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SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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CM ATTENDS VALEDICTORY FUNCTION OF NCC ANNUAL TRAINING CAMP AT NAMCHI

Chamling calls on young to toughen up because success does not come easy

BIKASH CHETTRI/ IPR NAMCHI, 19 MAY:

Chief Minister Pawan Chamling today attended the valedictory function of Annual Training Camp-VI of 03rd Sikkim Battalion of National Cadets Corps (NCC) here at Namchi Government College.

The Chief Minister was accompanied by Speaker, Sikkim Legislative Assembly, KN Rai, Human Resource Development Minister, RB Subba, Principal Secretary [HRDD], GP Upadhyaya, Secretary, Rajya Sainik Board Colonel [Retired], DN Bhutia, Principal Kamrang College, Dr PR Poudyal, NCC



cadets and students.

Addressing the function, Mr Chamling encouraged the students and youth of the State to face problems courageously.

“Success is not easy. Life is tough but we should aim to pass the test of life with flying colors,” Mr Chamling added. He urged the NCC ca-

dets to inculcate positive character which he said will assist them in life and make the society a better place to live in. He explained in particular,

the diversity of India and said that the cadets need to imbibe the concept of unity in diversity and uplift the country to greater heights. He also empha-

sized that the cadets and students need to place high value on discipline and the importance of routine in their daily life.

He also urged the gathering to embrace the spirit of adventure and physical activity for long and healthy life.

“We are the facilitators to help you find your path but to make best use of the opportunities provided by us is entirely upon your shoulders,” he said.

He further urged the students to take up various pro students educational scheme of the State Government and also underlined the importance of skill-based education.

He also announced

MoTA Secretary visits EMRS at Swayem

MANGAN, 19 MAY [IPR]: Secretary, Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Leena Nair today made a visit to Eklavya Model Residential School (EMRS) at Swayem in North Sikkim.

She was accompanied by Joint Secretary, Ministry of Tribal Affairs and Director Integrated Child Development Scheme [ICDS], Government of Sikkim along with District Collector [North], Karma R Bonpo, Joint Director, Social Welfare, Principal EMRS, Panchayats of Namok Syawem Gram Panchayat Unit and School Management Committee members.

The Secretary expressed her satisfaction with regard to the education being imparted in the school. In an interactive session held with the school teachers and students, she listened to the experiences and problems of the students. She

also promised that all help will be rendered by the Central Government with regard to upgradation of the infrastructure of the school.

During the program, the DC put forth the school's requirement of a multipurpose auditorium, sports stadium, science labs and additional hostel in the school premises.

The Secretary promised to look favourably into the demands and also directed that the project proposals for the same be sent to the Ministry through the State Government. The Secretary stated that there was need to implement water harvesting in the schools and she also spoke on gender equality.

EMRS Principal gave a brief report on the enrolment and education achievements of the school.

Wuhan summit brought greater comprehension of issues between India-China leaders: envoy

BEIJING, MAY 19 (PTI): After the Wuhan summit last month, there is greater comprehension about strategic and over-arching issues between the leadership of India and China, Indian Ambassador to China Gautam Bambawale said today.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Xi Jinping met in April in an unprecedented two-day 'heart-to-heart' summit in the central Chinese city of Wuhan to "solidify" the India-China relationship after the Doklam standoff last year.

Today, especially after the Wuhan summit between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Xi Jinping, where our two leaders had several hours of heart-to-heart discussions, specially on strategic and over-arching issues, there is a much greater comprehension of each other amongst the leadership of our countries, Bambawale said.

Troops of India and China were locked in the 73-day standoff in Doklam after the Indian side stopped the construction of a road by the Chinese army in the disputed area.

Addressing a meeting to commemorate the 157th birth anniversary of India's poet laureate Rabindranath Tagore at the Indian Embassy here, he said Tagore was fascinated by China and its ancient civilisation.

Tagore was one of the earliest modern thinkers of India who understood and comprehended the benefits of mutual un-

Dzongu boy selected for training at Reliance Foundation Youth Sports in Mumbai

REBYNA RANA GANGTOK, 19 MAY:

Ragpay Lepcha from Namchi Sports Hostel has been selected for Football Academy of Reliance Foundation Youth Sports, Mumbai.

The 12-year-old boy is from Hee-Gyathang, Dzongu and had joined Namchi Sports Hostel in February 2017.

The news of Ragpay Lepcha's selection in Reliance Foundation Football Academy was confirmed by Namchi Sports Hostel head coach, Suren Chettri.

Reliance Foundation Youth Sports is a residential football scholarship academy based in Navi, Mumbai aimed to revolutionize grassroots sports in India. It was started in 2016.

Mr Chettri informed that the news of Ragpay

being selected for the academy was confirmed a couple of days ago.

Ragpay along with Sumit Pradhan from Namchi Sports Hostel and Sujal Rai from Melidara were short-listed for the final national level trial at Mumbai earlier this month. The trio was among thousands of kids who had attended the state and regional level selection rounds held in different parts of the country. The three kids were selected from the first round held at Namchi by the Reliance Foundation Football Academy coaches.

The trio had also passed the northeastern level selection round held at Siliguri.

Around 1200 kids took part in the final selection round held at Mumbai.

Mr Chettri informed that Ragpay will be given a one year scholarship

by the Reliance Foundation. The scholarship will be renewed annually depending on the performance and discipline shown by the kids retained at the academy.

Ragpay had joined Namchi Sports Hostel from North Sikkim Football Association. He is the second footballer from Sikkim to join the Reliance Foundation. Last year, Raj Kumar Sanyasi, also from Namchi Sports Hostel was selected by the foundation.

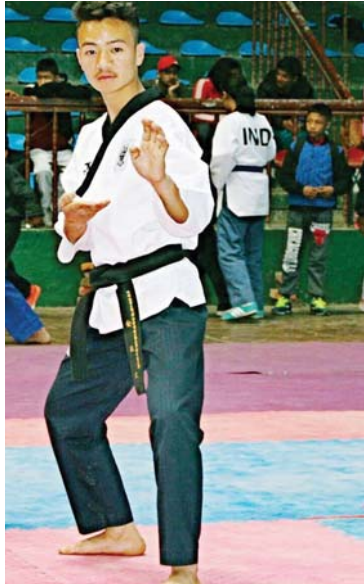
Mr Chettri also informed that four students from Namchi Sports Hostel had recently been selected by Mahogany Football Club Academy based in Chennai. It is also an elite football academy of India.

Namchi Sports Hostel under Sports and Youth Affairs Department currently has 30 students.



Young martial artist kicking it big

YUGAN TAMANG GANGTOK, 19 MAY:



An ambitious young taekwondo player from Sikkim is on his way to the top, winning medals after medals for the State and the Country.

18-year-old Pema Gyacho Sherpa recently won a bronze medal in senior men's freestyle category in Pre-Asian Games held at Jakarta, Indonesia in March 2018.

Born and brought up in purano (old) Namchi, South Sikkim, 18-year-old Pema Gyacho Sherpa had his eyes set on achieving big. Passionate about taekwondo from a tender age of seven, his parents Chitra Kala Rai and Nima Sangay Sherpa helped the boy hone his skills which

in time bore fruits.

“My parents have always been supportive of me. In fact, they are the ones who pushed me to take up the sport and work towards doing something with it,” Pema said.

Pema Gyacho has participated in various national and international taekwondo competitions many of which he has won. Prior to winning a bronze medal in Pre Asian Games, he had participated and won a gold medal in Assam Guwahati Taekwondo Competition in 2010 in the sub-junior category.

He also won a gold medal at Dehradun, Uttarakhand Taekwondo Competition. At World Taekwondo Hangmadang held in Pokhara, Nepal, Pema had

brought home two bronze medals.

Gyacho believes that every youngster should learn taekwondo for self-defense.

“One can equally learn wushu, kungfu, karate, kickboxing and muay-thai too. Self-defense is very necessary nowadays. Given the present scenario, one should take up at least one self defense sport,” he adds.

Pema further shares that he wants to be an acclaimed international taekwondo player in the future and hopes to open his own academy in Sikkim.

“Everything has limits but in order to be invincible and immortal in your field, one should definitely go beyond one's limits,” he says.

Yeddyurappa does a Vajpayee, quits without facing floor test



NEW DELHI, MAY 19 (PTI): Karnataka Chief Minister BS Yeddyurappa today did what Atal Bihari Vajpayee had done over two decades ago --resign without facing a floor test.

Led by Vajpayee, the BJP had in 1996 formed the government at the Centre and was asked to take a floor test.

Vajpayee -- who was sworn in by then President Shankar Dayal Sharma -- too did not have the numbers to back his claim.

Vajpayee had made an emotional speech in the Parliament before announcing his resignation. Lack of requisite numbers did not mean the BJP had served the motherland less, he had said.

The 13-day Vajpayee government was later replaced by the one led by H D Deve Gowda, whose son H D Kumaraswamy is now set to be the next chief minister of Karnataka with the Congress's support.

The three-day-old BJP government in Karnataka collapsed today, minutes before the scheduled trust vote, with Chief Minister Yeddyurappa resigning in a tame an-

ti-climax to what promised to be an edge of the seat political thriller.

With defeat staring him in the face, Yeddyurappa announced his decision to quit on the floor of the Assembly after a brief emotion-laden speech.

Though exuding confidence about winning the trust vote as the D-day loomed, Yeddyurappa failed to muster the support of 7 additional MLAs required to ensure the longevity of his government.

Yeddyurappa's three-day tenure as the chief minister of Karnataka also turned out to be one of the shortest in Indian history.

The 75-year-old BJP leader was sworn in as the chief minister of Karnataka on May 17. He resigned before facing a Supreme Court-mandated floor test today.

The BJP veteran's initiation to the league of chief ministers with tenures of a few days, however, happened over a decade ago. In 2007, Yeddyurappa had to resign as the chief minister of Karnataka after just eight days.

SKM welcomes CM's BL seat reservation announcement

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 19 MAY:

Sikkim Krantikari Morcha has welcomed the recent announcement of Chief Minister Pawan Chamling on seat reservation for Bhutia and Lepcha communities in Municipal and Panchayat elections.

SKM had been demanding the same for a long time and its workers had also gheraoed and demanded seat reservation for BL when the SDF Government had not secured seats for BL in the last Municipal election, an SKM press release informs.

If the CM is serious about the BL seat reservation then it should transform its announcements into reality instead of attacking opposition parties, the release adds.

HPV vaccination & TB awareness programme in Singtam

SUMMIT REPORT

SINGTAM, 19 MAY:

District Hospital Singtam in collaboration with Singtam Nagar Panchayat conducted a sensitization programme on HPV Vaccination and Tuberculosis with the theme "Aiming to eliminate Tuberculosis by 2022" here at the community hall of Singtam Nagar Panchayat in East Sikkim today.

Addressing the gathering, Chief Medical Officer, Singtam District Hospital, Dr T Laden, spoke on the importance of proper diet and nutrition in controlling TB.

"TB is a curable disease. Social stigma attached to the disease needs to be eradicated," he added.

Adhyakshya, East district, SS Bokhim, while highlighting various initiatives undertaken by the State Government to fight against TB, urged for collective contribution from all stakeholders in order to eliminate TB from the State by 2022.

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 19 MAY:

District Legal Services Authority [South] and Taluk Legal Services Committee [South] in co-ordination with the Sikkim State Legal Services Authority organized a legal services and awareness camp at Rateypani in South Sikkim today, a press release from the office of District Legal Services Authority [South] informs.

The programme was conducted to spread awareness about welfare legislations and schemes and strengthen the community's access to the schemes implemented by the Legal Services Authority and other departments of the Government.

South DLSA conducts legal services and awareness camp at Rateypani



The programme also aimed at identifying and connecting people to welfare schemes to ensure that people are benefitted from the welfare schemes. The programme also looked upon under-

standing legal needs of the people and addressing legal problems of the people by giving appropriate legal advice, read the release.

The programme was launched by DLSA

[South] chairperson, Jyoti Kharka.

Information booths were setup by various departments like - Legal Aid Clinics by Panel Advocates and Para-Legal Volunteers, Social Justice

Empowerment and Welfare Department, Government of Sikkim (Welfare schemes) and Health Care, Human Services & Family Welfare Department (Health camp for differently-abled per-

sons) for the attendees and participants.

Around 273 people attended the programme among which 181 benefitted from different schemes.

The attendees visited the booths and interacted with the officers and representative of the departments present to address their problems and to procure appropriate advice and guidance, informs the release.

A medical team comprising of doctors from Orthopedics, ENT [Ear, Nose and Throat], Eye and Psychiatry Departments conducted medical checkup of the attendees.

Further, documentaries on Lok Adalat, mediation and domestic violence were also shown to

the attendees.

The programme was also attended by DLSA [South] secretary, Sonam Denka Wangdi, panel advocates, Block Development Officer [Namthang], staff members from Block Administrative Center [Namthang], officers from Social Justice Empowerment and Welfare Department, Health Care, Human Services & Family Welfare Department, doctors from Namchi District Hospital and Gyalshing District Hospital, officials of Namchi Police Station, Panchayat Members of Namthang-Rateypani Ward, Para-Legal volunteers of Namthang-Rateypani area and anganwadi workers.

Goats distributed at Alley under livestock-based farming system

SUMMIT REPORT

NAMCHI, 19 MAY:

Thirty goats were distributed with insurance coverage at Alley cluster from Maniram Phalidara Gram Panchayat Unit under Namchi-Singithang constituency in South Sikkim today.

The programme is a convergence of livestock based farming system under Rainfed Area Development of Food Supplies and Agriculture Development Department with Animal Husbandry Livestock Fisheries and Veterinary Services Department 2017-18 with considerable share from State capital, a press release from District Col-



lector [South] informs. The beneficiaries were also provided

with packs of mineral vitamins, dewormer, anti-stress tonic and

handouts.

The aim of the programme is sustainable

livelihood of farmers through goat production, the release reads.

The beneficiaries were also made aware of modern management practices focusing on balanced diet, breeding, health coverage, insurance for enhanced production.

The programme was attended by Advisor to the Government of Sikkim, Power and Energy Department, Gagan Rai accompanied by members from District and Block Working Committee, Panchayats and officers from the concerned department headed by Joint-Director [South], Dr T Bajgai.

Lingi Paiyong SS conducts inter-house story telling compptt

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 19 MAY:

Lingi Paiyong Secondary School, South Sikkim, organized inter house Story Telling Competition for students of upper primary level as a part of its co-curricular activities at the school premises today, a press release informs.

Three participants from each of the four houses narrated different stories and were judged on the parameters of content, language proficiency, story delivery, story-line and time management. Zemu [Red] house was declared winner of the competition with Pritika Adhikari [Zemu] being declared the best story teller.



Ex-diplomat gets 3 yrs in jail for spying for Pak ISI

NEW DELHI, MAY 19

(PTI): Former diplomat Madhuri Gupta, who had served at the Indian High Commission in Islamabad, was today sentenced to three years in jail for passing on sensitive information to Pakistan's ISI, with a Delhi court saying her actions caused a "severe security threat".

Additional Sessions Judge Sidharth Sharma gave her the maximum sentence for the offences of spying and wrongful communication of information protected under the law, observing that an educated woman like her did not deserve any leniency.

Sixty-one-year-old Gupta, who was the Second Secretary (Press & Information) at the high commission from 2007 till her arrest on April 22, 2010 during a visit here, was held guilty yesterday under various provisions of the Official Secrets (OS) Act.

After passing the sentence, the court granted bail to Gupta to allow her to appeal against the conviction and the sentence.

She was suspected by Indian intelligence agencies of spying for Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence since 2008.

According to the prosecution, the Minis-

try of External Affairs had received information that Gupta had been maintaining unauthorised contacts with Pakistani intelligence officials and was passing on sensitive official information personally as well as through electronic means from her computer at her office and residence in Islamabad.

The prosecution had stated that she passed on the information to the ISI handlers through her e-mail account from October 2009 to April 2010.

The court said that Gupta was a modern educated woman who had

served in different embassies and at the time of the offence, she was posted in a very sensitive position in the high commission.

"Undoubtedly, from a person of her stature, it was expected that she would act in a more responsible manner than an ordinary citizen as she was at a high position of trust but her actions tarnished the image of the country and has caused severe threat to the security of the country.

"Therefore, she does not deserve any leniency in punishment," the court said.

While convicting her, the court had said that the e-mails "passed on by the accused were categorically sensitive information which could have been useful to the enemy country... and its secrecy was of utmost importance".

Gupta was convicted under Sections 3 and 5 of the Official Secrets Act which attract a maximum sentence of three years and fine or both.

She had sought leniency from the court on the ground that she was a senior citizen, a single woman and was a victim of circumstances.

SDF hits back at BJP Sikkim, questions its workings

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 19 MAY:

Sikkim Democratic Front has said that politics for Bharatiya Janata Party Sikkim Pradesh and its president, DB Chauhan, is all about posting live videos on social media and issuing misleading press releases. The ruling party has further stressed that BJP state president has failed to place political demands of Sikkimese people at the Centre and even to organise its own State working committee.

An SDF press release issued by its publicity secretary, Chudamani Mishra, has strongly criticized Mr Chauhan's statement of forming government in the State in the upcoming election. The party has said that the government is a people's organisation formed by the people for themselves.

Further criticizing the allegation of BJP state president that SDF uses middlemen in its deal-

ings with the Centre, the release adds that such statements are unbecoming of the State president of a national party.

People of Sikkim are well aware of the demands placed by the CM to Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his Sikkim visit on 18 Jan in 2016 at Chintan Bhawan, the release mentions and instead questions BJP State unit's works on demands of people of Sikkim at the Centre.

The CM placed various demands of the Sikkimese people including seat reservation for Limboo and Tamang in the State Assembly, tribal status to left out Nepali communities of Sikkim, permission to the Karmapa to visit Sikkim and IT exemption to left out old settlers of Sikkim. Among these demands, the demand for permission for Karmapa's visit to Sikkim has been fulfilled and others are being considered by the Centre, the release adds.

Borbotay farmers trained in soil management



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 19 MAY:

Mevedir organized a training program on Soil Nutrient Management and preparation of 'Amrit Jal' for the progressive farmers of Borbotay ward under Mendogaoon Gram Panchayat Unit in West Sikkim today, a press release informs.

Mevedir master trainer, Tshering Doma Bhutia welcoming the trainees outlined the objectives of the training programme. She then informed the farmers about locally made liquid manure from naturally available ingredients.

She briefed the participants about the process

and ingredients for the preparation of Amrit Jal.

Ward panchayat, San Maya Tamang who attended the programme as the guest of honor explained the importance of organic farming and how the government is working towards the development of organic farmers in the State.

She further informed the farmers about various schemes under the State Government and urged them to take advantage of the benefits.

She encouraged the farmers to attend such training programmes and learn in depth about the process of adopting organic cultivation.

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Gangtok on Sunday, 20 May

Temp: 25°C / 14°C
Forecast: A morning thundershower in a couple of spots; otherwise, intervals of clouds and sunshine.
Sunrise: 04:45 AM
Sunset: 6:19 PM

Chamling calls on young to toughen up because success does not come easy
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that the State Government will provide free coaching facilities for National Defense Academy [NDA] and other competitive examinations for the youth of the State.

The CM reiterated that 05% reservation in government jobs will be provided for 'A' grade sportspersons of the State who have played at national and international levels. He also announced to grant an annual sum of Rs 12 lakh to 'A' grade football clubs and clubs associated with sports like badminton, boxing and archery.

Brigadier Sanjeev Saini in his address gave a brief outline about the historical background of NCC cadets and its origin in the country. He informed that the NCC cadets in Sikkim organize a variety of state and national level camps. The brigadier underlined that during the NCC training the cadets are imparted with valuable leadership qualities, national integration and adventure camp and NCC youth exchange program.

It may be mentioned here that 400 cadets including 150 girls from all over the state have undergone the annual training camp.

Social worker Sunmaya dedicates felicitation to Sikkimese women

**SAGAR CHETTRI
GANGTOK, 19 MAY:**

Sikkimese social worker, Sunmaya Gurung, has been felicitated by Siliguri-based North Bengal Human Development Charitable Trust [NBHDC]. She was felicitated during the Trust's Social Workers Appreciation Programme 2017-18 while also celebrating Mother's Day on 13 May in Siliguri.

Ms Gurung hails from Development Area in Gangtok and has been helping people suffering from ailments with referral cases to hospitals outside the State. It is informed that she has also raised around 15 orphans and destitute children who are presently

working successfully in different fields. She runs a small cafe near STNM Hospital and visits the hospital often to look for people in need.

Addressing a press conference here today, Ms Gurung dedicated this felicitation and other honors received from different organisations in the past to women of Sikkim.

"Since my childhood days, I just loved to serve needy persons and this zeal has motivated me to always help them," she said.

She is not only providing financial help to the people in need but has also been helping take patients of referral cases to hospitals outside the State.



Day04 of riverfront cleanliness drive coruses through Smile Land



**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 19 MAY:**

On the fourth day of its 20-day riverfront cleanup drive at Rani Khola, Forest, Environment and Wildlife Management Department, Government of Sikkim cleaned the riverfront premises of Smile Land complex near Ranipool today, a press release informs.

A team of 100 participants consisting of Middle Camp Government Secondary School's Eco-Club members, Environment & Soil Conservation

wing of Forest department and local residents took part in the cleanliness drive coordinated by ENVIS, Sikkim.

The Forest Department, in collaboration with Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of

India, as a part of World Environment Day 2018 had kicked off the riverfront cleaning drive along Rani Khola and its adjoining streams on 15 May.

The cleanliness drive is scheduled to continue till World Environment Day, 05 June.

Rehab centres are not the only solution, proper counseling is: Dr Rasaily

**YOGEN THATAL
SINGTAM, 19 MAY:**

"SIMPLY SENDING AN individual to a rehab centre is not the only solution to helping him/her fight substance abuse," says nodal officer of District Mental Health Cell, Singtam District Hospital, Dr Satish Rasaily.

Expressing concern over the rising cases of mental health disorders caused due to alcohol and/or substance abuse in recent few years amongst the youth, Dr Rasaily informs that proper counseling and care is the first positive step towards fighting the issue.

"We, at Mental Health Cell in Singtam Hospital, have been working tirelessly to spread awareness on the importance of counseling treatment. Simply sending him/her to a rehab centre may sometimes backfire as people with substance abuse problems are more



often in denial of their problems. Sometimes just talking to someone away from your family or friends and who is trained in listening and supporting young people can be easier," he adds.

Addressing substance abuse problems and mental health issues among students, Dr Rasaily stressed that sending them to a rehab centre will not only hamper their studies but will also lower their self-esteem.

"With proper counseling and timely check-ups, young patients can recover better in a more confidential manner," Dr Rasaily adds.

It may be mentioned here, Dr Rasaily has also created a Facebook community page, "Grameen Manasik Swastha Abhiyan", through which individuals fighting mental health disorders or substance abuse can approach and interact with him for help and support.

SOA thanks CM for announcing grants for sports clubs

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 19 MAY:**

Sikkim Olympic Association [SOA] has expressed its gratitude to Chief Minister Pawan Chamling for his recent announcement of Rs 12 lakh grant to 'A' grade sports clubs and 5% reservation in government jobs for 'A' grade sportspersons of Sikkim.

An SOA press release states that these announcements of the CM will definitely encourage young generation to take

up sports as a career.

"The State has been producing talents in various sports' categories in the State, National and also International competitions. The Association feels that more youngsters will be motivated to take part in sports activities, thus keeping them away from various social evils," the release states.

SOA adds that Rs 12 lakh grant announced for various sports associations is a welcome step

to encourage the associations to hone sporting talents of Sikkim and financial incentives will definitely help in providing proper coaching, equipments and exposure to sportspersons.

"On behalf of all sporting associations in different disciplines in the State, SOA is very grateful and thankful to CM for the remarkable announcement in the field of sports," the release adds.

NIT wraps up six-week course on Buddhist Art and Shaytrin



**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 19 MAY:**

Namgyal Institute of Tibetology [NIT], Gangtok, today handed over certificates to the students who underwent six-week long intensive short term courses conducted by NIT in a function held today, a press release from NIT informs.

NIT, Gangtok, in collaboration with Sikkim University had recently wrapped up its six weeks intensive short term courses on Tibetan/Himalayan Buddhist Art and Architecture and Shaytrin [Nagarjuna's

Letter to a Friend].

The lecturers for the two courses were Professor Pranshu Samadarshi from Delhi and Dr Khenpo Chowang from Gangtok.

Governor Shrinivas Patil who is also the president of NIT attended the function along with SU vice-chancellor, registrar and staff members from the university and NIT, reads the release.

The release further informs that the students were certified based on their performance in the examination conducted after the completion of the courses.

Wuhan summit brought greater comprehension of issues between India-China leaders: envoy

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derstanding and cooperative partnership between India and China, the two great civilisations of Asia, he said.

I believe that our job at events like this one today is to expand friendship and understanding between the people of India and China, he said.

Through our efforts to remember Tagore, we are doing our little bit for enhancing understanding and trust between our people. This will stand both

our countries in good stead and will contribute in making the 21st century an Asian century, he said.

A large number of Tagore fans specially students of Peking University, which the poet visited during one of his two visits to China in 1924 and 1929, attended the meeting where some of them also sang his poetry in Chinese. A dance performance was also held.

His first visit is described, both in China as well as in India, as a major event in the literary

circles of the two countries, Bambawale said.

This visit to China left a very strong impression on Rabindranath Tagore, and he made friendships here, especially with the young Chinese poet Xu Zhimo, who was his official translator during the trip, he said.

Upon his return to India, he established the world famous Cheena Bhawan at Shantiniketan with the idea that it would be a bridge for intellectual exchanges between our two coun-

tries. He appointed Professor Tan Yunshan as the first Director of Cheena Bhawan, who in turn did yeoman service for closer understanding between India and China, he said.

Professor Dong Youchen of Centre for South Asian Studies of the Beijing Foreign Studies University made an elaborate presentation about the impact made by Tagore and his poetry on China.



OBITUARY

It is with great sadness that Shri Tika Gurung and family announces the passing away of their youngest daughter Smt. *Urmila Gurung* on 17.05.2018.

Smt. Urmila Gurung will be lovingly remembered by her father Shri. Tika Gurung, mother Smt. Shakuntala Gurung, sister Smt. Pramila Gurung, brother Shri. Pravat Gurung and husband Shri. Jigme Tshering Bhutia. She will also be fondly remembered by her two nieces Preen Taj Gurung, Veda Rana, brother-in-law Shri. Navin Rana and sister-in-law Smt. Shweta Pradhan.

Smt. Urmila Gurung born on 2nd October 1978 all of age 39 truly lived life to the fullest through simple pleasures such as spending time with her family, guiding her nieces and carrying out generous charity work whenever time permitted. She was an affectionate daughter who loved her mother and father beyond words, a doting sister who looked after the well-being of her siblings, a loyal loving companion to her spouse and a warm and genuine friend to those who knew her well. She was so smart yet so funny with a childlike innocence and a big heart. Even when times got tough, she could always make anyone laugh. She was a true fighter who fought life's battles and came out of it stronger. Her untimely death has caused irreparable loss to many particularly her family and she will always be fondly remembered as a true "Angel" in all forms.

It has therefore been decided that her last rites and funeral service will be conducted on 21st May (Monday) at her residence at PRAURMILA COTTAGE, MAJHIGOAN JORETHANG. Thereafter, a Memorial service in her name will be held on 24th May (Thursday) in the same location.

Urmila Gurung will forever be remembered by her family and her well-wishers.

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SummitTIMES

ON TOP OF THE NEWS

Disaster Mitigation: Informed Response Better Than Jerking Knees

Yes, it's that time of the year again

The pre-monsoon rains opened strong earlier last month and have already started scratching at the hill sides. The monsoon is scheduled to hit Kerala before this month is out and should officially debut in Sikkim by the World Environment Day on 05 June next month. And, if the nor'wester showers coursing through the State are any indication of what the monsoon months will bring, Sikkim would be well advised to do much more by way of preparedness than the occasional preparedness meetings.

The State, in fact the entire region, needs no reminding of how fragile its hills are. The slopes here have a long history of slips and slides and if anyone bothered to spend time with some of the village elders, they could also learn of how settlements came to be settled along safer zones and more stable locations. That traditional knowledge was honed over generations of living here, but now "development" has been added to this organic lifestyle mix. Roads, projects, constructions and expansions are disruptors too powerful for even rural pragmatism to manage, hence the need for more informed preparedness and quicker, more organized responses.

Unfortunately for the cause of disaster management awareness, the monsoon-opening landslips and road-blocks have bypassed Gangtok thus far in their severity if one were to ignore the sewage sinks and overflowing storm drains which mostly manifest after dark and are invariably cleared by the Gangtok Beautifiers before Gangtok wakes up. That, however, cannot be said for the districts, their roads and their habitations. The reason this is referred to as 'unfortunate' for disaster management awareness is because while areas beyond Gangtok are the ones which require better warning systems, more effective responses and more elaborate community-based training to minimize the destruction caused by monsoon calamities, the people who can influence decisions rarely see beyond Gangtok. Even the media has not effectively highlighted the problem of areas beyond the capital, in as much as rain-flooded disruptions are concerned. To understand how locational reactions work, take the case of two incidents. The 1997 landslides in Gangtok were unfortunate and the scale unprecedented. They rightfully led to the creation of a Civil Defence programme, formalization of new building bylaws and the no construction during monsoons rule. In the year 2004, Gyalshing and areas around Namchi were ravaged by severe landslides, mud-slips and flashfloods. And two years back, there was the Mantam hillside collapse, which, even though not monsoon-induced, was more evidence of the fragility of the slopes here and the need to save the hills. One still does not know what really caused it, or what policy course-corrections that incident has resulted in. Ditto for the flashfloods and glacial lakes-threat reported from North Sikkim over the recent years. In all these cases, the administration responded to a natural calamity, carried out rescue and relief operations, but, as mentioned, one is yet to hear of any policy decisions which could effectively mitigate such devastations in the future.

Every time a landslide occurs or a road-widening work collapses, as is commonly reported from West Sikkim, one hears complaints against unplanned constructions, irresponsible drainage and unsafe worksites. There is nothing new in these observations. Still, after all these years, the districts remain knee-jerk in their response to the annual monsoons.

All this, despite the fact that just about everybody, everywhere, is participating in disaster risk management committee meetings all over Sikkim, and yet when the first chance arrives to display their training and commitment, they are found wanting. The problem is neither with the training nor with the individuals, it is with motivation. Sikkim is speaking of disaster risk management committees not because the people demanded it or even knew of it, these are being set up only because a central directive ordered it and UNDP funds it. That said, Sikkim could genuinely use some scientific and organized response to natural calamities. Instead of just making a token presence in such committees, the members should realize that every village in the State needs to work out a coherent and rehearsed response to calamities and set up a working advance warning system. If Sikkim continues to drag its feet, the State will continue paying the price for it every year.

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Palestinian Women: a history of female resistance in Gaza and the West Bank

MARIA HOLT
theconversation.com

Outside observers tend to imagine the face of Gaza as resolutely male: the bearded Hamas "militant", or the young man hurling stones across the border fence. But Palestinian women, both in Gaza and the West Bank, have a significant presence as activists, protesting against an unjust occupation, but also as the backbone of a fragmented and demoralised society.

Women have been active in the Palestinian struggle since its early days. In the 1920s, they protested side by side with men against British control of their country. They formed charitable organisations and expressed themselves politically.

After the state of Israel was created in 1948, the majority of Palestinians were forced to flee into exile, and here too women played a key role as protectors of their families, and repositories of the "national story". It was vital that Palestinians, wherever they were in the world, did not forget what had happened and continued to insist on their right of return to their homeland. Women passed their memories of Palestine down to subsequent generations.

PARTICIPATING IN POLITICS

In the 1960s, with the emergence of a Palestinian liberation movement, dedicated to regaining the lost homeland, some women turned to more militant activities. Leila Khalid, for example, hijacked several airliners on behalf of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and became a familiar face in the Western media.

Gradually, women also started to engage in formal politics, through membership of the main Palestinian political factions. Although Palestinians tend to be socially conservative and are anxious to shield women and girls from what might be considered "dishonourable" or nontraditional behaviour, many younger women found a new kind of freedom through education and political mobilisation.

A largely non-violent intifada (or "uprising") began in 1987. Women, men and children combined efforts to resist the 20-year occupation of their land. They did so in innovative ways, for example by establishing alternative educational facilities for children after all the schools were closed, creating an alternative economy based on home produce, as well as engaging in large-scale protests.

There were also attempts at dialogue between Palestinian and Israeli women. For example, in July 2006, members of the International Women's Commission for a Just and Sustainable Palestinian-Israeli Peace (IWC) convened an emergency meeting in Athens. They urged the international community to intervene. In their words:

"Civilians, mainly women and children, are paying the price daily for this vicious cycle of retaliation and counter-retaliation. This is a time of great danger ... If no action is taken today, tomorrow will be too late."



Although no resolution came out of this or similar calls, initiatives involving women from the two sides were judged to have been among the most promising.

TELLING THE WORLD

Such activities ended in 2000, with the start of the second intifada. The resistance was no longer a shared endeavour involving all sectors of society – it was an armed confrontation. Women suffered greatly from rising levels of violence and decreasing security for civilians.

No one felt safe. Girls travelling from their homes to university were likely to experience harassment at Israeli army checkpoints and, as a result, many parents started to keep their daughters at home, and even to marry them off at the earliest possible opportunity; the age of marriage began to fall.

As the economic situation deteriorated, wom-

en had fewer opportunities for employment. Incidences of mental illness rose and women exhibited deep anxiety about the safety of their children.

Many Palestinians feel that they have no control over their own lives. Under a harsh Israeli regime, it has been very difficult to exercise agency and Palestinian political parties have seemed weak and ineffectual. The Islamist party Hamas seemed to offer a more assertive form of opposition, and many women were attracted by its grass-roots organising and evident ability to confront the Israeli occupation. Some became militants.

While it may be tempting to argue that the participation of women in violence is a sign of a society that has

lost its way, the reality is more complex. Many Palestinian women point out that their community is powerless; it has neither the political leadership nor the weapons to fight a conventional war. Instead, it relies on all its members to participate and "tell the world" what is happening to them.

By protesting at the Gaza-Israel border to mark the anniversary of al-nakbah ("the catastrophe"), Palestinians are reminding the world that they were dispossessed 70 years ago and this injustice has still not been remedied. Palestinian women, as much as men, have a vital stake in finding a solution to the conflict, that will provide safety and certainty for the next generation.

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When did the lights first come on in the universe? A galaxy close to the dawn of time gives a clue

JAMES GEACH
theconversation.com

It is springtime in the Northern hemisphere. Countless buds that have been waiting patiently on the stems and branches of trees and shrubs are now blossoming into life. The cosmic equivalent of this season is the time between a few hundred million and a billion years after the Big Bang. This is when the first stars and galaxies ignited, spewing light into the dark universe.

It is a time in the history of the universe that we are desperate to chart, because it represents part of the cosmological story that we have yet to understand. Now astronomers have detected oxygen in a galaxy further away than ever before – and it existed just 500m years after the Big Bang. The results, published in Nature, are hugely important as they provide new insights into when the first stars formed.

The period of this "cosmic dawn" is important not only because this is when the first galaxies were born, but a crucial cosmic transition also took place. In this process, atoms in the electrically neutral intergalactic medium – a wide sea of hydrogen gas surrounding galaxies – were bombarded with ultraviolet radiation escaping from the first galaxies. This stripped away electrons from atoms and made the gas charged, or "ionised".

The event, called the Epoch of Reionisation, is still mysterious. We'd like to know – or better yet, see – when this process started. Part of that quest involves finding the most distant galaxies.

When we look out into the universe we detect light that has taken some appreciable time to traverse the gulf that separates us from other stars and galaxies. The light from the screen you are

reading this on has taken about a third of a nanosecond to reach your eyes. Light from the nearest star beyond our sun takes four years to reach us. Amazingly, light from the galaxy at the centre of the new study, called MACS1149-JD1, has taken 13 billion years to be detected here on Earth. That means we see MACS1149-JD1 as it was 13 billion years in the past, around 500m years after the Big Bang.

POWERFUL GAZE

Using a telescope called the Atacama Large Millimetre/sub-millimetre Array (ALMA), the scientists detected a strong signal (an emission line) within the distant galaxy. Just as a prism disperses the light of the sun into a rainbow spectrum, we can disperse the light of distant galaxies, too. This is called spectroscopy. Emission lines are bright spikes in the spectra of galaxies that originate from different elements that can each release light of a very specific energy.

This particular emission line came from ionised oxygen gas. Its presence tells us that the galaxy was forming stars at the time, because the energy required to ionise it must have come from massive, hot, young stars.

If we measured the same type of gas here on Earth, we would detect it at a wavelength of 0.088 millimetres. But other galaxies are receding away from us due to cosmic expansion, and this causes the light they emit to increase in wavelength during the time it takes for the photons to reach us. The more distant a galaxy is, the larger the increase in wavelength.

This is called redshift, and it ultimately tells us the ratio between the size of the universe when the light was first emitted and the size of the universe today. The oxygen emission line observed in MACS1149-JD1 is ac-

tually detected at 0.88 millimetres – its wavelength has been stretched by a factor of 10. This means that at the time the light was emitted, the universe was a factor of 10 times smaller than it is today, and just four per cent of its present age.

In this way, the ability to detect emission lines in distant galaxies allows us to pinpoint at what stage in cosmic history we are seeing them. But of course, the most distant galaxies are also the faintest – you need ever more powerful telescopes if you want to peer back further.

ALMA (consisting of 66 individual telescopes working together) is an incredibly powerful telescope – it is revolutionising our view of the early universe. Not only is it providing exquisite sensitivity, but operates in part of the electromagnetic spectrum that gives access to a wide range of emission lines.

To help matters, the team also exploited a natural telescope: a massive cluster of galaxies. Light from MACS1149-JD1 has had to pass through this intervening cluster on its journey to ALMA. This is so massive that it significantly warps spacetime, meaning that the light is "bent" in a process called gravitational lensing. Gravitational lensing amplifies the brightness of MACS1149-JD1, making it a little easier to see.

INDIRECT GLIMPSE OF FIRST STARS
MACS1149-JD1 is not the most distant galaxy on record, but what this new study adds to our understanding is an insight into the history of the formation of the galaxy. This happened hundreds of millions of years before the current observation, and much further back than even the most distant galaxy known.

In fact, the presence of oxygen in the galaxy tells us that star formation

must have been going on for some time in MACS1149-JD1. That's because oxygen can only be formed within stars in a process called stellar nucleosynthesis. But what we don't know is when those stars first ignited.

By combining data from the Hubble Space Telescope, the European Southern Observatory's Very Large Telescope and the Spitzer Space Telescope, the authors made a model of the "stellar population" within MACS1149-JD1. This allowed them to estimate the mixture of stars that give rise to the emission from the galaxy observed in certain bands of the electromagnetic spectrum.

The model involves estimating the "star formation history" of the galaxy, describing the rate of production of stars in the past. The modelling suggests that, in order to produce the observed emission, stars must have started forming just 250m years after the Big Bang, when the universe was just two per cent of its present age. In other words, MACS1149-JD1 was already a fairly well established galaxy, even at this early time.

This is a huge scientific accomplishment as it is currently impossible to observe galaxies that existed 250m years after the Big Bang. However, the new James Webb Space Telescope, which is due for launch in 2020, may be able to do so.

But until then, thanks to the new study, we now have a way of indirectly studying when stars first formed in ancient galaxies like MACS1149-JD1. In effect, by observing the blossom, astronomers have estimated when the bud first opened.

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In a first, rlys to use AI to control air circulation in Manipur tunnel

NEW DELHI, MAY 19 (PTI): For the first time, the railways will use artificial intelligence to control air circulation, signages and even supervision and maintenance work in the 10.28 km-long tunnel in Imphal as part of its 110 km railway line from Jiribam to Manipur's capital city.

While the national transporter is already using this technique to detect flaws or problems in the signalling system on a real-time basis and rectifying it in order to avoid possible delays and mishaps, this is the first time that such a technology will be used in a tunnel in the country.

The system will control air circulation in the



system, along with other aspects. It will alert the passenger in case of fire and help us in quick evacuation in case of any issue. This tunnel is spe-

cially unique as it also has a safety tunnel at every 500 meters," said Yogesh Verma, deputy chief, construction, Northeast Frontier Railway.

"So, in case of an accident or any mishap, all a passenger has to do is go 500 meters into the safety tunnel and through signages find his way

out. The entire thing will be controlled by artificial intelligence, Verma said.

This tunnel is one of 47 such tunnels in the Jiribam-Imphal line and part of the railways' project to bring connectivity to the capital city.

The system will continuously monitor signals, track circuits, axle counters and their sub-systems of interlocking, power supply systems, including the voltage and current levels, relays, timers collect the data on a pre-determined interval and send them to a central location.

While it will help run trains safely through the tunnel, it will also help its management and maintenance.

As tunnels deteriorate, officials said, they become more dangerous to the public and more costly to repair. By properly maintaining these tunnels, much of this unnecessary danger and cost can be avoided.

AI will help engineers and inspectors organise and analyse data collected about specific tunnels. The results of this data can then be evaluated and used to predict future tunnel deterioration patterns and corresponding maintenance needs, officials said.

This system will also be used in the Hyderabad, Mumbai and Ahmedabad metros.

NABARD sanctions Solar street lighting system in Arunachal



ITANAGAR, MAY 19 (PTI): The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has sanctioned LED Solar Street Lighting system for Arunachal Pradesh under its Rural Infrastructure Development Fund with a total grant of Rs 87.83 lakh, an official release said here today.

The project would be implemented in the four districts of the state Tirap, Longding, Namsai and Tawang.

Chief Minister Pema Khandu launched the scheme here yesterday in presence of NABARD Chairman Harsh Kumar

Bhanwala.

Bhanwala called on the chief minister and briefed him about the 'Micro Irrigation Fund' with NABARD, which was cleared by the union cabinet recently, the release said.

The government on May 16 approved a dedicated Rs 5,000 crore fund under NABARD to bring more land area under micro-irrigation as part of its objective to boost agriculture production and farmers' income.

Bhanwala also informed Khandu about various other projects of the NABARD.

PM to visit Odisha on May 26

BHUBANESWAR, MAY 19 (PTI): Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Odisha on May 26 and address a public meeting at Cuttack, BJP state president Basant Panda said here today.

The Prime Minister's visit is being held on the occasion of the NDA government at the Centre completing four years in office, Panda said.

The NDA came to power on May 26, 2014.

Modi's visit is significant in wake of the state BJP's defeat in the recent Bijepur bypoll and certain urban polls, though the party had performed well in the last year's panchayat elections. Both the Lok Sabha polls and state Assembly election will be held next year.

A team of senior BJP leaders visited the venue of the PM's meeting, the Bali Jatra ground, at Cuttack, Panda said.

Manipur 'fake' encounters: SC voices displeasure at defence ministry

NEW DELHI, MAY 19 (PTI): The Supreme Court has expressed its displeasure that the Ministry of Defence has "not even bothered" to respond to the letters addressed to it by the CBI's Special Investigation Team (SIT) that is probing the alleged extra-judicial killings and fake encounters by the Army, Assam Rifles and police in Manipur.

A bench comprising justices Madan B Lokur and U U Lalit asked the SIT to conclude by June 30 its investigations in the cases related to the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), judicial inquiries and those on which the Gauhati High court had given its findings.

Additional Solicitor General (ASG) Maninder Singh, appearing for the CBI, told the bench that

he would take up the matter with the Ministry of Defence to ensure necessary cooperation.

"We have also seen from status report no. five (filed by the SIT) that letters have been addressed by the SIT to the Ministry of Defence in some cases as far back as in February, 2018 but the Ministry of Defence has not even bothered to respond to those letters," the bench noted in its order.

"The ASG says he will take it up with the Ministry of Defence and ensure that necessary cooperation is extended and letters will be responded with promptitude. We expect the Ministry of Defence to fully cooperate with the SIT," the court said and listed the matter for hearing on July 2.

Singh told the court that the SIT would give a

list of documents to the chief secretary and director general of police (DGP) of Manipur to ensure that all the materials were made available to the probe team or at least, an explanation on which documents were not available and why was given.

"We would require this to be done in a time-bound manner," the bench observed, while noting that in the status report filed by the SIT, there were several entries concerning non-supply of documents by the police and other agencies.

The apex court directed the in-charge of the SIT, Sharad Aggarwal, to furnish the list within a week and said it expected that the chief secretary and DGP of the north-eastern state would respond to it

"positively within three weeks".

"On the basis of the material on record i.e. the report of the CFSL (Central Forensic Sciences Laboratory) and documents and statements of witnesses, we expect the SIT to conclude the investigations by June 30, 2018 in respect of cases pertaining to Table II (judicial inquiry and high court cases) and III (NHRC) and file the final report under section 173, CrPC," the court said.

As many as 31 FIRs have been lodged by the SIT under the category of cases in Tables II and III.

During the hearing, the CFSL director assured the court that the reconstruction of the crime scene would be done expeditiously and he would ensure that the tasks pending with the

department were completed at the earliest.

The apex court had earlier directed the SIT to expedite its probe into the alleged fake encounters, which had come under the scanner of the NHRC, the Gauhati High Court and some commissions of inquiry.

The court had, on February 12, expressed its displeasure over the progress of the SIT probe in these cases and observed that something was "terribly wrong".

The court, which is hearing a PIL seeking a probe into as many as 1,528 cases of alleged extra-judicial killings in Manipur, had on July 14 last year set up the SIT and ordered registration of FIRs and a probe into the alleged extra-judicial killings in the north-eastern state.

Congress era over, says Meghalaya CM



AMPATI (MEGHALAYA), MAY 19 (PTI): Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma yesterday said the Congress era is over.

"The Congress era is over. People are rejecting the Congress everywhere and not just in Meghalaya," Sangma, also president of the National People's Party (NPP), said.

During Indira Gandhi's regime, the Congress was ruling in most of the states, but under Rahul Gandhi and Mukul Sangma, the party has been reduced to only two states, he said while campaigning for his party candidate Clement G Momin for the May 28 bypoll to Ampati seat.

Mukul Sangma was the Congress chief minister whom Conrad K Sang-

ma ousted in the assembly election held in February.

Though the NPP is a new party, it is part of ruling coalitions in in three states including Manipur and Nagaland, Conrad K Sangma said.

"We have faith in the people of Ampati constituency that this time people will vote for change," he said.

The by-election was necessitated as Mukul Sangma vacated the seat after he had won from two seats - Ampati and Songsak - in the assembly election, and retained Songsak.

Miani Dalbot Shira, daughter of Mukul Sangma, is the Congress candidate in the bypoll.

Shaheed Swabhimaan Yatra reaches Gangtok

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 19 MAY:

Shaheed Swabhimaan Yatra organised by the Swabhimaan Desh Ka organisation, taken out with an aim to create awareness among people towards martyrs, reached Gangtok on 18 May and visited Nathula, Harbhajan Mandir and Tsomgo Lake today, a press release informs.

It may be mentioned here, the 90-day yatra was kicked off at India Gate in New Delhi on Shaheed Bhagat Singh Diwas on 23 Mar by the representative of Chief of Army Staff General Bipin Rawat and Major General Ashok Narula.

It aims at not just creating awareness but also to move ahead with a purpose to compile data regarding former servicemen and martyrs at the national level and to

request the Government to improve living conditions, status and employment opportunities for the family members of martyrs. The yatra will cover all 29 States of India before finally culminating in Delhi.

Organised under the leadership of Swabhimaan Desh Ka national president, Suren Singh Bidhuri, Shaheed Swabhimaan Yatra has covered Jaipur, Kota, Udaipur, Chittorgarh, Ahmedabad, Ujjain, Bhopal, Indore, Dhule, Nashik, Mumbai, Pune, Khed, Goa, Bangalore, Coimbatore, Kanyakumari, Rameshwaram, Puducherry, Chennai, Tirupati, Balaji, Hyderabad, Nagpur, Raipur, Bhuvneshwar, Ranchi, Kolkata, Siliguri, Guwahati, Cherrapunji, Shillong and now Gangtok.

Mr Bidhuri said it is



important for the youth to be aware about the sacrifices of martyrs so that they can understand

the true value of independence. He urged the Government for a 'Shaheed Swabhimaan Card'

through which all Government benefits such as education, health, employment, free travel

facility, free housing facilities for the families and dependents of the martyred are ensured.

WB Congress condemns BJP gameplan to grab power in Ktk

KOLKATA, MAY 19 (PTI): The WBPC President Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury today slammed the BJP for its attempt to "grab power" in Karnataka "undemocratically" and expressed happiness over the "win of democracy".

Describing the political development in Karnataka during the day which saw the resignation of the newly appointed Chief

Minister B S Yeddyurappa ahead of the trust vote, Chowdhury said, "What happened after the result of Karnataka election was over was most unwanted. And what has happened now is win of democracy and people's mandate."

Welcoming the development in Karnataka in favour of the Congress-JDS combine,

Chowdhury lauded their elected leaders who had shown "absolute loyalty" to their respective parties despite provocation.

Earlier, the Youth Congress demonstrated before the Raj Bhavan here condemning the BJP "gameplan" to grab power in Karnataka and 27 demonstrators and were arrested by the police for

violating prohibitory orders in the area.

A group of slogan shouting Youth Congress workers walked in a procession waving placards and assembled before the Raj Bhavan north gate before the Karnataka assembly session began and condemned the way BJP was trying to snatch power in the southern state undemocratically.

The demonstrators alleged that the BJP was trying to prove its majority in the House through 'horsetrading'.

The placards read 'Hai Hai BJP', 'BJP murderer of democracy in Karnataka', 'Shame on BJP'. The arrested were later released on personal bonds.

The Youth Congress leaders were led by Asu-

tosh Chatterjee, who too was arrested by the police for violating prohibitory orders around the Raj Bhavan, "We had assembled before the Raj Bhavan to register our protest against the way BJP circumvented all democratic principles to come to power in Karnataka despite falling short of the requisite numbers."

Jumbo tramples woman, daughter to death

DIPHU (ASSAM), MAY 19 (PTI): A woman and her daughter were killed when a wild elephant trampled them in Karbi Anglong district of Assam today, police sources said. The pachyderm attacked the two when they were asleep in their thatched house in the village under Khatkhathi police station, the sources said. The deceased have been identified as Muni Devi (35) and Puja Kumari (3), they added.

Man sent to 10 yrs jail for raping minor girl in Mizoram

Aizawl, May 19 (PTI): A Champai district court convicted a resident of Ngur village for raping a minor girl and sentenced him to 10 years rigorous imprisonment, court officials today.

The court also slapped a fine of Rs 9,000 on the convict, Khamsavunga, the court officials said.

The officials also said that Judge R Vanlalena pronounced the judgement yesterday after announcing that Khamsavunga was found guilty of committing the crime.

Khamsavunga had raped the minor girl on December 10, 2014, while she was alone at her home.

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Nadal, Djokovic to meet for 51st time in Rome

Rome, May 19 (AFP): Novak Djokovic set up an Italian Open semi-final blockbuster against old rival Rafael Nadal after both former world number one players battled back in thrilling last-eight clashes.

The Serb fought back against Kei Nishikori to earn a 2-6, 6-1, 6-3 win while top seed Nadal continued his clay court domination with a 4-6, 6-1, 6-2 defeat of Italy's Fabio Fognini.

On a dramatic and exhausting day in the Italian capital, there were also quarter-final wins for three-time winner Maria Sharapova and defending men's champion Alexander Zverev.

Djokovic, seeded 11th after his elbow injury problems, beat Japan's top player for the 12th time in succession.

"It was a fantastic match, we went toe-to-toe all the way to last shot. He started, he was flawless from both ends," said Djokovic who will face Nadal for the 51st time, holding a narrow 26-24 advantage.

Nadal beat Djokovic in their last meeting in May in 2017 in a Madrid semi-final and the Serb will be out for revenge after winning seven in a row prior to that.

"We will see tomorrow. I've not played so many matches in the last six months," said Djokovic whose last semi-final spot was in Eastbourne on the eve of Wimbledon in 2017.

"Physically, I'm OK. I just need some rest now and then go out and give it everything I've got." Second-ranked Nadal needs to lift an eighth career title at the Foro Italico on Sunday to return to the top of the rankings after losing that position to Roger Federer last week.

Nadal dropped the opening



set to Fognini in an hour but regrouped effortlessly as he swept past the Italian in the one-sided second and third sets.

"I'm not used to playing so early," Nadal said of his midday start. "But I'm very happy to be in the semi-finals.

"This was a very important win for me today," Nadal also beat Fognini in Rome in 2013 in their first ever meeting. This was his 11th victory in 14 meetings with the 21st-ranked Italian, and sixth in a row.

Nadal is working towards Roland Garros, where he will aim for an unprecedented 11th title.

"My clay court season has been, I think, fantastic. It will be much better if I finish here with another title," added the 16-time Grand Slam winner.

Marin Cilic beat Pablo Carreno Busta 6-3, 6-3 to reach the Rome semi-finals for the first time where he will face second seed Zverev.

Defending champion Zverev battled past Belgium's David Goffin 6-4, 3-6, 6-3 in a quarter-final which finished just before 1 a.m.

Sharapova fired a French Open warning with an epic three-hour win over Roland Garros champion Jelena Ostapenko to reach the women's semi-finals.

For Sharapova, now the world number 40, it was arguably her best victory since her return from a 15-month doping ban last year.

"It was nice to close things down in that way after a long

match," three-time Rome champion Sharapova said. "I didn't have a great first set, I kept going. I like to smile about it.

She added: "I appreciate this new chapter of my career, I still have lots of passion for the sport and for this life. I realise I'm towards the end of my career so I appreciate it."

Sharapova rode a roller-coaster in her marathon win, working her way from 4-1 down in the first set only to drop it in a tiebreaker after 80 minutes.

She regained her momentum to win the second set but it was tough in the third when she let a 5-2 lead get away.

With Sharapova serving for victory, Ostapenko secured a break for 4-5 thanks to a ninth Sharapova double-fault which

yielded a break point.

The sixth seed then saved two Sharapova match points to level 5-5 before the Russian claimed victory two games later with a final break in a match marred by 21 cumulative double-faults and a dozen breaks of serve.

Sharapova will next face world number one Simona Halep who made sure of the top seeding at Roland Garros with a 6-2, 6-3 win over France's Caroline Garcia.

Fourth seed Elina Svitolina recovered from a slow start to defeat former number one Angelique Kerber of Germany 6-4, 6-4.

Defending champion Svitolina will next face Estonia's Anett Kontaveit who earned an upset over second seed Caroline Wozniacki, 6-3, 6-1.

MI eye win against DD to seal play-off berth

AMIT KUMAR DAS

NEW DELHI, MAY 19 (PTI): Back in their element at the business end of the tournament, defending champions Mumbai Indians will be firing on all cylinders against wooden spoonsers Delhi Daredevils in their bid to clinch a play-off berth in a must-win IPL encounter, here tomorrow.

The cash-rich league is still alive and kicking with only Sunrisers Hyderabad (18 from 13 games) and Chennai Super Kings (16 from 13 games) having clinched play-off spots.

Statistically, five teams save Daredevils are still contention, with two play-off spots still up for grabs. In the mid-table clutter, Mumbai Indians are among the four teams who are at 12 points and fighting for a spot in the play-off.

Mumbai Indians (NRR +0.384) will be praying for a favourable result

for Sunrisers Hyderabad in their last home match against KKR (14 points and NRR -0.091).

A KKR win will mean that only one slot will be left during the final two encounter with an eye on run-rate.

While Rajasthan Royals and Royal Challengers Bangalore will face off in one of the two matches today, Kings XI Punjab takes on Chennai Super Kings in the final round-robin match later in the evening at Pune tomorrow.

However the performance in the past few matches is sure to have boosted the confidence of Rohit Sharma and his men.

Mumbai had a top-sy-turvy campaign so far as after a series of defeats early in the tournament, they were able to string in the victories when it

mattered most.

However Daredevils can be the banana peel and Mumbai Indians will be wary after CSK slipped in their penultimate game. For DD, there is nothing but pride at stake, which makes the young team



dangerous oppositions.

The last time the two teams faced off, it was DD won by seven wickets win in a last-over thriller.

Mumbai's batsmen have been inconsistent so far with skipper Rohit Sharma scoring only 273 runs in this edition so far.

It took a strokeful fifty from Kieron Pollard to help Mumbai post a competitive score against Punjab in their last match.

Suryakumar Yadav (500 runs) has been among runs after being promoted as opener while West Indian opener Evin Lewis (334) has had his moments on and off.

Skipper Rohit's poor form is a big worry for M u m b a i .

Apart from his match-winning knock against RCB, Rohit has failed to live up to the expectations of

the fans and MI need him to contribute big time, so that Pollard and the Pandya brothers - Hardik and Krunal can provide the late charge if needed.

Jasprit Bumrah's (16 wickets) sensational three wicket haul in the last match will give him a lot of confidence apart from his consistent show in most death over situations.

Hardik (18 wickets and 233 runs) has been

solid without being spectacular while Krunal (224 runs and 11 wickets) has again been impressive.

For Delhi, it has been another forgettable season as they looked below par throughout the tournament. Despite having legendary Ricky Ponting on board as coach or handing the captaincy in the middle of the tournament to young Shreyas Iyer, they have once again brought up the rear.

However, a break of five days seemed to fresh them as they outclassed formidable Chennai by 34 runs to restore some pride.

Vijay Shankar and Harshal Patel helped Daredevils post 162 for five and then leg-spinners Amit Mishra (2/20) and young Sandeep Lamichhane (1/21) managed to restrict CSK to 128 for six and Iyer would expect a similar effort from his team tomorrow.

Match starts at 4 PM.



Sluggish KXIP need big win over CSK to make play-off

PUNE, MAY 19 (PTI): Kings XI Punjab will face the uphill task of not only pulling the rug from under the feet of formidable Chennai Super Kings but also boosting their net run rate in the last IPL round-robin match to salvage any hopes of sneaking into the play-offs.

Punjab had started the season with a string of wins before going off the boil. Currently placed at the seventh position with 12 points, Kings XI still have a slender chance of making it to the play-off.

Mumbai Indians, Rajasthan Royals and Royal Challengers Bangalore are also at 12 points with one match to go but Punjab will have the advantage of knowing exactly what they need to do to make a last-ditch effort to steal a play-off berth.

It has been a story of individual brilliance for Punjab who have failed to click as a team. Only KL Rahul (652 runs) has been scoring runs in a heap but none of the other batsmen have played to their potential on a consistent basis.

Kings XI had come agonisingly close in securing a win against Mumbai Indians in their last outing before a last-minute slip saw the defending champions seal the contest by three runs in the last over.

Chris Gayle played some superb knocks early in the tournament but he has looked inconsistent. Among others, Aaron Finch, Karun Nair, Marcus Stonis, Mayank Agarwal and Yuvraj Singh -- all have failed to score runs when it mattered.

Among bowlers, only Andrew Tye (24 wickets) has delivered along with injured rookie Afghan leggie Mujeeb Ur Rahman, which has hurt the side's chances.

If they have do the improbable, R Ashwin's side would need a better show from their bowlers and batsmen alike in their last league game.

Chennai Super Kings, on the other hand, have already qualified for the play-off but they would be eager for a top-two finish.

Handed a reality check by an out-of-reckoning Delhi Daredevils last night, Chennai will be looking to plug the gaps before they take on Punjab tomorrow.

Mahendra Singh Dho-

ni-led Chennai are sitting in second spot with 16 points and a victory would pilot CSK into the top two and a place in Qualifier 1 against Sunrisers Hyderabad in Mumbai on May 22.

However, last night's 34-run defeat against a bottom-placed Delhi Daredevils has exposed the weakness of two-time champions Chennai and they need to quickly regroup.

For Chennai, Ambati Rayadu (585 runs) has been brilliant throughout the season as he has delivered wherever he was asked to bat - as opener or at number 4.

He and experienced Australian campaigner Shane Watson (438 runs) will have to give the South-eastern outfit a solid start.

The tournament has seen some vintage innings from Dhoni (430 runs), who has reminded his critics that he has not past his prime. His role will be crucial tomorrow when CSK play their last game at their adopted home venue the Maharashtra Cricket Association Stadium.

Others like Suresh Raina, who failed with the bat last night, West Indian Dwayne Bravo and Ravindra Jadeja will also need to chip in.

The return of pacer Deepak Chahar from injury has bolstered CSK's bowling attack that will also depend on Shardul Thakur and the experienced spin duo of Harbhajan Singh and Jadeja to stop in-form Rahul and Gayle from taking the game away.

Kings XI Punjab: Ravichandran Ashwin (captain), Chris Gayle, Aaron Finch, KL Rahul, Karun Nair, Mohit Sharma, Mujeeb ur Rahman, Ravinder Srn, David Miller, Andrew Tye, Ankit Rajpoot, Axar Patel, Akshdeep Nath, Mayank Agarwal, Manoj Tiwary, Yuvraj Singh, Marcus Stoinis, Mayank Dagar.

Chennai Super Kings: Mahendra Singh Dhoni (C), Suresh Raina, Ravindra Jadeja, Faf Du Plessis, Harbhajan Singh, Dwayne Bravo, Shane Watson, Ambati Rayadu, Deepak Chahar, K M Asif, Kanish Seth, Lungi Ngidi, Dhruv Shorey, Murali Vijay, Sam Billings, Mark Wood, Kshitz Sharma, Monu Kumar, Chaitanya Bishnoi, Imran Tahir, Karn Sharma, Shardul Thakur, N Jagadeesan, David Willy.

Match starts 8 pm.

UGC directs universities to ban plastic cups, bottles on campus

NEW DELHI, MAY 19 (PTI): The University Grants Commission (UGC) has directed all varsities and higher educational institutions to ban use of plastic cups, lunch packets, straws, bottles and bags on their campuses.

The directive by the commission comes after the Union Environment Ministry issued an advisory, saying India is the global host of this year's World Environment Day celebrations, the largest UN-led celebration on environment, and the theme for this edition is 'Beat Plastic Pollution'.

"Ban take-away coffee cup, lunch wrapped in disposable plastic packaging, plastic bags, disposable food service cups, plates, containers made in polystyrene foam and plastic straws. Restrict single-use plastic water bottle and encourage use of refillable bottles instead," the UGC said in a communication to all vice-chancellors.

The commission has also asked varsities to conduct networking activities on mass awareness on disposal of plastic and cleanliness drives under the Swachh Bharat Mission in municipalities.

"This is an opportunity for collective efforts to reduce the use of plastic and the HRD Ministry has desired that the students be encouraged to refuse, reduce, and re-use plastic product in their daily uses," the letter said.

In the run-up to the World Environment Day celebrations on June 5, the Environment Ministry has also asked schools to stop the use of plastics in their premises.



MUMBAI, MAY 19 (PTI): Radio is a medium of great impact, veteran journalist Sir Mark Tully said, and cautioned the media against the menace of fake news.

At an awards ceremony held here last night, Tully spoke about his passion for radio and its importance, especially that of public service radio.

"As a medium, radio is convenient, has greater impact and makes the journalist and the listener work harder," Tully said.

Radio is also intimate as the listener believes that he is being addressed directly, the former BBC India correspondent said.

On the menace of fake news, Tully said it must be rooted out by the news organisations.

"In today's age, it is absolutely essential to root out and

expose fake news," Tully said, after accepting the Lifetime Achievement Award at the event organised by the Mumbai Press Club here last night.

Tully said he was a fourth generation Britisher in India, and added that his great grandfather was an opium trader in Uttar Pradesh.

At a panel discussion on 'Is there a business in news media?', which preceded the award ceremony, panelists agreed that there is a rise in demand for news.

Anant Goenka, executive director of The Indian Express Pvt Ltd, said news remains a good business, but would probably not be a "great business" in terms of profitability.

"We have proved time and again that it is possible to be

financially independent and do good journalism," Goenka said, participating in the panel discussion.

Other panelists included Vijay Darda, chairman of Lokmat Media, Raghav Bahl, founder and chairman of Quintillion Media and Samir Patil, CEO of Scroll Media.

The RedInk Award for Lifetime Achievement in Journalism was bestowed upon Tully in recognition of his long and outstanding contribution to Indian journalism.

Tully, who has spent almost five decades with BBC, has come to personify the organisation in the subcontinent.

Justice Chandramauli Kumar Prasad, chairman of Press Council of India, presented the awards.

8 killed in blasts at cricket match in Afghanistan

KABUL, MAY 19 (AP): An Afghan official says at least eight people have been killed after multiple explosions hit a cricket match in eastern Nangar-har province.

Attahullah Khogyani, spokesman for the provincial governor in Nangar-har, says around 45 others have been wounded at the sports stadium late last night in the provincial capital of Jalalabad.

The attack happened as players and hundreds of spectators gathered for a nighttime tournament during the holy month of Ramadan.

Khogyani says an investigation is underway.

No one has claimed responsibility for the attack but both Taliban insurgents and the Islamic State group are active in eastern Afghanistan, especially in Nangarhar province.

North Korea military officer defects to S. Korea: Yonhap

SEOUL, MAY 19 (AFP): A North Korean military officer, accompanied by a civilian, defected to the South across the Yellow Sea today, a South Korean news report said, citing a government source.

"A small boat was spotted in waters off the north of Baengnyeong Island" near the inter-Korean border, the source told Yonhap news agency, adding that the officer, who holds the rank of major, and a civilian were aboard the vessel.

"They expressed willingness to defect," he said.

A Korea Coast Guard official said relevant authorities were investigating the case, declining to give details.

The defection was the 14th involving a North Korean soldier since 2000.

The last defection by a North Korean military officer took place in 2008, YTN TV said.

It is the first defection by any North Korean since a historic summit between the two Koreas which saw their leaders agree to pursue the denuclearization of the peninsula and a permanent peace.

In November last year, a North Korean soldier drove to the heavily-guarded border at speed and ran across under a hail of bullets from his own side.

He was hit multiple times in the dramatic defection at Panmunjom truce village.

In 2012 a North Korean soldier walked unchecked through rows of electrified fencing and surveillance cameras, prompting Seoul to sack three field commanders for a security lapse.

More than 30,000 North Korean civilians have fled their homeland but it is very rare for them to cross the closely guarded border,

No decision about H4 visas is final until rule-making process is completed: USCIS

LALIT K JHA WASHINGTON, MAY 19 (PTI): No decision about H-4 visas is final until the rulemaking process is completed, a senior US official has said, days after over 100 lawmakers urged the Trump administration to continue granting work authorisation to certain dependent spouses of non-immigrant workers holding H-1B visas, the most sought-after among Indian IT professionals.

The Trump administration is planning to revoke a rule that makes spouses of thousands of immigrant workers

eligible to work while in the US, a move that could have a devastating impact on tens of thousands of Indians.

H-4 is issued to the spouse of H-1B visa holders, a significantly large number of whom are high-skilled professionals from India. They had obtained work permits under a special order issued by the previous Obama administration.

The move to end the Obama-era rule could have an impact on more than 70,000 H-4 visas holders, who have work permits.

"No decision about H-4 vi-

sas is final until the rulemaking process is completed," Philip Smith, a US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) spokesperson told PTI.

This comes days after more than 130 influential lawmakers wrote a letter to the US Homeland Security Secretary not to rescind the Obama administration's decision to provide work authorisation to certain categories of H-4 visas, which are mainly spouses of H-1B visas.

All indications so far, including the Spring Agenda, reveal that the Trump admin-

istration is planning to end the Obama-era rule allowing spouses of H1-B visa holders to work legally in the US.

Smith said the agency is considering a number of policy and regulatory changes to carry out the President's Buy American, Hire American Executive Order, including a thorough review of employment-based visa programmes.

The USCIS is focused on ensuring the integrity of the immigration system and protecting the interests of the US workers, and is committed to reforming employment-based immigra-

tion programmes so they benefit the American people to the greatest extent possible, he said.

"USCIS continues reviewing the employment-based visa programmes which includes a new economic analysis. USCIS anticipates any proposed rule would be published in June 2018," Smith told PTI.

He was responding to questions on the letter to the Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen signed by more than 130 lawmakers in this regard.

"The opportunity for H-4 visa holders to work has made

our economy stronger, while providing relief and economic support to thousands of spouses, mostly women, who have resided in the United States for years," the letter said.

"Many are on the path to permanent residency and would already be permanent residents if not for the decades-long employment backlogs. Rescinding the rule will hurt the competitiveness of US employers and the US economy, as well as H-4 accompanying spouses and their families. We strongly urge you to reconsider this action," the lawmakers wrote.

More than 100 killed in Cuba airliner crash

HAVANA, MAY 19 (AFP): A Cuban state airways plane with 110 passengers and crew on board crashed shortly after taking off from Havana, killing all but three people on board in a mass of twisted and smoldering fuselage.

Cuban state media reported that three women had been pulled alive from the mangled wreckage and were in critical condition in hospital.

They were the only known survivors from the nearly 40-year-old Boeing 737, operated by Cubana de Aviacion. It crashed into a field close to a wooded area near Jose Marti airport, sending a thick column of acrid smoke into the air.

The 110 people aboard included six Mexican crew, said the Mexico-based company that leased the plane, Global Air, also known as Aerolineas Damojh.

Two victims were Argentine, the country's foreign ministry said. Most of the others were Cuban, according to state media.

The plane -- carrying 104 passengers -- was almost completely destroyed in the crash and subsequent fire. Firefighters raced to the scene along with a fleet of ambulances to put out the blaze, as emergency per-



sonnel combed through the wreckage.

What appeared to be one of the wings of the plane was wedged among scorched tree trunks, but the main fuselage was almost entirely destroyed.

Cuba's President Miguel Diaz-Canel, who visited the scene, said an investigation has been opened into the disaster, and that its findings would be made public as soon as possible.

A press conference was scheduled for 1900 GMT on Saturday.

The 58-year-old president, who succeeded Raul Castro as the communist island's leader only last month, appeared aghast as he surveyed the recovery efforts, wearing a short-

sleeved green shirt and surrounded by officials.

He said an investigation into the cause of the accident was underway.

Cuba declared two days of national mourning.

Raul Castro sent condolences to families of the victims of the "catastrophic accident," a statement read, as Russian President Vladimir Putin and a string of Latin American leaders also expressed sympathy.

Airport sources said the plane took off at 12:08 pm (1608 GMT) heading for the eastern city of Holguin, 670 kilometers (415 miles) away.

From the supermarket where he works near the airport, Jose Luis, 49, said he could see the

plane taking off before it banked and plunged to the ground.

"I saw it taking off. All of a sudden, it made a turn, and went down. We were all amazed," he said.

Yasniel Diaz, a 21-year-old musician, said the pilot appeared to attempt an emergency landing, but crashed instead.

"The explosion shook everything," he said.

"I started running, I was so afraid."

Images from Cuban television showed rescue workers at the scene removing what appeared to be a survivor on a stretcher as rain began to fall.

Global Air said the plane was flying with a crew of six Mexicans -- the

pilot, co-pilot, three flight attendants and a maintenance technician.

In Mexico City, anguished relatives and colleagues of the crew gathered outside the company's offices demanding information -- some of them hugging and crying.

"I was friends with the captain, with the co-pilot, with the head flight attendant," said a former Global Air employee, 44-year-old Ana Marlene Covarrubias.

"When I heard the news on the phone, I thought it was one of those jokes people play," she told AFP.

Mexico said it had sent two civil aviation specialists to help in the investigation.

Teen laid out Texas attack plans in journals, officials say

SANTA FE, MAY 19 (AP): The Texas student charged in the shooting at Santa Fe High School described planning the attack in private journals, including a plan to kill himself, posted an image on Facebook of a "Born to Kill" shirt and used his father's shotgun and pistol in the rampage that left 10 dead and 10 wounded, authorities said.

A motive wasn't immediately clear, but Gov. Greg Abbott said Dimitrios Pagourtzis, 17, wrote about planning the attack in journals on his computer and in his cellphone that police obtained. That was inconsistent with the portrait painted by his friends a reserved young man, an athlete who had discussed wanting to own guns but didn't talk of killing people.

It may have been what Pagourtzis hoped would happen, as according to an affidavit filed Friday when he was charged with capital murder, he told investigators that he didn't shoot students he liked "so he could have his story told."

"Not only did he want to commit the shooting but he wanted to commit suicide after the shooting," Abbott said, adding that Pagourtzis told authorities he "didn't have the courage" to take his own life.

Pagourtzis was held without bond in the Galveston County jail on the capital murder charges, said the county sheriff, Henry Trocheset. Abbott said the two guns used in the attack were owned legally by his father. It was not clear whether the father knew his son had taken them.

The governor also said explosive devices including a Molotov cocktail had been found in the suspected shooter's home and a vehicle as well as around the school and nearby.

Abbott said at a news conference that "unlike Parkland, unlike Sutherland Springs, there were not those types of warning signs." He was referring to the February 14 school shooting in Florida and one in November inside a church in a town near San Antonio.

Abbott said the early investigation showed no prior criminal history for Pagourtzis no arrests and no confrontations with law enforcement.

That same Facebook profile that included pictures of the "Born to Kill" shirt which one classmate told The New York Times that Pagourtzis was wearing Friday described Pagourtzis as planning to enter the U.S. Marine Corps next year. But the Marine Corps told The Associated Press it has reviewed its

records and found no one by that name as either a recruit or a person in their delayed entry pool.

A woman who answered the phone at a number associated with the Pagourtzis family declined to speak with the AP.

"Please don't call us. Give us our time right now, thank you," she said.

Classmates described Pagourtzis as quiet, an avid video game player who routinely wore a black trench coat and black boots to class. He had played football on the school's junior varsity squad and danced as part of a church group. Those who know him expressed shock he might be involved in the killings.

Brandon Auzston, 17, a junior at Santa Fe High School, said he was sitting in his history class watching a movie when he heard the fire alarm. At that moment, he thought it was just a fire drill, so he and his girlfriend, Daisy Sullivan, walked outside the building with other students. But Auzston said he thought it was odd the school was having another fire drill after having had one about two weeks ago.

"We go outside like normal. We're told to get in the grass," he said.

Auzston said once he was outside, he heard two bangs but thought it was either a door slamming or the lid of a dumpster slamming down.

"Then I see Mr. Vaughn run hysterically and screaming, 'Just run.' At that point you have 500 students just running off to get as far off as possible." Daniel Vaughn is a history teacher at the high school.

Tristen Patterson, a 16-year-old junior at Santa Fe, considered Pagourtzis a friend. He said Pagourtzis was into video games that simulated war, and that he sometimes talked about guns firearms that he liked or wanted to get. "But he never talked about killing people or anything like that," Patterson said.

He said Pagourtzis didn't show signs of being bullied but also rarely talked about himself. In one of their classes, Pagourtzis would sometimes enter the room "acting a little bit down or sad. A little bit sluggish," Patterson said.

"But he never talked about why," he said.

"You would never think he would do anything like this." Michael Farina, 17, said he grew up with Pagourtzis. He said Pagourtzis knew a lot about guns and remembered him asking which one he should get when he was older.

China lands strategic bombers in SCS for 1st time; US sees red

KJM VARMA BEIJING, MAY 19 (PTI): China has for the first time landed strategic bombers on an island in the disputed South China Sea, drawing sharp reaction from the US which said that the move will "raise tensions and destabilise the region".

China's air force said that its fighter jets, including an H-6K bomber, had recently conducted take-off and landing training on an island reef in the resource-rich South China Sea (SCS).

The training had elevated the air force's abilities of "reaching its full territory, assaulting in full time and space, and striking in full scope", the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post quoted the People's Liberation Air Force

(PLAF) as saying.

Wang Minliang, a military expert, was quoted as saying that the bombers' take-off and landing training was "beneficial to enhance the real combat ability against all kinds of security threats in the sea".

People's Daily, the Chinese Communist Party's official newspaper, yesterday posted a video on its Twitter account featuring a series of the H-6K's training programmes, including take-off, landing and flying.

The Chinese move invoked sharp reaction from the US which said that it will "raise tensions and destabilise the region".

A spokesman at the Pentagon, Lieutenant Colonel Christopher

Logan, called the exercise an act of "China's continued militarisation of disputed features in the South China Sea", the Post report said.

Bonnie Glaser, a China security expert at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, said the location of the H-6K landing was believed to be Woody Island Yongxing island in Chinese on which China's Sansha city government is located.

China had established Sansha City, a prefecture-level city of Hainan Province, in 2012 to administer the South China Sea islands identified by China as Xisha, Zhongsha and Nansha island groups and their surrounding waters.

"I believe this is the first time a bomber has landed in the South

China Sea. No doubt the H-6K will soon land on an island in Spratly (Islands) since hangers there are built to accommodate bombers," the Post quoted Glaser as saying.

In early May, the US said that it was prepared to take measures against militarisation of the South China Sea, after Beijing reportedly installed new missiles on outposts in the Spratly Islands known in China as the Nansha Islands that are also claimed by Vietnam and the Philippines.

China claims almost all of the South China Sea but Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan have counter claims.

The US is periodically deploying its naval ships and fighter planes to assert freedom of navigation.

Malaysia's Najib summoned to anti-corruption agency: report

KUALA LUMPUR, MAY 19 (AFP): Scandal-tainted former Malaysian leader Najib Razak has been summoned to appear before the country's anti-corruption authorities next week as part of an anti-graft investigations, state media has reported.

Najib, 64, unexpectedly lost a May 9 election to a political coalition that had focused on allegations that he oversaw the looting of billions of dollars from sovereign wealth fund 1MDB in a vast conspiracy of fraud and money-laundering stretching around the world.

Najib was already barred from leaving Malaysia in the wake of the election, and police seized large amounts of cash, jewels and luxury items from his home



and other sites last week.

State-run Bernama news agency said Najib had been ordered to appear before the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) next Tuesday.

"So far, he is asked to turn up next Tuesday to enable us to record his statement relating to SRC International," Bernama quoted an MACC source as saying in the report issued late Friday.

SRC International was a subsidiary of 1MDB before being placed directly under the finance ministry in 2012. Najib was both prime minister and finance minister at the time.

Hundreds of millions of dollars linked to SRC are alleged to have gone

missing, in just one component of the wide-ranging 1MDB affair.

As reports proliferated in recent years that billions were looted from 1MDB by Najib, his family and cronies, his government shut down domestic inquiries into the scandal, arrested critics calling for a full investigations and muzzled news organisations reporting on the affair.

But 92-year-old former premier Mahathir Mohamad, expressing disgust over the scandal, came out of retirement to lead a diverse alliance of parties to a stunning electoral victory on May 9.

Mahathir has vowed to fully investigate the 1MDB scandal.

Navy's all-women crew to reach Goa after sailing around globe

PANAJI, MAY 19 (PTI): Over eight months after it set sail from Goa, the all-women crew of the Indian Navy on board the naval vessel INSV Tarini, will return to the state on Monday after the historic circumnavigation of the globe.

Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will welcome the all-women crew when it arrives near Panaji, from where they had embarked on the journey on September 10 last year.

"The Defence Minister and Navy Chief Admiral Sunil Lanba will be present for the flag-in ceremony of the ship near Panaji on Monday," a Navy spokesperson said.

The expedition named 'Navika Sagar Parikrama' is led by Lieutenant Commander Vartika Joshi and it is the first-ever Indian circumnavigation of the globe by an all-women crew, the spokesperson added.

The crew also included Lt-Commanders Pratibha Jamwal and Swati P, and Lieutenants Aishwarya Boddapati, S Vijaya Devi and Payal Gupta.

The six women officers trained under Captain Dilip Donde, the first Indian to solo-circumnavigate the globe in 2009-2010, the Navy official said.

The expedition was sailed in six legs, with stopovers at



the Fremantle (Australia), Lyttleton (New Zealand), Port Stanley (Falkland Islands), Cape Town (South Africa) and Mauritius.

"It covered 21,600 nautical miles in the Indian-built sailing vessel INSV Tarini

that visited five countries and crossed the Equator twice, sailed across four continents and three oceans, and passed south of the three Great Capes - Leeuwin, Horn and Good Hope," the spokesperson said.



Bohemian Rhapsody trailer criticized for ignoring Freddie Mercury's sexuality

This year's release of *Bohemian Rhapsody* describes the end of a tumultuous production, but the drama around the Freddie Mercury/Queen biopic is not yet over. Television producer and scriptwriter Bryan Fuller (Hannibal, American Gods) took to Twitter after this week's release of the first *Bohemian Rhapsody* trailer, calling out what he saw as an overt erasure of Mercury's queer identity, demonstrating scenes of the singer flirting with women but making no mention of his same-sex relationships.

"Anyone else mildly annoyed that the *Bohemian Rhapsody* trailer features gay/bi superstar Freddie Mercury flirting with and twirling with a woman but no indication of his love of men?" he wrote.

Fuller argues that the trailer favours Mercury's relationship with women as opposed to his ones with men while also highlighting the absence of the singer's AIDS diagnosis from the synopsis. Instead, it's simply referred to as "a life-threatening illness."

Fuller is an openly gay



professional with numerous critically acclaimed television credits throughout his career, and his work has often emphasized sexual themes and imagery. Starz Network's 2017 series *American Gods* featured an intricate same-sex encounter between an Omani businessman and his Ifrit cab-driver, leading to one of the year's most soulful, memorable, and explicitly erotic television moments.

While Fuller's mentions on Twitter erupted with both support and derision, he articulated that his criticisms were fixated on 20th Century Fox's marketing, and on the general awareness of Mercury's sexual orientation among Americans. Somewhat ironically, Queen's

music has become a formative part of American sports leitmotifs, with "We Will Rock You" a favorite standard among stadium crowds.

Bohemian Rhapsody's production has been fraught from the start, including the eventual addition of a new director, with Dexter Fletcher stepping in to complete production and post-production after the termination of disgraced filmmaker Bryan Singer from the project late last year. Fletcher may or may not receive full director's credit when the film releases on November 2.

Fuller's criticisms seem especially poignant in light of this directorial switch; replacing an openly bisexual director - though, it should be

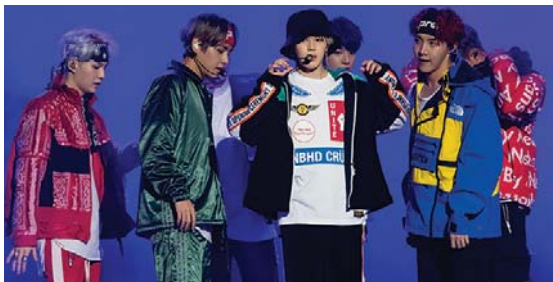
noted, one accused of raping a minor - with a straight director may give some Queen fans immediate pause. Choosing to describe the singer's terminal battle with AIDS as a "life-threatening illness" in the YouTube description, which is likely pulled from Fox's official synopsis, does little to rally comprehension of the historically devastating and discriminatory syndrome. While Rami Malek - a straight actor - plays Mercury in the film, all accounts indicate that same-sex relationships will be featured in the script, with Aaron McCusker cast to play Mercury's long-term partner Jim Hutton.

Even if the film shapes up as a successful draw at the box office, the audience for the *Bohemian Rhapsody* trailer on YouTube will arguably exceed that of the finished film. Fuller made it clear that 20th Century Fox had an opportunity to circulate important details and educate audiences about a creative individual who was both an inspirational rock star and queer icon, but chose, in the end, to #HetWash their marketing.



Priyanka Chopra wearing a stunning Vivienne Westwood suit and fascinator was spotted entering St. George's Chapel at Windsor Castle ahead of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle's wedding.

BTS'S "FAKE LOVE" MV GAINS AMAZING NUMBER OF VIEWS IN FIRST 24 HOURS



BTS's latest MV has achieved an astounding number of views in the first 24 hours!

BTS released the music video for "Fake Love," the title track of their third studio album "Love Yourself: Her" on May 18. As of May 19, only 24 hours after its release, the music video has reached just under 41 million views at a count of around 40,961,289 on YouTube! However, an official count from YouTube will be needed to know the exact record.

This means that BTS has set a new record for the high-views on a K-pop group MV within the first 24 hours,

with their previous record being 20,975,068 views for their last comeback "DNA."

Not only this, but the achievement makes BTS's "Fake Love" MV one of the most-viewed music videos in 24 hours of all time. PSY's "Gentleman" music video holds second place as it drew in 38.4 million views in the first day.

The current record for the most views in the first 24 hours since a music video's release is held by Taylor Swift's "Look What You Made Me Do," which amassed 43.2 million views in one day. YouTube's official count will be needed to determine whether a new record has been set by BTS, but surpassing 40 million views in under 24 hours is an amazing feat in itself.

Deadpool 2 registers huge opening in India



Deadpool 2 has had a massive opening of Rs 11.25 Crores in India. It is this year's 4th biggest opening day across Hollywood & Bollywood films. It's also the 03rd biggest opening of all time for a Hollywood film. Despite the Indian Premier League being at its peak, the film's business seems to be untouched. The film should witness a good jump over the weekend as the word of mouth is excellent.

Deadpool 2 is the sequel to 2016's hit film *Deadpool* with Ryan Reynolds in the lead. *Deadpool*

is back, and this time he is not working alone. He has an entire team of mutants to take on Cable, a time-travelling powerful mutant. With Bollywood's hit-maker Ranveer Singh dubbing for the lead character in the Hindi version of the film, the makers were sure about connecting with the Indian audience and that is exactly what has happened. The film has received a lot of love in just one day at the box-office in India and with the weekend in hand, the collections are expected to jump a lot higher.

to connect with others at this time, Virgo. It would behoove you to reconnect with friends or family members you may have lost touch with. Their energy can bring an entirely different perspective to your life, which could surprise you with its richness. The aspects are also good for meeting new people. Don't hesitate to get out there and mix and mingle!

LIBRA: You will find that disciplined actions are the best way to go about your day today, Libra. Stay focused on your path. You can accomplish many tasks at the same time if you play your cards right. Try not to get bogged down with details. People might cause you to worry too much. Don't let their energy

get in the way of your progress. **SCORPIO:** Decisions will be even more difficult to make than usual today, Scorpio. On the one hand, you may feel a need to stabilize, while on the other hand find that your energy is raging in a million different directions as you want to seek new experiences and social interactions with others. Try to adopt a plan that combines both of these energies. Nervous energy will keep you moving.

SAGITTARIUS: There's a solid grounding to the day that might have you feeling less than energetic about getting the ball rolling, Sagittarius. Don't be surprised if there's a sense of restriction and duty weighing you down. Times of rest and reflection

are very important in the natural cycle. Don't think that you always need to be on the go in order to make progress. Put your warring nature aside today and rest.

CAPRICORN: Things will go more and more in your favor over the next four weeks, Capricorn, although today you might find that they're slow to get moving. It could be that there is a bit of stress on your body and that you aren't feeling very motivated to get up and go. Don't worry about it. This feeling will soon pass and you'll feel like your old self in no time.

AQUARIUS: Discipline and a sense of duty have been major themes for you lately, Aquarius. It might seem like someone has put

the brakes on a current plan of yours. Try not to see this as negative. In reality, this is an important time for you to slow down and plan. Be aware of the passage of time and consider using this period to organize your scattered energy. This is a good time to focus and streamline your life.

PISCES: Your ego and physical vitality should experience a boost today, Pisces. Try to hone in on the solid, grounding energy that's encouraging you to come to terms with your emotions. Be aware of the fact that your often gloomy attitude may be starting to weigh heavily on the ones you love. Be careful that you aren't hurting someone just because you know that they'll forgive you.

ARIES: It might be hard to find the exact direction you're looking for today, Aries. It could be that there's a strong force urging you to slow down and be more practical with your energy. This may not be the advice you want to hear, but it probably is the advice you need to follow. Remember that the world doesn't revolve around you, regardless of how much you might like to think it does.

TAURUS: Just when you're feeling good and solid in your plan, Taurus, something or someone may step in to rain on your parade. You could get the feeling today that you're taking one step forward and two steps back. Perhaps there's a feeling of doubt creeping into the pic-

ture. Try not to let these nagging, restrictive energies hold you back. Be confident about your abilities.

GEMINI: Restriction might weigh heavily on you today, Gemini. Perhaps you're being reminded that there are some important details that you need to take care of. Perhaps you need to adopt a more disciplined approach in your life. Is it time for some restructuring? Don't be afraid of change, and don't let feelings of responsibility hold you down. This is an important time in which you can hit it big.

CANCER: Try not to worry too much today, Cancer. Take care of details and work to get things accomplished. Check things off your list and you'll feel much

better about yourself and the direction you're headed. Keep your eyes open and try not to have tunnel vision on every issue. Give people the benefit of the doubt instead of the third degree. Concentrate on what you need to do.

LEO: Aspects of your life that you've neglected lately might haunt you on a day like today, Leo. Make sure you're keeping up with all your responsibilities. Things may come to a dramatic climax at this time, and you could find yourself at an important crossroads. Nervous energy could cause you to run around frantically in search of the right path. Don't let indecision keep you from getting where you need to go.

VIRGO: You might find it easier