protect schools and education during armed conflict. These include the commitment not to use schools or universities for military purposes and to support measures to monitor and report on attacks on schools.

Education is a right, not a luxury to be indulged in better times. To rise out of conflict and create truly stable communities, education is a necessary investment in the future, and the international community shares a collective responsibility to protect it.

[the writer is Lecturer in Law, Macquarie University]

CBSE papers leak: Police detain 6 students in Jharkhand

CHATRA (J'KHAND), MAR 30 (PTI): Six students were detained here today in connection with the CBSE papers leak, the police said.

Six students have been detained. An FIR has been lodged against four, Chatra Sub-Divisional Police Officer (SDPO) Gyan Ranjan said, adding that no arrest was made so far.

The CBSE papers leak has drawn widespread criticism from across the country and triggered students' protest.

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has announced a retest of the Maths paper for Class 10 students and Economics paper for Class 12 students in the wake of the papers leak.

Tripura to set up crime wing of state police

AGARTALA, MAR 30 (PTI): The Tripura government has decided to set up a "well-equipped" crime branch under the state police to deal with unlawful activities such as drug and narcotics peddling.

The new wing will be modeled after Delhi Police's crime branch, Law Minister Ratan Lal Nath told reporters here today.

"The state cabinet has cleared a proposal to form a well-equipped police wing to arrest crime in the state and restore the rule of law, as was promised in the BJP's election manifesto," he said.

Anybody found having links with drug peddlers or mafia gangs will be punished, Nath said.

"We will seek expert opinion from Delhi and Mumbai to build the unit," he said.

The two-hour-long cabinet meeting yesterday also sought a crack-down on illegal constructions across Tripura.

The ruling dispensation has sought a report on government land allotment to political party offices in the state, Nath said.

"All district magistrates and superintendents of police have been asked to submit details within 15 days for necessary action," he explained, adding that a separate report on land allotment to different NGOs or institutions during the Left rule will be sought for examination.

The cabinet also agreed to extend the tenure of teachers engaged under the Sarva Siksha Abhiyan after March 31, when their current engagement is slated to end.

"We shall retain them in service till the Centre agrees to provide funds," Nath added.

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Work to bring expediency in governance: Sonowal

GUWAHATI, MAR 29 (PTI): Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal today asked the deputy secretaries to work honestly and in a transparent manner to plug all shortcomings and bring in expediency in governance.

He said the government will introduce e-office for the convenience of all in secretariat administration. Interacting with the deputy secretaries here, Sonowal termed



them as capable soldiers and asked them to remain committed to the people and serve them with dedication and honesty.

Stating deputy secretaries, who constitute the second rung of bureaucracy, as the force behind the government to

perform, Sonowal asked them to work resolutely to take governance down to the grassroots level. During the interaction, Sonowal also said that to bring in expediency in administration and for inter-departmental coordination, the government will introduce e-office for the convenience of everybody in secretariat administration.

Taking suggestions from the deputy secre-

taries, Sonowal assured them to bring in necessary modalities for ease of administration at all levels of secretariat administration.

He also said that taking into account the paucity of space in the secretariat, more buildings would be constructed to create an ideal ambience to work, besides employees amenity centres like rest room, more canteens, more toilets will be created for officers and employees.



Verdict in Salman Khan black buck poaching case on April 5

JODHPUR, MAR 28 (PTI): A Jodhpur court will announce on April 5 the verdict in the 1998 black buck poaching case against actor Salman Khan.

The court of the chief judicial magistrate (Jodhpur Rural), where the trial of the case has been in progress for the last 19 years, reserved the judgment today after the final arguments.

Magistrate Dev Kumar Khatri reserved the order to be pronounced on April 5 in the presence of Khan and other accused, including a local, Dushyant Singh.

Khan's counsel H M Saraswat said the final arguments in the case began on September 13 last year with the prose-

cution counsel citing the statements of the eyewitnesses of the case.

"After the completion of the prosecution's arguments on October 23, we began our arguments on October 28 last year and completed on February 4," he said.

After this, the counsels for the co-accused began their arguments, which completed on March 24, he said.

Khan was accused of killing two black bucks on October 2, 1998 in Kankani village in Jodhpur during the shooting of "Hum Saath Saath Hain".

He was acquitted in two poaching cases by the high court and in a case under Arms Act by the lower court.

Nepal PM to visit India from April 6-8

NEW DELHI, MAR 30 (PTI): Nepal's Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli will pay a three-day visit to India from April 6 during which he will hold talks with the top leadership here to strengthen the partnership between the two countries.

The upcoming visit will provide an opportunity to the two sides to review the wide-ranging cooperative partnership, and to progress it further for the benefit of the two peoples, a Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) statement said.

Oli, who is visiting India at the invitation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, will hold talks with his Indian counterpart and call on President Ram Nath Kovind and Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu during his trip.

A high-level delegation will accompany Oli



on his state visit to India, the MEA said.

The Nepalese premier, who will also be accompanied by his spouse

Radhika Shakya Oli, will visit the G.B. Pant University of Agriculture and Technology in Pantnagar, Uttarakhand, during the

visit.

External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and other ministers will call on the Nepalese prime

minister, the MEA said.

India and Nepal enjoy age-old, special ties of friendship and cooperation, it said.

Ten-member team to inspect Ratna Bhandar of Puri temple

PURI, MAR 30 (PTI): Ten people, including two experts of Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), will be allowed to enter the Ratna Bhandar (storehouse of ornaments) of Shree Jagannath Temple to inspect its structural stability, a senior administration official of the 12th century shrine said today.

The Orissa High Court had on March 22 ordered the ASI to examine the condition of Ratna Bhandar and submit a status report.

A meeting of Chhatisa Nijog (an apex body of priests) last evening decided on the names of members, who would be given permission to walk into the repository for its inspection, the chief administrator of Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA), PK Jena, told reporters here.

Puri SP Sarthak Sarangi was also present at the meeting along with temple administration officials and priests, he said.

The ten-member team will comprise Puri King Gajapati Maharaj Dibyasingha Deb or his representative, four servitors, two members of the ASI Core Committee, two experts of ASI, and Advocate NK Mohanty, who has been appointed as Amicus Curiae by the Orissa High Court to inspect the repair work.

"The Chhatisa Nijog meeting has decided that the 10 members would be thoroughly searched before and after the inspection," Jena said.

Each member of the team will have to submit his individual report on



the condition of the Ratna Bhandar on the same day of inspection, he said.

"The team members will be provided a

"Gamuchha" (a towel) while entering into the Ratna Bhandar. They will inspect the floor, roof and walls of the Ratna Bhandar.

"None of them will be allowed to touch the jewellery boxes inside the repository. There will be arrangements for light and oxygen inside the Bhandar, which was last opened in 1984," Jena explained.

Earlier this week, an ASI team inspected the Ratna Bhandar from outside and said its outer surface is in good condition.

The High Court has been monitoring the repair work in the 12th century shrine since 2016 in response to a PIL seeking judicial intervention for effective renovation of the temple.

Circulation of image can't be called question leak: minister

KOLKATA, MAR 29 (PTI): West Bengal Education Minister Partha Chatterjee today said circulation of some images on WhatsApp cannot be described as examination question paper leak unless it is proved.

Asked about allegations of question paper leak in Higher Secondary examinations conducted by the state board, Chatterjee said, "No such leak has been proved. Circulation of some images on WhatsApp cannot be described as leak."

The West Bengal Council of Higher Secondary Education was there to inquire into such



allegations and taking action if and when required, he told reporters.

The Bengali question paper of Higher Secondary Examinations was allegedly circulated on WhatsApp at an examination centre in Malda district, one hour after the examination started on March 27.

There had also been

allegations that the seal of question paper packet was broken before the scheduled time in just-concluded Class 10 Board examinations.

On this, Chatterjee said, "The West Bengal Board (of Secondary Education) is already looking into the charges. We are waiting for the probe to be completed."


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Pak's policy of restraint on LoC should not be treated as its weakness: FO

ISLAMABAD, MAR 30 (PTI): Pakistan yesterday said its policy of restraint on the Line of Control (LoC) should not be treated as a sign of weakness and warned India of a "befitting response" in case of any misadventure.

Foreign Office spokesman Mohammad Faisal made the remarks during his weekly media briefing here.

"The Pakistani forces have exerted great restraint but this restraint should not be construed as a sign of weakness. Any Indian misadventure on the LoC and Working Boundary can lead to a strategic miscalculation," he said.

"While we advise restraint to the Indian side, our military is ready to give a befitting response. We shall choose the time and place of our response," he said.

He claimed that the escalation at the LoC and the Working Boundary were attempts to divert the attention of the international community from Kashmir.

Faisal also termed the reports about Pakistan giving Gilgit Baltistan to China on lease as "speculative and baseless".

He said the ban on Pakistani artists in India was "regrettable".

"We believe that art and culture can, and should enrich societies, instead of being used as political tools which inhibit and curtail," he said.

Talking about the alleged harassment of Pakistani diplomats in India, the spokesman said that there was no plan to take the matter to the UN as "all efforts are being made to work out these matters."

He said that Pakistan was still waiting for a response from India on humanitarian proposals about exchange of prisoners, sending doctors and revival of judicial committee.

Faisal said Pakistan delegation led by Commissioner for Indus Waters (PCIW) Syed Muhammad Mehar Ali Shah is visiting India for the 114th meeting of the PCIW from March 29-31 to discuss issues related to the Indus Waters Treaty.

England face dominant Australia in women's tri-series final

MUMBAI, MAR 30 (PTI): Entering the final on the back of some dominating performances, Australia will fancy their chances when they take on England in the title clash of the women's T20 tri-series here tomorrow.

The task gets even more difficult for England as they are coming off back-to-back reverses.

England had started their campaign with two successive wins, which also included the highest chase in T20 internationals against India, but their batters have miserably failed in the previous two matches.

England were outclassed by both Australia and India in their last two league games. Their players need to erase those memories as they get ready to take the field tomorrow.

If England are to do well in batting, then their in-form opener Danielle Wyatt will have to again score heavily.

But she will also need support from other batters like Natalie Sciver, Tamsin Beaumont and skipper Heather Knight on a track where the ball is expected to come nicely on to the bat.

Sciver and Beaumont have been among the runs and they will have to see that they don't play reckless shots and throw their wickets away. Others such as Amy Jones, too, need to chip in and her role will also be crucial.



Yesterday, the English batters struggled to play against the Indian spinners and they will have to be cautious in their approach against the Australian tweekers, especially Jess Jonassen.

On the bowling front, left-arm pacer Katie George, Tash Farrant and the experienced Jenny Gunn will have to keep the Australian batters at bay.

On the other hand, most of the Aussie bats-women -- Beth Mooney, Alyssa Healy, skipper Meg Lanning, Ellyse Villani, Ellyse Perry have been among the runs and if they fire in unison they can dismantle any bowling attack.

Lanning, who struggled earlier, got some runs under her

belt against England in their league game, and would like to continue from where she had left.

Their pacer Megan Schutt has been in terrific form and if Australia are to restrict the English women, then Schutt would have to produce another stellar performance. And she would expect support from medium-pacer Delisaa Kimmince, spinners Ashleigh Gardner and Jonassen.

However, an area of concern for the Aussies has been their sloppy fielding and they have dropped too many sitters.

Scores above 150 have been regularly witnessed in the tournament and another run-feast could be on the cards at the Br-

bourne Stadium.

Teams (From):

England: Heather Knight (captain), Tamsin Beaumont, Kate Cross, Alice Davidson-Richards, Sophie Ecclestone, Tash Farrant, Katie George, Jenny Gunn, Alex Hartley, Daniellie Hazell, Amy Jones, Anya Shrubsole, Natlie Sciver, Fran Wilson, Danni Wyatt.

Australia: Meg Lanning (c), Rachael Haynes (vc), Nicola Carey, Ashleigh Gardner, Alyssa Healy, Jess Jonassen, Delisaa Kimmince, Sophie Molineux, Beth Mooney, Ellyse Perry, Megan Schutt, Naomi Stalenberg, Ellyse Villani, Amanda-Jade Wellington.

Match starts at 10 AM.



Bairstow salvages England after Southee, Boult strike

CHRISTCHURCH, MAR 30 (AFP): Jonny Bairstow was in sight of his fifth Test century after a late run spree with Mark Wood lifted England to 290 for eight at stumps on day one of the second Test here today.

England had been in trouble at 164 for seven before Bairstow (not out 97) and Wood (52) put on 95 for the eighth wicket.

Tim Southee and Trent Boult did all the damage for New Zealand with Southee taking five for 60, his seventh five-wicket bag while Trent Boult had three for 79 after New Zealand won the toss and elected to bowl first.

England were in danger of not reaching 200 until Wood joined Bairstow and the pair put on 95 for the eighth wicket before Wood fell to Southee for 52, his maiden Test half century.

After being comprehensively beaten in the first Test, England strengthened their batting line up for Christchurch with the addition of James Vince while

Wood and Jack Leach came in for bowlers Chris Woakes, Craig Overton and Moeen Ali.

But apart from Wood and Bairstow there was little to enthuse about with the England batting as Boult and Southee swung and seamed the ball with precision.

Bairstow's 97 off 154 balls included partnerships of 56 with Ben Stokes, 13 with Stuart Broad, the sparkling 95 with Wood and 41 with Jack Leach who was not out 10 at the end of the day.

On 58, Bairstow suffered a fearful blow to the side of the head from Colin de Grandhomme which knocked his helmet from his head but did nothing to slow his run flow.

Boult and Southee took their wickets in clumps starting with Alastair Cook (two) and James Vince (18) to have England at two for 38.

When play resumed after lunch they accounted for Joe Root (37), Dawid Malan (duck) and Mark Stoneman (35) in a nine-ball burst.

Ashwin laments as Smith cries, says world will 'live happily ever after'

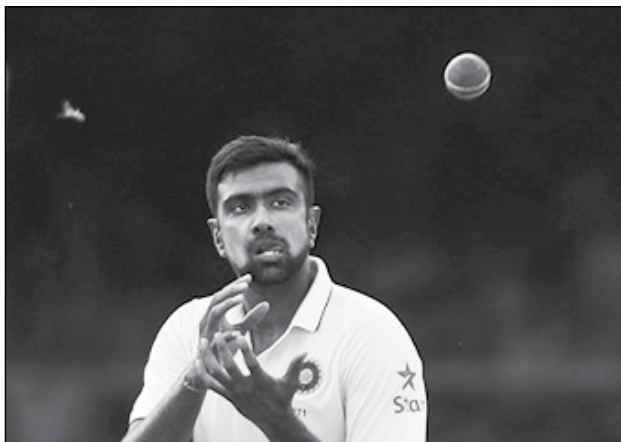
NEW DELHI, MAR 30 (PTI): "The world simply wants to see you cry..." lamented India spinner Ravichandran Ashwin while expressing solidarity with the disgraced Steve Smith and David Warner.

Ashwin hoped the Australian cricketers can put the ball-tampering scandal behind them.

"...once you have cried they will feel satisfied and live happily ever after. If only Empathy was not just a Word and people still had it. God give @stevesmith49 and Bancroft all the strength to come out of this," tweeted Ashwin.

"And @davidwarner31 will also need the strength to fight it out, hopefully their players union will provide them with all the support," he added.

Smith broke down repeatedly at his arrival press conference in Syd-



ney Airport yesterday and said he was "truly sorry" for his actions.

Cricket Australia banned Warner and Smith for one year while Cameron Bancroft was handed a nine-month suspension after all three admitted to ball-tampering in the third Test

against South Africa in Cape Town.

The infamous incident also led to Darren Lehmann stepping down as Australia coach after the fourth Test in Johannesburg.

The players' confession triggered a massive public outcry in Australia,

leaving even Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull "deeply disappointed".

A wave of sympathy for Smith gathered pace after his heart-wrenching apology and as opposition grew to the severity of bans handed out in the ball-tampering scandal.

Tearful Smith takes responsibility; Warner, Bancroft also say sorry



AHMEDABAD, MAR 30 (PTI): The CAG has expressed dissatisfaction over the Gujarat government's efforts to control salinity ingress in coastal areas, saying the delay in implementing various works has escalated the project cost by 455 per cent.

A report by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) on the Salinity Ingress Prevention Scheme (SIPS) was tabled in the state Legislative Assembly on Wednesday. The government has not enacted a law in this regard despite being recommended by a high-level committee (HLC) almost 40 years ago, it pointed out.

The CAG noted that the state government had appointed two HLCs in 1976 and 1978 to study the problem and suggest appropriate measures to save ground water in coastal areas from getting affected by the ingress of sea water towards land.

Both these HLCs submitted their reports, having various recommendations, between 1978 and 1984, the CAG said, adding all these reports were accepted by the Gujarat govern-

ment in the subsequent years.

The recommendations included construction of tidal regulators or "bandharas", check dams, recharge wells and reservoirs, tidal-cum-demonstration (TCD) farms, afforestation and coastal land reclamation.

But, when the CAG conducted its audit on the status of the implementation of recommendations under SIPS, it found that "except in case of check dams and recharge wells, the progress of works was very slow even after lapse of 25 to 39 years since the acceptance of reports of HLCs".

The CAG said, "No or limited action was taken for the establishment of tidal-cum-demonstration farms, coastal land reclamation, gully plugging and afforestation."

"Even the plan document, detailed project report and budget estimates were not prepared for these activities," it said.

The apex auditor also said that as against the original cost of Rs 789.65 crore, which was estimated for the project by HLCs, an expenditure of

Rs 1,045.65 crore was incurred up to March 2017.

"For the remaining works, the estimate was revised to Rs 2,544.79 crore. Thus, due to the delay in implementation of the recommended works, cost of scheme escalated by 455 per cent," the CAG said.

The CAG also noted that though the HLCs, way back in 1978, recommended enacting a law "to impose control on the excessive use of ground water", no such legislation was brought by the government as on end of 2017.

The CAG rapped Gujarat for failing to bring such a law and observed that such a legislation had already been enacted and implemented in states like Goa, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and West Bengal.

"But, it was not enacted and implemented by Gujarat.

Thus, the fact remains that no management techniques recommended by the HLCs have been implemented even after a lapse of 25 to 39 years of its acceptance by the state government," the CAG noted.

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ElseWhere

US wants visa applicants to submit phone, email, social media details

LALIT K JHA
WASHINGTON, MAR 30 (PTI): The Trump administration wants all US visa applicants to submit details of their previous phone numbers, email addresses and social media histories as part of its “vetting” practice and to prevent entry of individuals who might pose a threat to the country.

In a document posted on the Federal Register yesterday, anyone who wants to come to the US on a non-immigrant visa will have to answer a list of questions under new rules.

The State Department estimates that the new visa forms would af-



fect 710,000 immigrant and 14 million non-immigrant visa applicants.

It said that in addition to asking the visa applicants to provide their identifications or han-

dles of their social media platform, they would also be asked to give details of their phone and mobile numbers used in the last five years.

Other questions seek

five years of previously used telephone numbers, email addresses and international travel whether the visa applicant has been deported or removed from any country

and whether specified family members have been involved in terrorist activities, said the document which would be formally published today.

After its publication, the public would have 60 days to comment on the proposed new visa form.

“One question lists multiple social media platforms and requires the applicant to provide any identifiers used by applicants for those platforms during the five years preceding the date of application,” the document said.

It said the State Department will collect the information from visa applicants for “identity resolution and vet-

ting purposes” based on statutory visa eligibility standards.

However, it intends not to routinely ask the question of applicants for specific visa classifications, such as most diplomatic and official visa applicants, it said.

The revised visa application forms will also include additional information regarding the visa medical examination that some applicants may be required to undergo.

The State Department estimates that the new visa forms would affect 710,000 immigrant visa applicants and 14 million non-immigrant visa applicants.



Russian action marks further deterioration in bilateral ties: WH

WASHINGTON, MAR 30 (PTI): Russia's decision to expel 60 American diplomats and ordering a closure of the US Consulate in St Petersburg mark a further deterioration in bilateral ties, the White House said today.

“Russia's action today to expel American diplomats marks a further deterioration in the US-Russia relationship,” White House Press Secretary Sarah Sanders said, hours after Russia in a retaliatory action asked 60 American diplomats to leave the country within seven days and ordered the shutting down of the US Consulate in St Petersburg within 48 hours.

“The expulsion of undeclared Russian intelligence officers by the United States and more than two dozen partner nations and NATO allies earlier this week was an appropriate response to the Russian attack on the soil of the United Kingdom,” Sanders said.

The Trump administration had earlier ordered the expulsion of 60 Russian diplomats and shutter the country's consulate general in Seattle.

She said the Russian response was “not anticipated”, and the US will “deal” with it.

Swaraj meets Japanese PM Abe, conveys PM Modi's greetings



TOKYO, MAR 30 (PTI): External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj today met Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and the two leaders discussed ways to strengthen the bilateral ties.

Swaraj, who was here on a three-day visit, also conveyed the greetings of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Abe.

“EAM @SushmaSwaraj called on Japanese Prime Minister @AbeShinzo today morning in Tokyo. EAM conveyed the greetings of PM @narendramodi to PM Abe,” Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Raveesh Kumar said in a tweet.

During the meeting, Abe told Swaraj that the traditional friendship between the India and Japan was characterised by “heart-to-heart” bonds and blessed with a huge potential for growth.

“PM Abe said that India-Japan traditional friendship is characterised by heart-to-heart bonds and blessed with a huge potential for growth,” Kumar tweeted.

Swaraj, who was on her first visit to Japan in the capacity of the External Affairs Minister, had reached Tokyo on Wednesday to attend the

ninth India-Japan Strategic Dialogue.

She met her counterpart Taro Kano yesterday and the two leaders reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral ties.

Describing the meeting as “very productive”, Swaraj said her trip had laid a sound foundation for Modi's visit to Japan for the next bilateral Annual Summit later this year.

Hours after meeting Abe, Swaraj departed from Tokyo, concluding her first official trip to Japan.

“Sayonara! EAM @SushmaSwaraj departs from Tokyo after her first official visit to Japan for the 9th #IndiaJapan Strategic Dialogue,” Indian Embassy in Tokyo tweeted.

Earlier yesterday, Swaraj met Chairman of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party Policy Research Council & former Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida.

Swaraj also addressed a gathering of Indian diaspora at the Vivekanand Cultural Centre in Tokyo.

According to official figures, Japanese FDI in India during 2016-17 was USD 4.7 billion, an increase of 80 per cent over the last year.



A fire on a double-decker bus carrying migrant workers to a Bangkok factory has killed 20 people. The bus burst into flames at about 1.30am on Friday in Tak province in western Thailand on the border with Myanmar. Local media said the workers were from Myanmar and had been heading to a factory in an industrial area near Bangkok. Police Lieutenant Raewat Aiemtak said 27 people managed to escape the bus, one of whom was severely burned. He said the driver reported that the fire started in the middle of the bus and spread quickly. The incident is the latest in a series of bus crashes in Thailand, which has the second-highest rate of traffic fatalities in the world after Libya, according to the World Health Organisation.

US withdrawing from Syria ‘very soon’: Trump

WASHINGTON, MAR 30 (PTI): President Donald Trump today said the US troops would withdraw from Syria “very soon” as he lamented that America has wasted USD 7 trillion in wars in the Middle East.

At the same time, he said the US was using all its resources to defeat ISIS and drive them out of the captured territory.

We're knocking the hell out of ISIS. We'll be coming out of Syria, like, very soon. Let the other people take of it now, Trump said in Ohio where he had gone to deliver a speech on infrastructure.

“Very soon we're coming out. We're going to have 100 per cent of the caliphate, as they call it -- sometimes referred to as “land” -- taking it all back quickly, quickly. But we're going to be coming out of there real soon. Going to get back to our country, where we belong, where we want to be,” he said.

Trump, in his remarks, lamented that US has wasted USD 7 trillion in wars in the Middle East.

“We spent USD 7 trillion in the Middle East. We'd build a school, they'd blow it up. We'd build it again, they'd blow it up. We'd build it again -- hasn't been blown up yet, but it will be. But, if we want a school in Ohio to fix the windows, you can't get the money. If you want a school in Pennsylvania or Iowa to get federal money, you can't get the money,” he said.

We spent USD 7 trillion in the Middle East. What we have for it? Nothing. Remember I used to say ‘keep the oil’ as a civilian. We never kept the oil. If we kept the oil, we would have been OK. If we kept the oil, we wouldn't have ISIS. Because you know who kept a lot of the oil? ISIS. That's how they funded themselves. They kept the oil. We didn't keep the oil. Stupid, stupid, he said.

As a result, Trump said, the US has little money for its infrastructure.

“We have to fight for our military. But we're becoming so strong again. And you watch -- not going to take very long. I've asked Republicans and Democrats in Con-

gress to come together and deliver the biggest and boldest infrastructure plan in the last half century. I don't think you're going to get Democrat support very much. And you'll probably have to wait until after the election, which isn't so long down the road,” he said.

Earlier in the day, Defense Department Spokesperson Dana White said while the coalition has significantly degraded ISIS, the important work remains to guarantee the lasting defeat of the extremists.

“Our commitment to win must outlast the so-called physical caliphate, and the warped ideas that guide the calculated cruelty of ISIS,” she said.

This is a group that plots and launches terror attacks globally, White said, adding that they have no regard for anything decent or valuable in life.

“As long as they exist and bring death and destruction around the world, we will continue to degrade, destroy and ultimately defeat ISIS,” she said.

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1st Prize Rs.10,000/- 5722
2nd Prize Rs.1,000/- 3036 3rd Prize Rs.500/- 1164
4th Prize Rs.300/- 4894 5th Prize Rs. 204/- 6331
6th Prize Rs.100/-
1002 1003 1030 1039 1057 1092 1094 1126 1129 1142
1240 1251 1286 1325 1383 1402 1404 1425 1428 1432
1472 1473 1479 1481 1490 1508 1551 1552 1561 1563
1580 1630 1643 1685 1705 1709 1712 1721 1723 1724
1725 1726 1810 1837 1856 1868 1883 1904 1911 1919
1966 2083 2085 2087 2105 2163 2195 2211 2214 2223
2236 2256 2258 2297 2326 2351 2404 2444 2472 2479
2497 2522 2580 2585 2586 2603 2629 2653 2657 2728
2733 2755 2761 2762 2763 2777 2806 2811 2812 2825
2827 2856 2873 2884 2909 2923 2935 2991 3024 3025
3134 3172 3173 3199 3232 3265 3319 3335 3351 3352
3423 3438 3476 3508 3567 3587 3588 3598 3600 3638
3685 3741 3746 3803 3819 3823 3828 3829 3863 3878
3900 3905 3924 3925 3933 3945 3949 3980 4062 4121
4126 4201 4204 4262 4280 4305 4311 4312 4314 4418
4464 4474 4482 4483 4515 4582 4603 4614 4617 4658
4691 4706 4713 4719 4737 4740 4747 4788 4813 4823
4842 4872 4898 4920 4981 4996 4999 5007 5024 5090
5106 5110 5255 5273 5279 5295 5359 5377 5394 5460
5512 5535 5551 5578 5651 5664 5697 5703 5720 5837
5846 5855 5875 5881 5892 5899 5917 6043 6071 6103
6110 6143 6192 6204 6238 6349 6475 6477 6492 6501
6521 6533 6597 6603 6604 6619 6667 6695 6698 6699
6719 6755 6757 6857 6870 6881 6886 6887 6950 6962
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1st Prize Rs.10,000/- 4241 2nd Prize Rs.2,000/- 3896
3rd Prize Rs.1,000/- 1652 4th Prize Rs. 504/- 5537
5th Prize Rs.200/-
1126 1136 1152 1156 1274 1333 1428 1472 1531 1547
1636 1663 1683 1740 1757 1767 1818 1838 1919 1924
1930 1943 1992 2142 2227 2264 2315 2353 2359 2403
2435 2521 2535 2672 2689 2707 2809 2838 2971 3048
3116 3151 3236 3248 3251 3299 3390 3433 3455 3490
3560 3566 3664 3681 3762 3800 3833 3931 3933 3936
3961 4014 4113 4125 4198 4245 4373 4406 4421 4426
4450 4507 4606 4758 4846 4882 4886 4912 4983 5020
5053 5055 5137 5196 5235 5302 5410 5418 5421 5563
5613 5635 5675 5762 5771 5831 5863 5917 5964 5992
6th Prize Rs.100/-
1005 1057 1066 1082 1093 1103 1104 1169 1199 1213
1226 1256 1307 1311 1345 1366 1372 1379 1399 1456
1464 1480 1524 1534 1572 1605 1614 1620 1635 1675
1754 1791 1852 1854 1859 1889 1915 2000 2013 2036
2048 2058 2113 2147 2161 2164 2186 2209 2289 2339
2357 2402 2453 2454 2484 2565 2636 2722 2723 2724
2735 2875 2894 2952 2962 2964 3033 3042 3054 3061
3106 3110 3112 3117 3156 3174 3191 3214 3232 3290
3297 3304 3313 3343 3380 3383 3384 3394 3414 3443
3456 3521 3562 3563 3568 3606 3656 3666 3674 3684
3711 3712 3720 3723 3748 3763 3803 3830 3861 3902
3939 3956 3958 3970 4020 4039 4042 4045 4083 4097
4101 4135 4148 4161 4181 4184 4187 4204 4243 4249
4276 4286 4303 4306 4316 4342 4343 4392 4404 4414
4461 4500 4541 4562 4574 4577 4593 4621 4642 4647
4671 4697 4700 4755 4871 4876 4878 4889 4931 4945
5068 5085 5107 5108 5139 5216 5220 5274 5275 5297
5344 5350 5369 5391 5397 5398 5457 5480 5526 5529
5535 5595 5609 5615 5629 5646 5656 5674 5677 5693
5707 5723 5797 5808 5813 5832 5872 5950 5961 5977
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DEAR TENDER MORNING
Draw Time: 11:55 am onwards
Draw No:17 DrawDate on:30/03/18
1st Prize Rs.26 Lakhs/- 93G 02510
(Including Super Prize Amt)
Cons. Prize Rs.9498/- 02510 (REMAINING ALL SERIALS)
2nd Prize Rs.9000/-
12003 58404 59797 60142 73955
76309 83003 84764 96521 99130
3rd Prize Rs.500/- 0145 1162 2451 4171 4189 4282 4331 5974 6493 9860
4th Prize Rs.250/- 0341 0750 1720 2089 2944 3449 5900 7597 8278 8767
5th Prize Rs.120/-
0049 0082 0131 0191 0473 0939 0957 0961 0968 0988
1047 1083 1215 1255 1419 1592 1663 1872 1970 2140
2562 2581 2608 2628 2695 2734 2867 2908 2923 2929
2969 3050 3051 3170 3260 3416 3689 3877 3880 3891
4052 4056 4066 4103 4139 4163 4332 4503 4535 4556
4602 4633 4708 4922 5017 5058 5211 5275 5297 5317
5515 5716 5909 5972 6044 6164 6204 6373 6491 6801
6874 6922 6997 7185 7274 7329 7334 7347 7380 7430
7738 7830 8436 8506 8787 8993 9024 9054 9133 9157
9244 9310 9317 9557 9589 9635 9648 9671 9713 9901

NAGALAND STATE LOTTERIES
DEAR ADMIRE
Draw Time: 04:00 pm onwards
Draw No:17 DrawDate on:30/03/18
1st Prize Rs.26 Lakhs/- 83E 66336
(Including Super Prize Amt)
Cons. Prize Rs.9498/- 66336 (REMAINING ALL SERIALS)
2nd Prize Rs.9000/-
10075 32283 32334 44049 62543
68762 73611 81318 87517 89696
3rd Prize Rs.500/- 0711 1606 3022 3445 3702 6198 6592 7078 8991 9181
4th Prize Rs.250/- 1901 3582 3601 4025 4369 4632 5756 6843 7623 7993
5th Prize Rs.120/-
0063 0094 0206 0235 0263 0290 0293 0306 0363 0393
0451 0712 0754 0836 0863 1078 1377 1395 1461 1651
1809 1834 1974 2144 2181 2274 2478 2562 2593 2995
3007 3046 3072 3100 3293 3717 4024 4105 4130 4339
4409 4458 4504 4555 4643 4677 4680 4779 4807 4962
5020 5057 5136 5156 5195 5325 5331 5333 5403 5589
5659 5772 5814 6084 6143 6213 6253 6328 6334 6490
6625 6734 6804 7032 7042 7374 7694 7697 7777 7921
8015 8017 8078 8131 8145 8208 8285 8553 8660 8693
8775 9015 9101 9221 9232 9300 9464 9475 9706 9809

NAGALAND STATE LOTTERIES
DEAR VULTURE EVENING
Draw Time: 08:00 pm onwards
Draw No:35 DrawDate on:30/03/18
1st Prize Rs.26 Lakhs/- 68I 68857
(Including Super Prize Amt)
Cons. Prize Rs.9498/- 68857 (REMAINING ALL SERIALS)
2nd Prize Rs.9000/-
10834 20467 25341 27537 42013
43023 59673 73042 90873 99314
3rd Prize Rs.500/- 0117 2579 3055 4054 4799 5718 7486 7582 8774 9756
4th Prize Rs.250/- 1316 2433 3486 5803 6198 6348 7681 7735 8972 9080
5th Prize Rs.120/-
0035 0135 0168 0340 0674 0675 0742 0780 0889 0925
0956 0959 0973 0976 1163 1259 1402 1602 1732 1853
1924 1959 2032 2096 2195 2203 2406 2407 2440 2523
2720 3059 3214 3220 3392 3708 3709 3913 4015 4141
4312 4340 4355 4387 4408 4690 4772 4980 5020 5021
5038 5164 5279 5378 5473 5575 5595 5622 5669 5822
5955 6211 6232 6423 6572 6641 6847 6938 6971 7053
7205 7225 7254 7333 7525 7578 7598 7674 7736 7820
7874 7954 7997 8087 8352 8394 8427 8529 8556 8623
8733 8984 9223 9376 9657 9779 9783 9821 9907 9974

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LADY GAGA GETS BEHIND THE PIANO FOR COVER OF ELTON JOHN’S ‘YOUR SONG’

An all-star roster is celebrating Elton John’s most beloved and legendary catalog of hits with two albums “Revamp” (Island Records) and “Restoration” (Universal Music Group Nashville) to be released on April 6. The superstar lineup features artists both new and iconic reinterpreting the timeless songs of the more than 50-year writing partnership that Elton and Bernie Taupin share.

Restoration, which was spearheaded by John’s long-time songwriting partner

Bernie Taupin, finds contemporary country singers offering their own take on his pop classics. And the other, Revamp, was organized by Elton John himself, who reached out to various pop and rock stars to see what they could do with his songs. We’ve heard one song from each project so far -- Chris Stapleton’s gravel-voiced version of “I Want Love” and Q-Tip and Demi Lovato’s slightly funkier “Don’t Go Breaking My Heart” -- and now we’re get-

ting a Lady Gaga rendition of John’s 1970 hit “Your Song.” Gaga and John performed the song together at the 2010 Grammys, and her recorded take on the song stays pretty faithful to both that version and the original, surrounding her powerful voice with stately piano and strings. “Restoration” highlights countries biggest stars with thoughtful interpretations by Oklahoma City native Vince Gill and Don Henley, former Tishomingo resident Miranda Lambert, Dierks Bentley, Rosanne

Cash and Emmylou Harris, Miley Cyrus, Little Big Town, Mar-en Morris, Kacey Musgraves, Willie Nelson, Brothers Osborne, Chris Stapleton, Rhonda Vincent and Dolly Parton and Lee Ann Womack. “Revamp” features the hits reimagined by the best in pop, rock and urban with Mary J. Blige, Alessia Cara, Coldplay, Miley Cyrus, Florence And The Machine, Lady Gaga, The Killers, Mumford and Sons, P!nk and Logic, Q-Tip featuring Demi Lovato, Queens of the Stone Age, Ed Sheeran and Sam Smith.

The caliber of names contributing to “Revamp” and “Restoration” is another reminder of Elton John’s enduring popularity at a busy and prolific time for the superstar. As reported, John announced last month his “Farewell Yellow Brick Road” tour. Featuring 300 dates across five continents over three years, including a 2019 Tulsa stop, the tour kicks off in the U.S. in Sep-



tember and marks the finale of 50 years on the road. The first 60 dates sold out immediately after going on general sale, confirming that the farewell tour will be some of, if not the, hottest gig tickets of the coming three years.

Music stars also will honor John’s illustrious career spanning five decades with a rockin’ tribute on “Elton John: I’m Still Standing - A Grammy Salute.”. The concert showcases musicians from multiple genres performing classic songs

written by Elton John and Bernie Taupin, including Miranda Lambert, Alessia Cara, Miley Cyrus, Lady Gaga, John Legend, Kesha, Little Big Town, Chris Martin, Shawn Mendes, Maren Morris, Ed Sheeran, Sam Smith and SZA.



PEACE OUT! Black Panther actor Michael B. Jordan arrives at a restaurant for a Creed II cast dinner in Philadelphia, Penn.

THE WEEKND RELEASES NEW ALBUM MY DEAR MELANCHOLY



As promised, the Weeknd has released a new album: My Dear Melancholy. The six-track effort is executive produced by the Weeknd and Frank Dukes. It includes two collaborations with G-saffelstein, as well as production by Daft Punk’s Guy-Manuel de Homem-Christo, Skrillex, Mike WiLL Made-It, Daheala, Cirkut, and Marz. Nicolas Jaar is credited as a composer on opener “Call Out My Name.”

The Weeknd’s last album, Starboy, was released in November 2016. The project recently earned him the Grammy Award for Best Contemporary Urban Album. So far this year, he has teamed up with Kendrick Lamar for the Black Panther single “Pray for Me.” He also featured on “Come Thru” from Atlanta rapper Trouble’s Edgewood mixtape. The album, My Dear Melancholy, features a track titled “Call Out My Name,”

which seems to be inspired by his ex-girlfriend, Gomez, who he dated for about 10 months until October 2017—during which time she had a kidney transplant to treat the effects of Lupus. The lyric runs: “I said I didn’t feel nothing baby, but I lied/I almost cut a piece of myself for your life,” he croons. Gomez ultimately received a kidney transplant thanks to her best friend, actress Fran-cia Raisa.



IT & CONJURING PRODUCERS TEAM FOR STEPHEN KING ADAPTATION OF TOMMYKNOCKERS

Stephen King’s novel The Tommyknockers is coming to the screen in a new adaptation from the producers of The Conjuring and IT. Last year was a banner year for King adaptations, headed up by the movie version of IT, which grossed more than \$700 million worldwide. The year also saw feature adaptations of King’s The Dark Tower, Ger-

ald’s Game, and 1922, as well as series versions of Mr. Mercedes and The Mist. And the Stephen King adaptation train looks like it won’t be losing steam any time soon. In 2018, Hulu will debut Castle Rock, a series inspired by multiple King works set in the titular Maine town. And already in the works for 2019 are a remake of Pet Sematary, an adaptation of the novel-la In the Tall Grass, and of course the IT sequel, IT: Chapter Two. In keeping with the novel’s time-spanning story, the second IT film will leap ahead 30 years and feature adult versions of the Losers’ Club kids from the first movie. Now, fans can add a new feature film adaptation of The Tommyknockers to the list of future Stephen King projects. The Conjuring director and producer James Wan has teamed with IT producer Roy Lee to as-

semble the project together with the novel’s rights holder, producer Larry Sanitsky. Published in 1987, The Tommyknockers tells the story of a small Maine town (of course) whose residents’ minds gradually become taken over by an alien entity. Only an alcoholic poet named Gard can see what’s really going on, thanks to the semi-immunity granted by the steel plate in his head. The Tommyknockers book, like a lot of King’s works, is arguably a bit of an overwrought mess. But even lesser King works are gold in the current market. And even with all its faults, The Tommyknockers does have a fairly compelling sci-fi/horror plot at its heart that, if handled correctly, could make for an commercially intriguing movie, especially with a pair of producers like Wan and Lee working on the movie behind the scenes.

» THE DAY AHEAD «

ARIES: Is your love interest out of town, Aries? If so, you might spend much of the day feeling lonely and gloomy. Your friend misses you, too, so don't think you'll be alone for long. Try to fill the hours until your partner returns with activities that you love, such as reading or artistic pursuits. The time should then go quickly and you'll be back together before you know it. Hang in there!
TAURUS: A financial goal you've been hoping to reach very soon might seem right around the corner, Taurus, but there still seem to be a thousand things you have to do before it's actually realized. This could get you down temporarily, but don't get stuck there. Make a list of whatever needs to be

done and then tackle each task one at a time until the goal is reached. Get busy!
GEMINI: Expect a hectic pace today, Gemini. Some of your colleagues may have been procrastinating a little and now everything has to be done at once. Don't get too frustrated, however. There are unspoken reasons for their behavior that they haven't shared with you. Just do the best you can and hope that others will as well. If some of it has to wait, it won't be the end of the world!
CANCER: Have you been planning to travel, perhaps for business, Cancer? You might receive word that your trip has to be postponed, which could be disappointing. However, bear in mind that this is only a

delay, not a denial. All signs are that you'll make that trip, so don't panic. Think of it as more time in which to prepare. You'll want to be thoroughly ready before you go. Enjoy your day.
LEO: A proposed get-together with a love interest might have to be postponed until much later tonight or perhaps another evening, %. This could make you a little blue. Your insecurity might even get the better of you. Does your friend not want to meet? Don't fall into this kind of thinking. Accept that there's a reason and go with the flow. You'll enjoy the date that much more for the delay.
VIRGO: Are you expecting a close friend or love partner to visit you at home, Virgo? Don't panic if your friend doesn't

show up at the allotted time. It doesn't mean that no one is coming! There probably has been a traffic jam, last-minute phone call, long line at the supermarket, or some other mundane delay. Be patient and your friend will show up eventually. Hang in there!
LIBRA: An emotional phone call could come from a close friend or love partner, Libra. This person has a lot of worries, and is apt to lay them all on you if you let it happen. You won't want to drop everything that you'd planned to work on today. Tell your friend that you should get together for dinner or coffee and you'll talk about it, and then finish your tasks as quickly as possible.
SCORPIO: Financial worries

could plague you today, Scorpio. This is unfortunate, because your concerns are probably misplaced. There may be a few adjustments to make, but nothing a little belt-tightening for a few days can't fix. Find something inexpensive but fascinating to do like reading or watching a documentary. You'll forget your troubles and learn something in the meantime. Once you get past it, you should see it in proper perspective. Relax!
SAGITTARIUS: Love matters could have you feeling uptight and somewhat fearful today, Sagittarius. Perhaps this involves a relationship that hasn't really manifested yet, or maybe you and your beloved have had a dispute of some kind. Don't worry too much. You should hear some

reassuring words before too long. Try to stay calm when talking to your partner. Sounding desperate or scared could push him or her in the opposite direction.
CAPRICORN: Idealized romantic feelings could pour out today when talking to your love interest, Capricorn. That's fine, but you should exercise restraint. If it's a new relationship, your partner could be scared off. If it's a long-term involvement, your friend might feel at a disadvantage. Channel the feelings into a poem, song, or painting. If you must voice them directly to your friend, keep the terms general. Don't put your beloved on the spot.
AQUARIUS: Money worries could cause you to resist attending a group event with some friends, Aquarius. Are

you afraid you'll be tempted to spend more than you can afford now? You probably will, but that's no reason to stay away. Leave your checkbook and credit cards at home. Take only a minimal amount of cash. If you see something you can't live without, take the name and number of the vendor for later.
PISCES: Someone you know from work could suddenly seem to have romantic feelings for you, Pisces. At first this might make you a little uncomfortable, since you've never thought of this person in that way before. Don't do anything rash. Think about it first. Maybe there's potential, maybe not, but don't jump at it or dismiss it out of hand. Who knows? This person could prove to be your ideal mate!