

# SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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## 5 specials promoted to Secretary rank

Summit Report  
Gangtok, 25 Apr:  
On the recommendation of the Sikkim Public Service Commission, the State government has promoted five Sikkim State Civil Service officers today to the post of Secretaries in the Pay Band-5 of Rs 37400-67000 and Grade Pay of Rs 9500.

Deepa Rai, presently posted as Special Secretary, has been promoted to the post of Secretary of State Election Commission on deputation in place of the incumbent there Tshering Namgyal Bhutia who has been repatriated and posted as Secretary at Excise Department.

Similarly, Special Secretary, Sherab Shenga, has been promoted to Secretary at Information & Public Relations Department.

Special Secretary, Shiv Kumar Pradhan, has been promoted as the new Secretary of Commerce and Industries Department while Special Secretary, CP Dhakal is the new Secretary at Tourism and Civil Aviation Department.

Lastly, Special Secretary, Pratap Pradhan has been promoted to the post of Secretary at Home Department.

## Asaram found guilty of raping teenager in 2013, awarded life term

JODHPUR, APR 25 (PTI): A Jodhpur court today awarded life sentence to self-styled godman Asaram after holding him guilty of raping a teenage girl in his ashram five years ago, the second case of a powerful spiritual leader being convicted of a sexual offence in less than a year after Dera Sacha Sauda head Gurmeet Ram Rahim last August.

Special judge Madhusudan Sharma's verdict, which comes as the debate over sexual violence, particularly the rape of minors, intensifies across the country, was read out in the Jodhpur Central Jail where 77-year-old Asaram has been kept for over four years. "The court has awarded life imprisonment to Asaram while the two other convicts have been each sentenced to 20 years in jail," a senior police official said.

Arguments for the quantum of sentencing were earlier held inside the heavily fortified jail premises, where the trial court delivered its verdict in accordance with the directions of the Rajasthan High Court.

# Two floors of Kisan Bazaar to open from Sunday for organic farmers

## SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 25 APR:

Farmers from different parts of Sikkim can now sell their organic produce here at the Kisan Bazaar in Gangtok from the coming Sunday. While the four-storied Bazaar is still under construction, two floors of the building have been exclusively allocated to local farmers of Sikkim for direct sale of their organic produce.

The two floors can accommodate 200 local farmers and has one space for SIMFED. Various facilities like canteen, cold storage, etc, will be provided to the farmers. The Kisan Bazaar will be inaugurated by Minister for Agriculture, Horticulture & Cash Crops Development Department, Somnath Poudyal.

Addressing a press conference here this afternoon, Horticulture & Cash Crop Development Department Director, DK Bhandari, informed



that spaces at the two floors of Kisan Bazaar will now be available for local farmers of Sikkim to sell their products

throughout the week starting this Sunday.

Farmers can either forward their produce to SIM-

FED or sell them directly to customers at Kisan Bazaar, he said further adding that no license will be required for

farmers to sell vegetables in this space. However, they will need to bring a proof of identification or recommendation from the concerned Panchayat only to ensure that other people do not take the space which is meant exclusively for farmers.

He informed that Kisan Bazaar will have 85 other stalls for local farmers along with provision of two cold storage facilities. In order to discourage subletting of licenses, the department will cancel the allotment if anyone is found doing so, he added.

"We are encouraging farmers throughout the State to come and sell their produce directly to customers," he said.

Mr Bhandari informed that such Kisan Bazaars will be coming up in other districts as well along with number of organic stalls throughout the State for farmers to sell their vegetables.

SIMFED Managing Director, Pawan Awasthy, stated that SIMFED has been giving top priority to growers and even providing better prices to them. He added that SIMFED vehicles have been picking up vegetables from various parts of the State for the convenience of farmers and to further motivate them in the organic mission.

Mr Awasthy also refuted various allegations of SIMFED selling non-organic vegetables and selling vegetables at higher rates after procuring them at low prices from growers. These are totally false, SIMFED is a government organisation which has all official records of its procurements and some vested interests are trying to defame the organisation, he stated.

SIMFED is willing to pay higher rates to the farmers to take the organic movement further, the loss will be borne

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## WORLD BANK MISSION REVIEWS IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL HYDROLOGY PROJECT

# Minister Poudyal bats for scientific hydropower management in Sikkim

GANGTOK, 25 APR [IPR]: The first phase of the 2nd World Bank Mission was conducted here in the capital today. The three-day mission-cum-conference that aims to review the implementation of the National Hydrology Project [NHP] was inaugurated by Minister for Water Resources & River Development Department, Somnath Poudyal.

The Mission is being attended by over 60 delegates from across the country including Team Leader, World Bank, Anju Gaur, Senior Joint Commissioners, Ministry of Water Resources & Ganga Rejuvenation, Neeraj Manglik and Rakesh Kashyap, and senior officials from 12 other States and central agencies from across the country.

The Second Phase of the Mission will be held at Munnar in Kerala in May for other States and Agencies who could not attend the conference in Gangtok.

Mr Poudyal, in his inaugural address, stressed on the need for proper management of water due to imminent inadequacy of drinking water and water for farming resulting in scarcity of food due to global warming and related challenges.

Speaking about the situation in Sikkim, he shared that Sikkim experiences extreme water shortages and drought prone conditions for about four months during the winters which he said is paradoxical



since Sikkim primarily gets good amount of rainfall during the monsoons and the percolated and surface runoff water runs its course for about six months.

He expressed hope that the NHP will play a pivotal role in the effective management of water resources, especially during the lean period.

He further shared that Sikkim has harnessed a lot of its hydro power potential over the years and the time has now come to undertake its management along scientific lines for equitable use as well as sustainability.

"Now, with the NHP, the State will be establishing data measuring stations to a certain extent, five automatic weather stations, and ten manual rain gauge stations and few other gauge stations, and many more to come in future," the Minister stated.

He also shared with

the delegates some of the green initiatives of the State of Sikkim including the Organic Mission. He attributed the development to the consistent leadership and political will to propel the State to new heights.

In conclusion, Mr Poudyal stated that the NHP will have collection and analyzing water related data as one of the major outcomes. This will ultimately help in reducing the effects of global warming and climate change for the people of this country as also its flora and fauna and the environment as a whole, he added.

He congratulated the Ministry of Water Resources, Government of India for having successfully engaged the World Bank in availing the financial support for the Project and also thanked the World Bank for their support.

After the inaugural session, the delegates

were engaged in a technical session and presentation by each State/Agency and review by the World Bank and the Union Ministry. The Mission will conclude on 27 Apr.

It may be mentioned here, the Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, Government of India is implementing the NHP [on a pan India level] at an estimated cost of USD 350 million approx. The Government of India has received a loan vide No 8725-IN, from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development [IBRD] in various currencies equivalent to US\$ 175 million towards the cost of NHP.

The project objectives are to improve the extent, quality and accessibility of water resources information, and to strengthen the capacity of water resources man-

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# Sikkim bags six national awards under Panchayati Raj

NEW DELHI, 25 APR [IPR]: Sikkim bagged the National e-Panchayat Puraskar 2018 [First Prize under Category I] on the occasion of National Panchayati Raj Day held at Rampur, Mandala in Madhya Pradesh today. Special Secretary cum Director Panchayat, Rural Management & Development Department, Government of Sikkim, MN Dhakal, received the award on behalf of the State from Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Similarly, Maniram Phalidara Gram Panchayat, South Sikkim, was awarded the Gram Panchayat Development Plan Award by the PM which was received by Panchayat Member, Topda Bhutia.

Union Minister for RD & Panchayati Raj, Government of India, Narendra Singh Tomar, and Minister of State for Panchayati Raj and Farmers Welfare, Parshottam Rupala, handed over the four other awards to Sikkim.

The Deen Dayal Upadhyay Panchayat Sashaktikaran Puraskar [DDUPSP] was awarded to South District Zilla Panchayat which was received by Adhyaksha, Farwanti Tamang, and Up-Adhyaksha, Bhim Bahadur Lakhey.

The DDUPSP for Martam Gram Pan-



chayat Unit, West Sikkim was received by Panchayat Sabhapati, Chabi Lal Chettri, and Panchayat Sachiva, Kumar Rai.

Likewise, Panchayat Sabhapati, Bikash Sharma, and Panchayat Up-Sabhapati, Durga Bahadur Subba, received the DDUPSP for Namphing Gram Panchayat, South Sikkim.

The Nanaji Deshmukh Rashtriya Gaurav Gram Sabha Puraskar [NDRGG-SP] to Gram Panchayats for outstanding performance of Gram Sabha GPDP Award was awarded to Tingvong Gram Panchayat, North Sikkim which was received by the Panchayat Sabhapati, Tshering Rapjor Lepcha, and Panchayat Sachiva, Norgay Lepcha.

The delegation from Sikkim have attributed the awards to the visionary and consistent leadership and guidance of the Government led by the Chief Minister, and the efforts from officers, Panchayats and field functionaries of the RM&DD.



Sri Ramasamy Memorial University  
Annual Sports Meet  
"ATHLON 2018"



25th-27th April 2018  
Reshithang Ground, Ranksa



## East completes verification of EVMs & VVPATs

### SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 25 APR:

Physical verification of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPATs) was conducted under the supervision of District Election Officer, East district from 21-25 Apr at the EVM warehouse located at the office premises of the Chief Electoral Officer in Baluwakhani, Gangtok.

A press release received from the District Collector, East, informs that the EVM warehouse was opened in the presence of Sub Divisional Magistrate, Gangtok, representatives of political parties, Under Secretary [Election], East, election officials on 21 Apr at 11 am.

The representatives of political parties were briefed on the purpose behind online verification of EVMs and VVPATs using mobile app. They were also explained the compulsory use of VVPATs in future elections across the country as a mandatory directive of the Election Commission of India.

The political parties were also invited to witness the process of verification if they desired. Some of the political parties have visited the warehouse on different days during the verification process, the release adds.

A total of 1,020 EVMs and 40 VVPATs were verified and updated online, thus completing the process of verification.

The EVM warehouse was closed in the presence of Additional District Collector, East [Headquarter], SDM, Gangtok, representatives of political parties and the election officials of East district.

## Two floors of Kisan Bazaar to open from Sunday...

contd from pg01

by us, said Mr Awasthy.

Responding to media queries, Horticulture Director, Mr Bhandari, mentioned that there is sufficient supply of vegetables in all markets of the State. Although this is the lean period, there is sufficient supply of vegetables and there will be surplus produce in the coming months.

Mr Bhandari appealed to customers and hoteliers to cooperate with the organic movement at this moment and assured that the State will have all vegetables in days to come. He also mentioned that teams have been posted at check-posts of the State for strict checking of vegetables being brought from outside.

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# World Malaria Day observed at Jorethang

JORETHANG, 25 APR [IPR]: Jorethang Community Health Center organized a daylong awareness and sensitization programme on prevention and control of vector-borne diseases to mark 'World Malaria Day' today. The theme of the programme was 'Ready to beat malaria'.

Area MLA, Health Minister AK Ghatani, attended the programme as chief guest accompanied by Divisional Magistrate [Jorethang], BC Rai, Medical Officer [Jorethang CHC], Dr SN Adhikari, Superintendent of Police [Traffic], BB Subba alongside officials from different departments, NJMC members, police personnel, school heads and members from different NGOs, aaganwadi workers and public.

Addressing the event, Mr Ghatani flagged concern over the rise in number of vector-borne diseases which were spurred largely by anthropogenic factors and suggested measures to combat and prevent these diseases, particularly malaria and dengue fever.



Further, he strongly urged the stakeholders and the public to work in tandem with the Health Department in keeping the surroundings of their homes, commercial outlets, eateries, educational establishments, butcheries and public places dirt-free and take precautionary steps to stave health hazards.

The Health Minister urged the school heads to encourage students of their respective schools to draft essays, poems and such write-ups on vector borne diseases which he further informed will be published in Sikkim Herald by Information & Public Relations Department.

Further, the chief guest also emphasized the need

to conduct regular health check-ups for the government-appointed sweepers and migrant laborers who are vulnerable and most likely to be in direct contact with the disease carriers.

In addition, he also announced the State Government's decision to make it mandatory for food joints and

restaurants to have a safai karamchhari. Additionally, he also spoke about the recently launched National Strategic Plan for Malaria Elimination (2017-22) which aims at eliminating malaria by 2027.

He further urged the health officials, administration, police department, youth and the public to lead by example to make Sikkim a disease-free state.

Resource person for the day, National Vector Borne Disease Control Programme (NVBDCP) Director, Dr Pramila Giri, made a power-point presentation on NVBDCP which she said is the central nodal agency for the prevention and control of vector borne diseases like malaria, dengue, kala-azar, Japanese encephalitis and Chikungunya in the country.

She also spoke about medical cases of vector borne diseases in Sikkim and discussed various measures to prevent and control them.

MO [Jorethang CHC], Dr Adhikari also addressed the program and gave a detailed

background on vector-borne diseases and how imperative it was for every individual to bring about a behavioral change to work towards controlling and preventing the spread of such diseases among us.

He also delved on issues like proper garbage management, public awareness, ownership of civil society members and guidelines on proper information, education and communication about vector borne diseases besides also examining the growing menace of drug abuse in a place like Jorethang.

Earlier in the day, students and school authorities in large number participated in a rally to spread awareness about mitigation, prevention and control of vector borne diseases.

A programme on the implementation of Reduce, Reuse and Recycle under Swachh Bharat Mission was also organized by Nayabazar Jorethang Municipal Corporation in collaboration with schools and Non Governmental Organizations [NGOs] of the area at Garib Uthan Bhawan.

## Ban has helped State's farmers say Chota Singtam farmers' group

SAGAR CHETTRI  
GANGTOK, 25 APR:

A progressive farmers' group of Chota Singtam in East Sikkim has thanked the state government for the ban on import of non-organic vegetables. The ban has helped Sikkim's farmers by providing right value and market for the organic produce of the State, the group said in a press conference held today.

Progressive farmer of Chota Singtam, DP Sapkota, mentioned that the entire farmers' community of the State is satisfied as they are getting the right price and value for their organic produce.

"Seeing better market and price for organic produce, people in rural areas are motivated to start farming in their land which was lying unused for many years," he said.

Mr Sapkota mentioned that agriculture has now become lucrative and attractive and



the youth should shift to this sector instead of running after government jobs.

"As the government has been providing trainings, seeds, various inputs and all required support in farming, a person can earn better than in a government job," he expressed.

In less than a month since the ban was enforced, many people in rural parts of Sikkim have started farming in their barren lands, he added.

Responding to me-

dia queries, Mr Sapkota mentioned that the local organic produce can fulfill the demands and requirements of vegetables in the State. With time, local produce will not only fulfill the State's requirements but surplus can also be exported outside the State, he added.

Likewise, progressive farmers, Bimit Lepcha and Sangkipa Lepcha, expressed their happiness on the government's decision to ban non-organic vegetables from outside the State. They also thanked the government

for providing all possible support and market for their produce.

They informed that farmers of Namcheybong constituency have been supplying two utility vehicles of vegetables every day to markets in and around Gangtok and have also been selling plenty of organic vegetables at Ranipool haat on Sundays.

They have appealed to consumers and businessmen to support the organic mission by giving some time to farmers in fulfilling requirement of local markets.

## CM trying to alienate LT community: SPA

SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 25 APR:

Sikkim People's Alliance [SPA] has strongly refuted the recent statements of the Chief Minister regarding the Limboo Tamang [LT] seat reservation issue and the consequent expansion of Sikkim Legislative seats [SLA] from 32 to 40.

In a press release issued by SPA chief convenor, MK Subba, the SPA has argued that the LT community, on being recognized as Schedule Tribe in 2002, were entitled to seat reservation in the SLA and consequently, the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India had given three options vide Letter No - D.O. No IV/11015/1/2005-CSR II dated 30 July 2005 to the Government of Sikkim where the first option was to reserve five seats from the existing 17 still unreserved seats in the SLA.

The release further informs that the second option was to increase the SLA seats from the existing 32 to 40 seats and give reservation to the LT community leaving the remaining 20 seats as Unreserved while the third option was to increase the SLA seats from existing 32 to 60 seats in conformity

with Article 171 [1] of the Indian Constitution.

"Out of the three options proposed by the MHA [GoI], the Sikkim Democratic Front led State government cleverly chose to go with the 2nd option of increasing the SLA seats from existing 32 to 40 seats, consciously aware of the fact that the Delimitation of Parliamentary and Assembly seats has been frozen till 2026 vide the 84th Constitutional Amendment Act of 2002, which was approved and passed as an Act in both houses of the Indian Parliament when the SDF led government had two MPs in both the houses.

Subsequently, the 4th Delimitation Commission chaired by retired Supreme Court Judge, Kuldeep Singh, had given an opportunity for Limited Delimitation to the GoS to accommodate the LT seats within the existing 32 SLA seats in 2006. However, the proposal was declined by the SDF led government, which further deprived the LT community of their constitutional rights.

In the same context, we would like to question the Chief Minister as to how he will provide the LT seats before

2019 as claimed by him, within the framework of the Indian Constitution, knowing that the next Census-based Delimitation exercise is expected only in 2031, after the current freeze expires in 2026 vide the 84th Constitutional Amendment Act of 2001. Hence, the SDF led government is very much aware of the Constitutional obligation and that they will not be able to provide LT seats before 2019," the SPA has stated in the release.

The SPA has alleged that the CM is trying to alienate the LT community from the rest of the Nepali community by stating that LT seat reservation is eating into the share of the majority community thereby inciting divisive communal propaganda.

The SPA has further alleged in the release that the CM has failed to deliver on the burning issues of the State and has been building up "hate politics" since he is running out of options to face the General Elections of 2019.

"We would like to caution the CM to refrain from double standard and divisive propaganda and work sincerely for the people of Sikkim," the SPA adds.

## Milch cows distributed under RKVY at Temi-Namphing

SUMMIT REPORT  
NAMCHI, 25 APR:

Eight milch cows along with their calves with three years insurance coverage were distributed at Tokal Bermiok cluster from Temi-Namphing constituency under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana 2017-18 today, a press release from Animal Husbandry Department, South Sikkim informs.

Minister for Cultural Affairs and Area MLA, GM Gurung along with area panchayats, former panchayats, officers from Horticulture Department and Joint-Director [Horticulture Department], Dr T Bajgai attended the



programme.

The beneficiaries were also provided with packs of mineral vitamins, dewormer and anti-stress tonic. The aim of the program is to uplift the economic condition of farmers through dairy

production in line with Sikkim Organic Mission, it is informed.

The beneficiaries were also briefed on management skills for good health and enhanced milk production from the cows.

## New exec members of SBJM-Namchi sworn in

SUMMIT REPORT  
NAMCHI, 25 APR:

Sikkim Bihari Jagaran Manch, Namchi, held an oath-taking ceremony today for the newly elected executive members of the Namchi unit. The oath-taking ceremony was conducted by SBJM central body and founding member of the Sangh and the election committee.

It may be mentioned here that for the first time in the State, executive committee for Namchi branch was selected on the basis of an election held earlier on 02 Apr.

Following the election, Anil Gupta was elected as the president, Rajesh Gupta as vice-president, Binod Gupta as general secretary, Ganesh Gupta as joint-secretary and Niraj Burma as the treasurer of SBJM, Namchi sangh.

Addressing the function, SBJM president [central committee], Swami Nath, congratulated the newly elected members and urged them to work together for the welfare of Bihari community in Namchi.

He assured to provide every possible help to the Namchi branch

and also spoke on the objectives and importance of SBJM in Sikkim.

He also informed the gathering about his meeting with Chief Minister Pawan Chamling and said that the CM was very encouraging regarding the motives of SBJM in the State.

"We kept our demands in front of Mr Chamling and he was very warm towards us and assured to help us on every way possible. He indeed is a people's CM," he said.

Newly elected SBJM, Namchi

president, Anil Gupta thanked the members for electing him and assured to work towards the development of Bihari community in Namchi and the State as well.

During the programme, women's wing of Bihari Jagaran Sangh, Namchi was also constituted following which Babita Gupta was nominated as president, Laxmi Devi Gupta as vice-president, Anika Gupta as general secretary, Januki Rajak as joint-secretary and Sarmila Raj as treasurer.



*Gangtok on Thursday, 26 Apr*  
Temp: 21°C /10°C  
Forecast: Overcast and cooler; an afternoon shower or thunderstorm around.  
Sunrise: 05:01 AM  
Sunset: 6:06 PM

MoS MSME visits enterprises around Gangtok

**GANGTOK, 25 APR:** Union Minister of State (Independent charge), Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Government of India, Giriraj Singh, visited small-scale enterprises - Jodicos Bakery, Syari, Washer Dry-cleaning, Lower Burtuk and Mountain Pure, Lower Burtuk - in and around Gangtok today.

While visiting these units, the Minister said, "Ministry is going to launch new scheme under Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) i.e Technology Upgradation Scheme where MSME will give Rs. 1 Crore loan where Rs.15 lakh will be subsidy".

The Minister urged the entrepreneurs to avail this scheme in the coming days.

While interacting with the team at Mountain Pure drinking water plant in Lower Burtuk, the Minister suggested that they go with premium bottled water as well so that it captures local and national markets. He suggested mint and tulsi flavours and fragrances.

The Minister said that people are now more health conscious and this has huge scope. He asked Mountain Pure to send their employee for training at Fragrance and Flavour Development Centre (FFDC), Kannauj, under the Ministry of MSME to learn premium water bottling.

Later in the day, the Minister attended a sensitisation programme on Women Empowerment Development at ICAR-Complex Pakyong as chief guest. The program was organised by ICAR-National Research Centre of Orchid, Pakyong.

While addressing orchid growers and Self Help Groups of Pakyong and surrounding areas, the Union Minister said "I want to develop agro-cluster in this area and I want agriculture institutions to support farmers. These institutions should provide a platform for farmers for marketing of Orchid in national and international markets."

Union Minister directed ICAR and Agriculture College Ranipool to set up a recognised platform which will benefit farmers and suggested development of Nursery on public private partnership mode. He assured that the Ministry under his charge will extend all help and support for the welfare of farmers.

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New political outfit for Sikkim to be announced in Delhi, Bhaichung a founding member

**REBYNA RANA NEW DELHI, 25 APR:** A new regional political party of Sikkim will be announced at a press conference at Press Club of India, New Delhi on 26 April. The name of the new party and plans for Sikkim would be announced by the party's founding members including former international footballer, Bhaichung Bhutia.

"I will be live from Press Club of India on Thursday to announce

our plans for Sikkim. It is also an outreach to national media to tell them that the beautiful State of Sikkim is ready for change. So please join me at 3 p.m. tomorrow as we engage the nation's capital, New Delhi," said Bhaichung in a press statement.

Sources close to those who are in the party expressed that only the name and some plans of the party would be unveiled in the media conference at New Delhi on

Thursday.

The party will be launched in Sikkim by May where the names of the party post holders and executive committee members would be announced, said the group [those who are accompanying Bhaichung to Delhi]

On why the party's name is being announced at Delhi and not Sikkim, sources said the certain issues of the State need to be put across to the Centre through the press

conference with national media at Delhi.

It was also said by the group that Bhaichung Bhutia is one of the founding members of the new political party. There has been talk in Sikkim that Bhaichung would be starting a new party. However, Bhaichung Bhutia is a founding senior member along with other founding members and it should not be seen as only Bhaichung Bhutia's party, said the group.

Increase in number of students at Soreng B.Ed College approved clarifies HRDD

**SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 25 APR:** The Human Resource Development Department, in a press release, has clarified that the increase in number of students in B.Ed College, Soreng from 100 to 150 has already been approved by National Council of Teacher Education (NCTE) with effect from 2017 session.

Regarding the approval of the number of students for the batches of 2015 and 2016, the HRDD informs that a bill to regularize the ap-

proval for B.Ed College, Soreng as well as 21 other Government Colleges/Universities including some Central Universities has already been introduced in the Lok Sabha by Union Minister of Human Resource Development Department, Prakash Javadekar in December, 2017.

However, the department says that the bill could not be passed during the budget session due to repeated adjournment of the Lok Sabha.

"The future of additional 50 children admitted

in 2015 and 2016 session has in no way been jeopardized," the release reads. According to the release, a written clearance has also been received from NCTE by Human Resource Development Department as well as Sikkim University regarding the issue.

"As far as Sikkim not performing well in education sector, this may please be noted that Sikkim is among the top performing states in education sector in the country. In 2013, Sikkim stood third at the national level in elementary education.

In 2017, Sikkim topped the list of best performing states in education in the small states category. Several programmes and initiatives, interventions like training and non-training needs, leadership programmes, quality improvement programmes under the HRDD speak loudly about the progress being made in education. As all know, achieving quality is not an overnight action. It is a slow and steady process and Sikkim has achieved much till date," the release reads.

Sikkim Entrepreneurs Meet in Gangtok

**GANGTOK, 25 APR (IPR):** Minister of State (Independent Incharge) Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Government of India, Giriraj Singh chaired the Sikkim Entrepreneurs Meet organized by MSME-Gangtok at Chintan Bhawan today.

Addressing the gathering Union Minister appreciated the growth made by the young entrepreneurs of Sikkim over the past years and urged them to continue with the same zeal and enthusiasm.

"There is much scope in Sikkim products as Sikkim has already made its brand as Organic. Young entrepreneurs must take advantage of this by labeling their products as Organic products. Besides Organic products, e-entrepreneurs can be set up for Bamboo industry under Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP). Once Bamboo industry starts functioning then products can be exported to various parts of the world," said the Minister.

He asked MSME to organise awareness programme on UAM across the state so that more entrepreneurs learn about the Udhayog Aadhaar Memorandum (UAM).



LTVC meets Tribal Affairs Minister on L-T seat reservation

**SUMMIT REPORT**

**GANGTOK, 25 APR:**

A Voluntary Committee [LTVC] including LTVC president, Yehang Tshong, general secretary, Prazal Tshong, joint secretary, Kishor Tamang, and member, Dechen Tamang, met with Union Minister of Tribal Affairs, Jual Oram, at his office in Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi today and submitted a reminder letter regarding the delay in Limboo-Tamang Assembly seat reservation in Sikkim, a press

release informs.

The LTVC team also submitted a three-point memorandum, "Memorial of Limboo Tribe", which the LTVC had earlier submitted to Sikkim's Governor, Chief Minister, Chief Secretary and Home Secretary.

The three-point memorandum includes grant of indigenous primitive status to Limboo tribe, amendment of Revenue Order No.1 to include Limboo and restoration of lost Tshong seat.

Mr Oram has assured to look into both the matters positively.

Minister Poudyal bats for scientific...

*contd from pg01*

agement institutions in India. The project envisages expanding the hydrological information platform and institutional capacity, improved infrastructure for water resources data collection, management and sharing, develop tools to verify water resources data, and develop tools for water resources planning and for management of water.

The NHP will seek to integrate the water resources information across state and central agencies. The focus will be on using the information generated, for water planning and management. The expectation

is that knowledge, open access and stronger institutional capacity will contribute to a shift towards integrated water resources management at the basin scale. The resulting improved water allocation and improved management of drought and flood risks will bring substantial socio-economic benefits.

The activity under the project envisages improving the extent and reliability of water resources data through automated/digitized and real-time communication systems. Hydro met networks will encompass meteorological, hydrological [surface and groundwater] and water

quality measurements. The emphasis will be on real-time data collection and telemetric transmission for use in water resources planning, reservoir operations and flood management.

The project will also develop web-based water resources information systems [WRIS] at State and Central levels. Building on protocols developed by central agencies, information sharing amongst agencies will be facilitated. The knowledge portals will provide easy access and analysis of water data. Public access will be developed by a mobile-based app, and disaster-related infor-

mation will be rapidly disseminated through mobile services. Stream flow forecasting and reservoir operation systems will support integration of real time data, weather forecast and hydrological models for water resource management and improved alert systems for disaster management.

This project is a 100% funded Central Sector Scheme under the Union Ministry. Scientific management of water as envisaged in the Project will also help in mitigating the adverse effects of Global warming and Climate change and for equitable and judicious use of water.

Joshua Pollock conducts Heartfulness meditation session at SMU

**SUMMIT REPORT**

**GANGTOK, 25 APR:**

Heartfulness meditation trainer and practitioner, acclaimed western classical violinist Joshua Pollock, interacted with the students and faculty of Sikkim Manipal University [SMU] here in Gangtok today, an SMU press release informs.

During the interaction, Mr Pollock gave a brief introduction to the book and highlighted the transformative practices of Heartfulness, especially for students. He also conducted a brief guided-meditation session for the audience during the interaction programme.

The interactive session was facilitated by Chief Electoral Officer of Sikkim, R Telang, who is also a se-



nior member of the Heartfulness Meditation Centre, Gangtok. Also attending the programme were Vice-Chancellor, SMU, Lieutenant General [Dr] MD Venkatesh, Registrar, Professor [Dr] Karma Sonam Sherpa, Head HR, MS Sridhar, faculty members and students of Sikkim Manipal College of Nursing. Mr Pollock has co-au-

thored the bestselling book, The Heartfulness Way: Heart Based Meditations for Spiritual Transformations, with his mentor, Kamlesh D Patel, fondly known as Daaji. Daaji is the fourth spiritual guide in the Sahaj Marg system of meditation, facilitating Heartfulness Meditation worldwide.

Animal Husbandry distributes piglets in Rumbuk GPU

**SUMMIT REPORT**

**GANGTOK, 25 APR:**

Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services Department distributed piglets to farmers of Rumbuk Gram Panchayat Unit in West Sikkim, a press release informs.

42 farmers from the GPU benefited with the scheme implemented by the State Government to foster economic development of farmers in Sikkim.

Area MLA [Daramdin], DN Sherpa, appealed to the beneficiaries to take



good care of the piglets and take advantage of the scheme implemented by the government.



**GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM**  
**FOOD SECURITY AND AGRICULTURE SEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**  
**KRISHI-BHAWAN, TADONG**

**No 443/FS&ADD** **Dated: 25/4/2018**

**EMPLOYMENT NOTICE**

Applications are invited from local candidates (Sikkim Subject/Holders) for the following posts on contractual basis for 2 years under SAMETI & ATMA, an autonomous agency under FS&AD Department, Gangtok:

SL. NO.	POST	NO OF POSTS	QUALIFICATION	AGE	SUGGESTED EXPERIENCE	CONSOLIDATED PAY/ MONTH
1.	State Co-ordinator	01	Doctorate/Post Graduate in Business Administration with Tally & Computer friendly	25 & above	3 years experience in Accounts/ Finance service	<b>Rs.50,000/-</b>
2	Gender Co-ordinator	01	Doctorate/Post Graduate in Home Science & Sociology	25 & above	2 years experience in gender related work	<b>Rs.40,000/-</b>
3.	Block Technology Manager (BTM)	02	Post Graduate in Agriculture & Allied Sector	18-35	2 years of experience in Agriculture & allied Sector with computer skill	<b>Rs.25,000/-</b>
4	Computer Programmer	01	M.C.A/B. Tech	18-35	1 year experience	<b>Rs.16,000/-</b>
5	Accountant	01	M.Com with Computer Knowledge	25 & above	3 years experience in Finance/ Acctt. Service	<b>Rs.15,000/-</b>

The posts are purely temporary which shall cease to exist on termination of funding by the Government of India. Candidates may apply with the following copies of documents. The applicant should submit their application to the Joint Secretary (Adm), FS&ADD, Room No. 306, Krishi-Bhawan, Tadong, latest by 10<sup>th</sup> May 2018.

1. Sikkim Subject / C.O.I.
2. Educational Qualification Certificate.
3. Valid Employment Card.
4. Date of Birth Certificate/Age Certificate.
5. Experience Certificate
6. Resume (with contact No.)

The interview will be held on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2018 in the Conference Hall of Krishi-Bhawan, Tadong from 10.30 am. No TA/DA shall be paid for attending the interview. Original documents should be produced on the above date.

Sd/-  
**JOINT SECRETARY**  
**F.S & AD DEPARTMENT**

*R.O. No. 46/lpr/pub/classi./18-19 dt. 25.4.18*



## Need to Always be All Ready

**Monsoon preparedness should be a year-round effort**

Here are the basics, in Geographical terms - the South-East quadrant of Sikkim, its footprint spreading across the alignment from Mangan to Dikchu, also sweeping through Rabong, and then to Gangtok up to Rongli, is the maximum rainfall zone of the State. The South-West corner around Hilley in West Sikkim is the other wetter zone and between the two sits the dry-to-the-extent-of drought-prone spread of Namchi and its immediate surroundings.

This much, anyone who has lived in Sikkim for a decent stretch of years will know instinctively. Ironically, this obvious fact has remained blindsided for far too long in the State, catching its people and planners on the wrong foot every time the skies open up, which is very often. Readers of this newspaper would have noticed that all four districts have been going through the motions of monsoon preparedness, but most of these have been limited to clearing jhoras and drains, with the connectivity and supplies situation receiving only nominal attention. Perhaps the reasonably tame monsoons of the past few years have inflicted some somnolence, but then again as any resident will point out, monsoons play in cycles of three years in Sikkim – three years of normal or less than normal rains and then three years of ferocity. The last monsoon was normal, and if past trends, also recognized by experts are any indication, Sikkim is being set up for a strong wave of rains this year. News reports about monsoon preparedness are included in the paper as much to inform people of the preparedness plans as for them to check back when the slides begin.

The concerned departments getting into monsoon readiness mode is a welcome sign, but what cannot be ignored is that monsoons become a challenge essentially because the drier months are allowed to pass without enough preparedness work getting done. For instance, meteorological data informs that Sikkim has an average of 160 days of rainfall every year (for Gangtok, this is 184 days!). That is a staggering number of wet days, but the data also reveals that the capital has almost as many days without rain and for a region kept on tenterhooks with what the clouds bear, the dry months need to be used well – to reinforce, repair, rebuild and restore. And yet, planners in the various civil works agencies of the State and Central governments refuse to make use of the dry months to get done with their digging and scrapping. It goes without saying that any work which, in any way, weakens slopes and alignments should be banned safely ahead of the monsoons because Sikkim's slopes have a tendency to come down like dominos at the slightest disruption once the monsoon sets in. With slightly over half the year spent with rainfall [albeit of varying intensities], planning here should be with the wet weather in mind. In these days of climate change, this becomes even more important because while the number of days with rainfall might come down, the intensity is projected to increase and that is even more destructive.

One needs to also bear in mind is that the rash of freak weather that Sikkim has been experiencing in recent years is no longer 'freakish' because it is consistent with climate change patterns. Sikkim now has a Department of Science & Technology with a longer name which includes "Climate Change". The policy-makers should realign the focus of this department to counsel other arms of the government on climate change adjustments and preparedness. Any student who has prepared for an essay/ debate competition on climate change will tell you that the intensity of climatic phenomenon is projected to reach extreme levels with climate change. Sikkim is already experiencing this. There might be fewer days of rainfall, but the days when it rains, it will pour. Departments working on civil projects like roads, hydel projects or construction should be the ones who get briefed on what to expect in the coming years and adjust their designs and work schedules accordingly. Storm drains, for example, should not be designed to just receive 8 cm of rain over an entire day in May, but to evacuate this inundation within an hour. Having been caught off-guard should not be accepted as an excuse anymore. Water conservation, an important issue around the word as in Sikkim, needs to be approached in a more pragmatic and interdisciplinary manner with intelligent and informed plantation efforts because a hill/ slope which conserves water well is also less prone to slip away. Done right, the spring rejuvenation mission should not only address the future needs of water supply, but also stabilise the slopes of Sikkim which have been debated by too much 'development' and too little respect for traditional knowledge...

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# The biggest clash of heroes and villains in Avengers: Infinity War - but can science survive?

MICHAEL MILFORD  
*theconversation.com*

Ten years of the Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) comes to a head with the release of Avengers: Infinity War, the 19th Marvel Studios film to date.

The biggest Marvel movie ever brings with it the largest cast of superheroes (and villains) ever and the biggest stakes ever to be fought over. So far.

The movie also pushes our boundaries on what you think could happen in a Marvel movie - with set pieces and some pretty good pathos mixed with humour. The Iron Man and Spider-Man suit technology is cooler than we've seen before. It also has, by a fair margin, the most fulfilling Marvel villain so far in Thanos, played by Josh Brolin.

My colleague and I had a great time reviewing the science in Marvel movies such as Thor: Ragnarok, Guardians of the Galaxy Volume 2 and Spider-Man: Homecoming, but I think we can resolve some unfinished scientific enquiry with Infinity War.

Obligatory warning: some minor spoilers follow, with one incredibly big plot revealing spoiler at the end of this review.

**IRON MAN'S POOR BRAIN**  
Iron Man best protect his brainy asset. (Marvel)

There's a lot of flying in Infinity War, and Iron Man's flying was one of the coolest things about the original Iron Man movie where the MCU began in 2008.

Now if the physics of propulsion and fuel can be solved, then parts of Iron Man's suit abilities are plausible. But one challenge that has no immediately obvious solution is sustaining the G forces required to accelerate like Iron Man is shown to do in the movies, especially when he has his suit's turbo propulsion mode activated.

Remember that Iron Man



is a very fit but otherwise normal human, apart from the generator in his chest. His suit can probably stop his legs from buckling under the acceleration, but his brain is another matter.

Under ideal conditions, fighter pilots can stay conscious up to about 10Gs. But what is Tony's acceleration?

The still frames above were taken about 0.21 seconds apart, and Tony has accelerated from a standing start to be about 5 body lengths away (we can say a body length is 2 metres).

Distance =  $0.5 \times a \times t^2$   
Where  $a$  = acceleration and  $t$  = time. So rearranging the equation gives:  
acceleration =  $2 \times \text{distance} / t^2$   
=  $2 \times 5 \times 2 / 0.21^2$   
= 453.5m/s<sup>2</sup>  
acceleration in g forces =  $453.5\text{m/s}^2 / 9.81\text{m/s}^2$   
= 46.23gs

This is a substantial amount more than the maximum normally sustainable by a human!

Verdict: Tony Stark's huge ego must prevent him blacking out!

**THROW A MOON AT SOMEONE**

I thought Thor:Ragnarok was pushing the boundaries on physics with Thor's hammer, but Infinity War takes it to an extreme.

In one scene, Thanos pulls a moon (yes a moon) out of orbit and throws it at Iron Man. We've had cars, trucks, even chunks of continents thrown around before,

but never a moon in a Marvel movie. What exactly would it take to pull this off?

One way to do this would be to instantaneously stop the moon dead in its tracks.

The kinetic energy of (our) Moon is given by:

$E = G \times \text{earth mass} \times \text{moon mass} / (2 \times r)$

Where  $G$  = the gravitational constant and  $r$  = the radius of the Moon's orbit around the Earth.

So rearranging the equation gives:

$E = 6.67 \times 10^{-11} \times 5.8 \times 10^{24} \times 7.4 \times 10^{22} / (2 \times 3.85 \times 10^8)$   
=  $3.72 \times 10^{28}$  Joules

The largest nuclear bomb ever, the Tsar Bomba, released about 209,000 trillion joules of energy, or  $2.09 \times 10^{17}$  J - not even close to enough, even if all the energy could be used to slow down the moon.

You might be able to do it over many millions of years with thrusters attached to the moon... but Thanos does it in seconds.

Ripping a moon out of orbit to throw at someone - easy. Squashing an individual

very strong human - no easy feat. (Marvel)

We can assume that Thanos is sufficiently powerful to do so, but then I guess we need to allow some dramatic license for that same Thanos struggling to put down Captain America, who is just an amped up normal human, later in the movie.

Verdict: Thanos - titan one moment, terribly weak the next.

**WHAT ARE THE CHANCES? (MAJOR SPOILER)**

You have been warned, so do not read on if you don't want to know.

The massive, incredibly dramatic ending of the movie involves Thanos enacting his promise to kill one half of the universe's population, completely at random. And boy, do the closing scenes of the movie pack a punch. I've rarely seen or heard an audience reaction like that at the end of a movie, as character after character dies.

While no-one can fault the screenwriters for an unprecedented move, a cynic might wonder what the chances

were of the original big name (and presumably big box office draws) Avenger actors surviving the cull (although the Black Panther movie put a pretty compelling case for a new set of actors).

It also seems like waaaaay more than 50% of the on screen characters still alive at the climax of the movie meet a tragic fate in Thanos's purge (including in an end credits scene not to be missed).

So to help you make up your own mind, see the handy Thanos 50% genocide chart alongside.

It shows the distribution of likelihoods for a percentage of characters dying, under a 50% purge (based on a count of 20 on screen characters at the end of the movie).

The most likely outcome is about 50% of the characters dying, as shown in the centre of the graph. But if you move to the left you can see that although the odds drop, there's still some chance of as small a fraction as 25% dying, and at the other side of the graph of up to 75% dying.

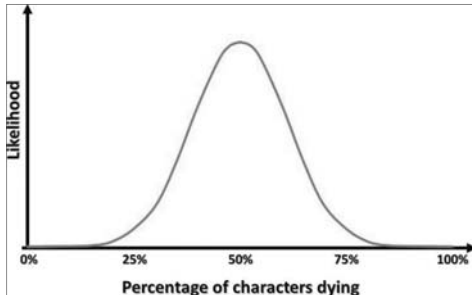
Verdict: Plausible enough, although contracts could be revealing.

## VERDICT

Avengers: Infinity War is Marvel's biggest movie to date and in many ways its most dramatic. Long story and character arcs have all led to this point, meaning the movie's (frankly incredible) events are all the more powerful for the viewer.

The action scenes are bigger and better than ever before, and we're treated to an ending and super villain like no Marvel movie before it. Upping the stakes, action and epic scenes means an expected further departure from "conventional" scientific reality, but that can be forgiven for the sake of an incredibly entertaining and engaging film.

*[the writer is Professor, Queensland University of Technology]*



# Yes, your kids can run all day – they’ve got muscles like endurance athletes

ANTHONY BLAZEVICH & SÉBASTIEN RATEL  
*theconversation.com*

Most of us know children who can run and play for hours and hours, taking only short rests.

As a parent or carer, it can be exhausting. For scientists, why this is the case has long been the source of debate – is it due to fitness? Or something else?

Our study published today looked at performance and recovery of children and adults doing strenuous cycling. It shows children not only out-perform most adults, but can perform as well as highly-trained adult endurance athletes, and then recover even faster afterwards.

**CHILDREN'S MUSCLES ARE DIFFERENT**  
Repeated experiments have shown that the muscles of children tend to fatigue more slowly than adults

These results seem to fly in the face of what science would predict. For example, children have shorter limbs, so they have to take more steps and should therefore theoretically use more energy.

Children are also less able to make use of tendon energy return systems – that is, they store less energy in their tendons so they can't reuse this energy to propel themselves during movement.

And children show greater activity in muscles that oppose or control movement, a reflection of the fact that typically they are less skillful, and therefore use more energy.

So how do their muscles stay fresh?

**AEROBIC AND ANAEROBIC EXERCISE**  
One possible explanation for the remarkable muscle endurance of children could be their different use of energy pathways.

Anaerobic ("oxygen-independent") pathways produce large amounts of energy without the need for oxygen - but tend to cause rapid fatigue. For example, sprinters rely on anaerobic metabolism to run fast over short distances.

Aerobic ("oxygen-dependent") pathways tend to produce energy at a slower rate but allow us to work for many hours without muscle shut down, like in a well-run marathon.

We know from existing research that children

seem to be able to get more of their energy from aerobic pathways than adults, minimising the fatiguing anaerobic contribution. Their aerobic machinery also kicks into gear faster than adults, so they don't need to rely as much on anaerobic metabolism when exercise first starts.

These benefits are believed to partly result from children having a greater proportion of so-called "slow-twitch" muscle fibres, which have a greater activity of important enzymes that drive release of energy from aerobic pathways.

Such findings prompted us to speculate that children's muscles might actually respond to exercise in a similar way to adult endurance athletes, since they too show these characteristics.

## LET'S GO CYCLING

We tested our speculation in a study run by researchers at Université Clermont Auvergne, in France.

Children (average age 10.5 years), young adults (21.2 years) with a similar physical activity level as the children, and age- and height-matched endurance-trained male athletes (21.5 years) were asked to complete two cycling tests on a stationary bicycle.

In the first test, power output was continually increased until exhaustion. In the second test, the subject completed a 30-second all-out cycle sprint. These tests allowed us to measure numerous physiological responses to exercise, and to assess both the rate of fatigue and then recovery specifically during brief, maximal-intensity exercise.

We found that the children fatigued as much in the all-out cycle as the endurance-trained athletes (about 40% loss of power), and much less than the untrained adults (about 50% loss).

Data also show that the proportion of energy derived from aerobic pathways in the 30-second cycle sprint was similar in the children and athletes, and more than in untrained adults.

These results clearly show that fatigue rates in response to high-intensity exercise may be the same in children as they are in highly-trained adult endurance athletes, and that this is associated with an incredible generation of energy from aerobic energy pathways.

But data collected during recovery from the exercise also revealed startling outcomes. The rate at which oxygen use declined after the exercise was the same in children and athletes. The rates at which heart rate returned to normal and lactate (a compound associated with muscle fatigue) cleared from the blood were even faster in the children, and again much faster than in untrained adults.

These data show that children's muscles recover rapidly from high-intensity exercise, and possibly reveal why children are able to produce repeated exercise efforts when most of us adults continue to feel exhausted.

## HOW CHILDREN'S MUSCLES WORK

Such data provide strong hints as to how to optimise exercise and sporting performance in children.

Children might benefit from short, high-intensity exercise bouts to boost anaerobic capacity, and a focus on movement skill, muscular strength, and other physical attributes more than in adults.

Adults (and adolescents), on the other hand, may need to place a greater emphasis on improving their muscle aerobic capacity.

There may also be important health implications. Metabolic diseases, including diabetes and many forms of cancer, are increasing in prevalence in adolescents and younger adults but are still rarely seen in children.

It might be the case that the loss of muscle aerobic capacity between childhood and early adulthood is a key maturation step that allows metabolic diseases to take hold.

It will be interesting in future to examine the link between muscle maturation and disease, and test whether the maintenance of our childhood muscles through exercise training might be the best medicine to prevent disease.

Either way, at least we now have some idea as to why children are able to play, and play, and play, when we adults need to take a break. Kids are already elite.

*[Anthony Blazeovich is Professor of Biomechanics, Edith Cowan University; Sébastien Rattel is Maître de Conférences en physiologie de l'exercice, Université Clermont Auvergne]*



### Exhibition on Parliamentary Democracy in India at Chintan Bhawan

**GANGTOK, 25 APR [IPR]:** As part of the “Best Performing Legislator Award” ceremony of Sikkim Legislative Assembly, an Exhibition on “Parliamentary Democracy in India” was organized at Chintan Bhawan in Gangtok today.

The exhibition traces the history of democracy in India from ancient and medieval periods, the freedom movement, the Constituent Assembly, the modern parliamentary system, parliamentary functions, etc. Besides these, a separate section on Sikkim and the Legislative Assembly of Sikkim has also been displayed in the exhibition. The exhibition also includes audio-visual components containing original audio of 16 eminent leaders of the Constituent Assembly.

The event has been organized by the Parliamentary Museum and Archives of the Lok Sabha Secretariat in collaboration with the Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity [DAVP], Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India and Sikkim Legislative Assembly.

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### GATC TO PERFORM IN DUBAI

**SUMMIT REPORT**  
**GANGTOK, 25 APR:** Hard rock/heavy metal band, Girish and the Chronicles [GATC], is on a month-long visit to Dubai in United Arab Emirates where they will be performing at some of the top venues. This is their 3rd visit to the Gulf country, the first and their second, being in 2014 and 2016 respectively, a press release informs. The band will be back in India during the mid week of May which will be followed by some gigs that are lined up for the following months. Currently working on the production of their 2nd album, the band will be releasing their new single, “Walking the Line” soon.

### Life Skill Education and Adolescence Management session for Kitam School girls

**KITAM, 25 APR:** Village Administrative Centre of Kitam-Manpur Gram Panchayat organised an awareness programme on Life Skill Education and Adolescence Management for girl students of Kitam Senior Secondary School on 24 April with the express objective make them aware about personal hygiene, menstrual hygiene, menstrual cycle and hormonal imbalance and the methods to cope with such changes.

Counsellor from Namchi District Hospital, Neeta Silwal, spoke to the girls about the physical and emotional changes which occur during adolescence due to hormonal changes and also addressed methods to cope with such emotions and stress.

She further asked the girls to maintain menstrual hygiene to avoid diseases and take other precautionary measures.

Citing adolescence as a vulnerable period, she also imparted Life Skill Education focusing on stress management and decision making.

Savitri Chettri, Panchayat President of the GPU, also laid stress on decision-making and asked the students to control their emotions.

The programme was attended by lady teachers, women Panchayats and girl students and was interactive.

### SKM Nari Morcha meet held at Mangalbaria

**SUMMIT REPORT**  
**GANGTOK, 25 APR:** Sikkim Krantikari Morcha's women's wing held a meeting at Mangalbaria under Rinchenpong constituency in West Sikkim today. The meeting was chaired by Nari Morcha chief convener, Kala Rai. Alleging that women are being exploited in Sikkim, the SKM Nari Morcha expressed the need to address the issue, informs an SKM press release. They alleged that there is no safety or empowerment of women under the Sikkim Democratic Front led government.

#### SKM Nari Morcha meet held at Mangalbaria

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### Rewaj Chettri attends Forbes Vietnam U-30 Summit

**NITESH PRADHAN**  
**GANGTOK, 25 APR:** Sikkim-born entrepreneur, Rewaj Chettri attended the Forbes Vietnam Under 30 Summit 2018 with the theme “The future is now” at Ho Chi Minh City today.

Chettri, CEO and founder of NE Taxi shared with the gathering his journey from a dorm room to the Forbes Asia List.

He also highlighted the potential South East Asian countries hold. Along with him Rahul Chaudhary, MD, CG Corp Global from Nepal also attended the summit as a speaker.

Forbes Vietnam honored 30 faces under 30 most prominent of Vietnam in 2018.

In addition to the 30 Under 30 members, the event organized by Forbes Vietnam has attracted more than 1,000 attendees, top entrepreneurs, game changers and the most creative minds of the young generation.

Rewaj Chettri has been in the coveted list of top under 30 achievers in Asia with the likes of actress Anushka Sharma.

## Asaram: the man who moved from hut to Rs 10,000 crore empire to jail

**AHMEDABAD, APR 25 (PTI):** From meditating in a small hut on the banks of the Sabarmati River to commanding a sprawling Rs 10,000-crore business empire, self-styled guru Bapu Asaram soared high -- only to plunge into ignominy after his conviction today for raping a teenage minor.

School dropout Asaram, once called Asumal Sirumalani, is believed to own 400 ashrams spread across India and abroad and has a legion of followers, many of whom still revere the controversial preacher, sentenced to life by a Jodhpur court.

When he was arrested in 2013, investigators had said the 77-year-old guru owed his immense wealth to buildings, stocks and shares, a lucrative money-lending practice and by selling Ayurvedic products and religious booklets.

Documents seized by the police from Asaram's ashram in Motera area here had revealed that he also owned vast tracts of land.

The grey-haired and bearded guru, who studied till Class 4, started attracting attention when he began meditating by a modest hut near the Sabarmati River back in the Seventies.

Soon, people were flocking to his hut and he



had begun gaining popularity as Sant Asaramji Bapu.

His official website states that he was born in 1941 in Berani village of the Sindh province in Pakistan.

After the partition of India in 1947, he came to Ahmedabad with his parents and studied in a school in the Maninagar area, but dropped out when he was 10 after the death of his father, Thaumal.

He did odd jobs in his early youth, including a reported stint as a tongawallah in Ajmer, and then, the website states, went towards the Himalayas on a spiritual quest, where he met his Guru, Lilashah Bapu.

Asaram came to Ahmedabad in the early 70s and set up 'Moksha Kutir', a small hut on the banks of river, in 1972.

It wasn't long before the hut had spawned into a full-fledged ashram. Soon, new ashrams had

come up in various parts of the country, including a sprawling complex in Delhi's protected Ridge area.

Asaram is married to Laxmi Devi and they have two children - son Narayan Sai, who is also behind bars, and daughter Bharti Devi.

The guru first ran into trouble in 2008, when two pre-teenaged -- cousins Dipesh and Abhishek Vaghela who lived in Asaram's gurukul in Motera -- were found dead on the riverbed near his ashram.

The two cousins' parents had alleged that they were killed in Asaram's ashram where they claimed black magic was practised.

The state CID had in 2009 booked seven followers of Asaram in the death case.

But Asaram fell from public grace in 2013, after he was arrested for a minor teenager's rape in Rajasthan.

After that, two Surat-based sisters also accused him and his son of sexual exploitation.

The police on October 6, 2013, registered complaints filed by the two sisters - one against Asaram and another against Narayan Sai - of rape, sexual assault, illegal confinement and other charges.

The case is being tried in the Gandhinagar court.

He was also accused of grabbing land for building his ashrams in Surat and Ahmedabad.

His followers were held for threatening and assaulting witnesses in rape cases against him and his son after they were arrested.

Asaram has also courted controversy in recent years with his outspoken -- and debatable views -- on issues such as Valentine's Day and the Nirbhaya killing.

Valentine's Day should be marked as the

day for worshipping parents, he had said a few years ago.

In 2013, he had told a gathering in Rajasthan that if Nirbhaya had chanted the 'Saraswati mantra', she would not have boarded the bus where she was brutally raped and assaulted by a group of men.

**GANGTOK, 25 APR (IPR):** Minister of State (Independent charge) Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Government of India, Giriraj Singh chaired the Sikkim Entrepreneurs Meet at the Conference Hall of Chintan Bhawan today.

The meet was attended by Commerce and Industries Secretary, Arvind Kumar, Heads and officials from various departments, Managing Director of Temi Tea Estate, representative from banks and young entrepreneurs from Sikkim.

The Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), Tadong, organised the gathering.

Addressing the gathering Union Minister, Mr Singh appreciated the growth made by the young entrepreneurs of Sikkim in the past several years and urged them to continue with same zeal and enthusiasm.

“There is so much scope in Sikkim and the State already has

branded itself as an organic state. So, young entrepreneurs must take advantage of it. Besides organic products, entrepreneurs can set up of Bamboo industry in Sikkim under Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP). Once Bamboo industry starts functioning then products can be exported to various parts of the world,” said the Union Minister.

He asked MSME to organise awareness programmes on UAM across the state so that more entrepreneurs will know about Udyog Aadhaar Memorandum (UAM).

“Our Prime Minister is mainly focusing on increasing ease of doing business through various online program mode. And our entrepreneurs must take advantage of such platform. We modified existing programs under MSME and it will benefit vibrant entrepreneurs. We have to bring decentralised model in Sikkim as well for ease of doing business under MSME,” the

“She should have taken God's name and could have held the hand of one of the men and said, I consider you my brother and should

have said to the other two, brother, I am helpless, you are my brother, my religious brother,” the media had quoted him as saying.

**Union Minister Singh chairs Sikkim Entrepreneurs Meet**

Mr Singh also released the first Data Bank Book on MSME, Sikkim and said that this data bank book will help the State and Ministry in days to come and every state must have Data Bank Book on MSME for reference.

The Union Minister also interacted with the entrepreneurs of Sikkim and made queries about their business process and working culture.

Mr Singh directed MSME Trading to guide and support entrepreneurs.

Earlier Secretary of Commerce and Industries highlighted various initiatives taken by the state government to encourage youth in this sector.

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E-mail: contact.synapse@gmail.com/ irshad\_ali123@rediffmail.com



#### Kutshe Shegu

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

PEMTU TSH LEPCHA (ELDEST SON) 9734365676, SONGMIT LEPCHA (ELDEST DAUGHTER) 9593822460, DR. SONAMI RINGCHEN LEPCHA (YOUNGER BROTHER) 9647884804, DATHUP LEPCHA (YOUNGER BROTHER) 7407015920



## Restrict students from using plastic covers for notebooks: Delhi govt tells schools

**NEW DELHI, APR 25 (PTI):** The Delhi government has directed all schools in the national capital to restrict students from using plastic covers for their notebooks or books.

The order by the AAP dispensation comes following the orders of the Delhi High Court banning use of plastic bags and other such material.

"All principals are directed to ensure that students in their respective schools do not use any kind of plastic cover or film for their books or notebooks," said an order by the Directorate of Education (DoE).

"This is of immediate importance in view of the upcoming new academic session when students purchase new books and notebooks for their new class," it added.

Following certain grievances in this regard shared by environment activists, the Delhi government's environment department wrote to the DoE to issue a directive to schools.

## 2ND MAHENDRA KARKI MEMORIAL INVITATIONAL FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT



## United Brothers overcome SSA challenge to break into semis

### SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 25 APR:**

United Brothers, Kalimpong, secured its berth in the semifinal round of the ongoing 2nd Mahendra Karki Memorial Invitational Football Tournament 2018. In a contesting quarterfinal match played today, a hattrick by Dewashish Rai helped United Brothers edge past the State Sports Academy

3-2.

Both the teams failed to capitalize some good opportunities to take an early lead in the match and the first half appeared to be headed for a goalless scoreboard until Amon Lepcha of SSA scored in the 37th minute and gave SSA the lead.

The deadlock broken, Dewashish Rai scored the equaliser soon after for United Brothers

in the 44th minute and the first half ended evenly poised 1-1.

In the early minutes of the second half, Dewashish Rai completed his brace in the 48th minute and took the lead for United Brothers.

SSA boys played their hearts out to equalize, but could not net any goals.

In the meantime, Dewashish Rai completed his hattrick in the

85th minute to further extend the lead for United Brothers to 3-1.

Sanjay Rai managed to bring the stadium to its feet with his goal in the 87th minute to bring SSA closer, but it was too late to stop the guest team from entering the semifinal round of the tournament and the match ended 3-2 in favour of United Brothers.

## Jeremy wins silver & bronze at Asian Youth and Junior Weightlifting C'ship



**NEW DELHI, APR 25 (PTI):** India's Jeremy Lalrinnunga (56 kg) registered his best total of 250 kg to win the silver in Youth section and bronze medal in Junior section at the Asian Youth and Junior Weightlifting Championships at Urgench, Uzbekistan.

The 15-year-old Lalrinnunga also created two new national record in Youth boys and junior men during his lift of 250 kg.

Sidhant Gogoi, 14, finished with bronze medal with a lift of 243 kg in Youth Boys section.

Earlier two Indian women athletes from Orissa won a silver and a bronze medal.

Jhilli Dalabehera (48 kg) clinched the silver medal in junior women after lifting 166 kg (73+93), while Sneha Soren (48 kg) lifted 145 kg (63+82) to bag the bronze medal in Youth Girls.

## Resurgent Aditi to tee up at San Francisco



**SAN FRANCISCO, APR 25 (US):** Aditi Ashok, who indicated last week that she is slowly finding the form that gave her a lot of excellent results last season, will tee up at the LPGA Mediheal Championship.

Aditi was T-19 at Hugel-JTBC LA Open last week, which was only her second Top-20 finish this season after her T-14 at Kia Classic.

This is also the first time this season she has had two rounds in 60s and consistency seems to be around the corner. She is currently 59 on CME ranking and 79 in Rolex World Rankings.

Aditi plays the first round with Ashleigh Buhai and Morgan Pressel.

The west coast swing continues this week with 19 of the top 25 in the Rolex Women's World Golf Rankings scheduled to compete including the new No. 1 Inbee Park and seven of the top eight in the world.

Commissioner Mike Whan will transfer the green Rolex No. 1 caddy bib

to Inbee and her longtime looper, Brad Beecher, before Thursday's first round.

Park has been incredible this year and especially of late. She has finished in the top three in each of her last three starts and has finished inside the top 20 in five straight starts, including a win at the Bank of Hope Founders Cup which kick-started this stretch of dominance.

Park paces the Tour in just about everything through nine events No. 1 on the money list (\$707,089), No. 1 in the Race to the CME Globe (1,458 points) and obviously No. 1 in Rolex Player of the Year points (75).

Maybe just driving over the Golden Gate Bridge will give Lydia Ko all she needs to find her form in 2018. Or maybe just stepping foot on the grounds of Lake Merced might do the trick.

Ko won the Swinging Skirts LPGA Classic when it was played at Lake Merced in 2014 and 2015. This year, Ko has one Top-10 finish in eight starts. She finished T31 last week in Hollywood.



## SRM University's three-day annual sports meet kicks off

### SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 25 APR:**

Sri Ramasamy Memorial [SRM] University kicked off its three-day annual sports meet 'ATH-LON 2018' on Tuesday at Reshithang Ground in Ranka, East Sikkim, a

press release informs.

The inter-departmental sports event features Department of Hospitality and Tourism Management, Department of English, Department of Management and Commerce and Department of

Information Technology and Skill Building compete in different track, field and group events.

The sports meet was inaugurated by the SRM Registrar, Professor Ch Satish Kumar and Dean Academic, Dr R Anbalagan.

## Under-fire Gambhir steps down as Delhi Daredevils captain

**NEW DELHI, APR 25 (PTI):** Gautam Gambhir today stepped down as IPL laggards Delhi Daredevils captain, saying he just could not handle the pressure of the job.

Shreyas Iyer replaced him in the position but Gambhir will continue to be a part of the team that has lost five of its six matches so far and is placed bottom of the table at the eighth position.

"Maybe I was too

desperate to turn things

around and that can

backfire. It could be the

reason. I just couldn't handle the pressure and when you don't do that, you have to own that up as a leader," Gambhir said in a press conference also attended by franchise CEO Hemant Dua and coach Ricky Ponting.

"I was sitting alone and thinking, I couldn't handle the pressure... I was not good enough and that is all," he added.

The 23-year-old Iyer is a top-order batsman and has scored two back-to-back half centuries in losing causes.

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## After CWG high, paddlers leave for World Championships

**NEW DELHI, APR 25 (PTI):** After tasting unprecedented success at the Commonwealth Games, the Indian table tennis team left in two batches for the World Championships to be held in Halmstad, Sweden from April 29 to May 6.

The Table Tennis Federation of India (TTFI) has retained the same team as the one that competed in the Gold Coast Games. The team, led by Sharath Kamal, will be training at Varberg from tomorrow until the competition begins on April 29.

Sharath said that both teams will try to live up to their rankings.

Our men's team is ranked 10th and women 14th. We also know the expectations have soared after our CWG success. But the worlds are a different ball game. Yet, we will give our best and I would be happy if we try to reach a top-12 spot, he said.

Anything else, we will consider as a bonus, he added.



Manika Batra, who was a part of the first batch that left yesterday, was confident of performing well.

I am in good touch and our team spirit is really good after what we did at Gold Coast. But CWG is past and we have to live in the present. The world championships will give us a kind of

experience that will help us all in the future, said Manika.

Coach Massimo Costantini, too, was upbeat but cautioned saying that India will have to think about improving their positions.

Most importantly, they have to maintain their rankings. The top fields will be on view in Swe-

den and the players are aware of the job at hand, said the coach.

Team: Men: A. Sharath Kamal, G. Sathiyam, A. Amalraj, Harmeet Desai and Sanil Shetty. Women: Manika Batra, Mouma Das, Madhurika Patkar, Pooja Sahasrabudde and Suthirtha Mukherjee. Coaches: Massimo Costantini and Arup Basak.





# India, Mongolia to enhance bilateral trade, energy cooperation

**ULAANBAATAR, APR 25 (PTI):** India and Mongolia today discussed economic cooperation in areas such as infrastructure development, energy, services and IT and agreed to explore possibility of launching direct air connectivity between New Delhi and the Mongolian capital.

External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj during a joint media briefing with Mongolian Foreign Minister D Tsogtbaatar after the 6th Session of the Indian-Mongolia Joint Committee on Cooperation here said the two countries agreed to explore ways to identify new areas of cooperation in all sectors of mutual interest and to enhance bilateral trade and investments.

Swaraj, the first Indian foreign minister to visit the resource-rich country in 42 years, said India sees Mongolia as a factor of stability in East Asia and believes that Mongolia's social and economic development is important for peace and prosperity in the region.

During the Indian-Mongolia Joint Committee on Cooperation, the two sides discussed pressing global challenges, particularly the scourge of terrorism and agreed to collaborate bilaterally and in international arena to thwart the designs of those who extend support to terrorist outfits.

The two sides also reviewed the progress in the ongoing collaborative projects, including the refinery project selected by the Government of Mongolia for implementation with the support of USD one billion Indian Line of Credit.

"We directed our officials to coordinate follow up action on each side for the expeditious implementation of these projects. Our strong political ties must be complemented by commensurate levels of trade, economy and investment," she said.

"Today, India has emerged as one of the fastest growing large economies in the world. With its rich natural resources and strong aspiration for development, Mongolia can be an important partner in India's growth story," she said.

Swaraj, who arrive here yesterday on a two-day visit, said collaboration for the ongoing refinery project is in recognition of this fact.

She said Mongolia is not only India's strategic partner but also a spiritual neighbour.

"We share long historical links. Mongolia is well known in India for the valour of her kings and her strong Buddhist heritage. India was among the first countries, outside the erstwhile Communist bloc,

to establish diplomatic relations with Mongolia," she said.

Swaraj also called on Prime Minister of Mongolia U Khurelsukh and discussed cooperation in developmental cooperation, mining, capacity building, IT, films and other areas of bilateral cooperation.

During the joint media briefing with Mongolian Foreign Minister, Swaraj said in the six decades of the partnership between the two countries, the bilateral relations have grown from "strength to strength".

"This is reflected in our widening and deepening strategic partnership today, based on the common ideals of democracy and freedom, and enriched by mutual respect and trust."

She said Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "historic visit" in 2015, the first ever by an Indian Prime Minister to Mongolia, provided a fresh impetus to the bilateral relations and qualitatively raised the level of the engagement.

"We also agreed that we should make all efforts to maintain and accelerate the momentum of our interaction in all areas."

She said that in tandem with the countries' "ever growing" engagement, India and Mongolai will have more frequent visits now on at Foreign Minister's level.

Calling upon the Mongolian business community to "seize economic opportunities arising out of "India's growth", she said the two countries have agreed to remove institutional and logistical impediments to boost trade, tourism and people to people contacts.

"In this regard, we also agreed to explore possibility of launching direct air connectivity between our two capitals," she said.

In the meeting, they discussed economic cooperation in areas such as infrastructure development, energy, services and IT.

She said that India is committed for capacity building programmes for the people of Mongolia, including in areas such as, training in English language and IT.

**WASHINGTON, APR 25 (AP):** President Donald Trump's escalating dispute with China over trade and technology is threatening jobs and profits in working-class communities where his "America First" agenda hit home.

The Commerce Department has received more than 2,400 applications from companies seeking waivers from the administration's tariffs on steel and aluminum imports, which may result in duty payments of millions of dollars for larger businesses.

The department has begun posting the requests online for public comment; several of the applications released so far suggest deep misgivings with Trump's protectionist strategy, especially in areas where he won strong support during the 2016 election.

The tariffs are aimed primarily at China for flooding the global market with cheap steel and aluminum. But they've also led to confusion and uncertainty, according to Associated Press interviews and a review of records. In Oklahoma, Texas and Wisconsin, for example, businesses operating in the furniture, energy and food sectors have outlined the financial difficulties they'd face if they're not excused from the



steel tariff.

In Okmulgee, Oklahoma, dozens of jobs hang in the balance as office furniture giant Steelcase waits to hear back from the Commerce Department.

A Steelcase subsidiary, PolyVision, operates a plant in Okmulgee that uses a special type of steel from Japan to manufacture a durable glass-like surface for whiteboards and architectural purposes. PolyVision "cannot and will not be able to procure" from US companies the cold-rolled steel it requires "in a sufficient and reasonably available amount or of a satisfactory quality," Steelcase said.

Trump won most of the votes cast for president in Okmulgee County. Without a waiver, Steelcase warned, the

"economic viability of PolyVision (and) the small town of Okmulgee" would be jeopardized.

The waiver request also indicates that a USD 15 million plant expansion may be at risk. Steelcase and PolyVision are on the verge of making the investment, which would create new construction and manufacturing jobs, according to the request.

Roger Ballenger, Okmulgee's city manager, said he and other local officials are "very concerned about the situation with PolyVision." The tariffs 25 percent on imported steel and 10 percent on imported aluminum are designed to protect and rebuild the U.S. companies that manufacture the metals. The U.S. temporarily exempted several major trading

partners, including the European Union, Mexico and Canada.

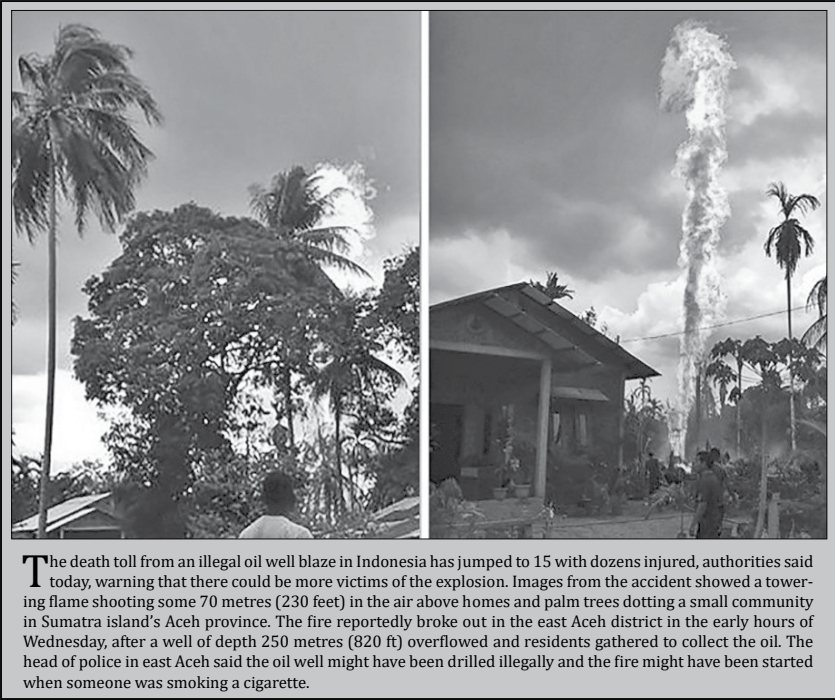
China, which was left on the target list, retaliated by imposing tariffs on USD 3 billion in US products, including apples, pork and ginseng.

Trump responded by adding more protectionist measures as punishment for Chinese theft of US intellectual property. And Beijing punched back by proposing tariffs on 50 billion in U.S. products including small aircraft and soybeans a direct threat to rural areas that were key to Trump's victory.

Economists Joseph Francois and Laura Baughman estimated last month that the tariffs would increase employment in the U.S. steel and aluminum industries by more than 26,000 jobs but also lead to the loss of 495,000 other jobs throughout the rest of the American economy.

John Hritz, CEO of JSW Steel USA in Baytown, Texas, said his company is in lockstep with Trump's approach.

"We're in favor of growing the steel industry in this country," Hritz said. JSW Steel, owned by Indian conglomerate JSW Group, is embarking on a USD 500 million overhaul of the plant that it says will create hundreds of jobs.



The death toll from an illegal oil well blaze in Indonesia has jumped to 15 with dozens injured, authorities said today, warning that there could be more victims of the explosion. Images from the accident showed a towering flame shooting some 70 metres (230 feet) in the air above homes and palm trees dotting a small community in Sumatra island's Aceh province. The fire reportedly broke out in the east Aceh district in the early hours of Wednesday, after a well of depth 250 metres (820 ft) overflowed and residents gathered to collect the oil. The head of police in east Aceh said the oil well might have been drilled illegally and the fire might have been started when someone was smoking a cigarette.

## Iran's Rouhani questions 'right' to seek new nuclear deal

**TABRIZ, APR 25 (AFP):** Iran's President Hassan Rouhani today questioned the legitimacy of demands for a fresh nuclear agreement with Tehran, after the leaders of the US and France called for a "new" deal.

"Together with a leader of a European country they say: 'We want to decide on an agreement reached by seven parties'. What for? With what right?" Rouhani said in a speech.

US President Donald Trump has fiercely criticised a three-year-old deal reached by world powers to curb Iran's nuclear programme, and threatened to pull the US out of the agreement.

Trump is eyeing a broader pact that also limits Iran's ballistic missile programme and support for armed groups across the Middle East.

European signatories to the 2015 deal have been scrambling to salvage it, with French President



Emmanuel Macron saying Tuesday after talks with Trump that he wished "for now to work on a new deal with Iran".

Iran has repeatedly insisted it is sticking to the nuclear deal and will not negotiate over its missile programme.

Rouhani took aim at Trump -- a former real estate mogul and TV reality star -- and accused him of lacking in experience.

"You are just a businessman... you have no experience in politics or law or international agreements," he said. "How can he pass judgements on international affairs?" Rouhani insisted that by agreeing to the nuclear accord in 2015 Tehran "showed goodwill to the world". "We wanted to prove to the world that Iran does not seek to acquire weapons of mass destruction."

NAGALAND STATE LOTTERIES		
DEAR FAITHFUL MORNING	DEAR VALUABLE	DEAR EAGLE EVENING
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**ALL SMILES:** DEEPIKA PADUKONE IS ALL SMILES AS SHE POSES FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS AT THE TIME 100 GALA.

## INSTAGRAM NOW LETS YOU SHARE MULTIPLE PHOTOS AND VIDEOS AT ONCE ON STORIES

Instagram has announced a couple updates to Stories on Android, including the ability to upload multiple photos and videos all at once.

Previously, if you wanted to post several photos or videos to your Instagram story, you would have to go through the process for every individual piece of media. Now, when Android users go to upload media, there will be a new icon in the top right corner of the screen. Once you tap it, your phone's gallery will display and you can select up to 10 photos and videos to post in one shot. Once the content is selected, you'll see a preview of how it all looks together, and have the option to add stickers, text, and other decorations to each one before uploading everything.

Being able to scoop a bunch of photos and videos to post at once is super handy and a time saver in several situations. Sometimes, you might want to hold on to things you've shot to make sure it's perfect before posting.

Along with this update, Instagram has also made another tweak with posting to your story. When you share a photo or video, the location sticker will automatically suggest places around where it was captured. It's a nice little shortcut, and could also help if you need a memory jog.

These updates are now available on Android, and will be coming to iOS in the following weeks.



## 'VEERE DI WEDDING' TRAILER GIVES FUN-FILLED GLIMPSE INTO LIVES OF FOUR FRIENDS

The trailer of the highly-anticipated Veere Di Wedding was revealed on Wednesday and promises to be a fun-filled ride. The trailer was unveiled at a grand event in Mumbai and gives us a glimpse into the sisterhood and lives of four friends -- Kareena Kapoor Khan, Sonam Kapoor, Swara Bhaskar and Shikha Talsania.

The comedy-drama produced by Rhea Kapoor revolves around Kareena Kapoor's wedding to her boyfriend and shows that she is not ready for the commitment and rituals of a traditional Indian wedding.

The trailer is packed with fun, comedy, unfiltered conversations, strong characters and the beautiful bond between friends.

Speaking at the trailer launch, Kareena said she liked the film as soon as she read the script.

Regarding getting back to work right after giving birth, she said, "I'm very lucky to have a husband who is so understanding. It's Saif Ali Khan who kind of pushed me to hit the gym and work and set an example to a lot of mothers."

Meanwhile, Sonam said that shooting Veere Di Wedding was "the most fun" she has had shooting for a film.

"Kareena is my favorite hero to work with. People expect women to pull other women down. What's amazing is to bond together and rule the world," she added.

Veere Di Wedding will hit the screens on June 1 this year.

## BTS' 'DNA' BECOMES MOST-VIEWED MUSIC VIDEO BY A K-POP GROUP ON YOUTUBE

Over the weekend, BTS' ARMY got to celebrate a new milestone: The band's "DNA" is now the most-viewed YouTube video by a K-pop group of all time.

On Sunday, the septet's "DNA" surpassed BIGBANG's "Fantastic Baby," which had long since been the most-viewed video from a K-pop group since its release in March 2012. At press time, "DNA" -- which was released on Sept. 17 -- has exceeded 349 million views, compared to 348.1 million of "Fantastic Baby."

The single is one of two BTS videos along with "Fire" to exceed the 300 million view milestone, while three others -- "Blood Sweat & Tears," "Mic Drop (Steve Aoki Remix)," "Not Today" and "Save Me"-- have surpassed 200 million views.

"DNA" landed at No. 67 on the Hot 100 last year.

TWICE's "TT" is the next most-viewed music video by a K-pop group, and currently has just under 347.17 million views. Videos from BIGBANG



and BlackPink have also surpassed the 300 million views milestone.

Psy remains the Korean solo artist with the most-viewed video on YouTube, with "Gangnam Style" currently sitting at over 3.14 billion views.

The accomplishment precedes the release of Love Yourself: Tear next month. The LP will be BTS' third full-length album since 2013.

It is highly anticipated, and has already become a best-seller on Amazon's CD & Vinyl list through pre orders despite it not being released until May 18. Tear will be the group's first album since September's Love Yourself: Her, which preceded the boy band's performances at the AMAs and Dick Clark's Rock-in' New Year's Eve last year.

BTS will also become the first-ever K-pop group to per-

form at the Billboard Music Awards next month, where they are nominated for the Top Social Artist award.

The news was announced on social media and on top of it all, BTS will be giving fans the world television premiere of their new single when they take the stage. The group will also release their Love Yourself: Tear album just two days before their appearance at the awards show.

## ROBERT DOWNEY JR. GIVES EMOTIONAL SPEECH AT INFINITY WAR PREMIERE

Robert Downey Jr. delivered an emotional speech at the Avengers: Infinity War premiere last night. The 19th film in the Marvel Cinematic Universe, Infinity War brings the franchise's many super-heroes together to battle their most dangerous adversary yet, Thanos. Given that he's been saving the world for almost a decade now, it makes sense that Tony Stark aka. Iron Man is at the forefront of the looming battle against this intergalactic villain.

Since launching the MCU in 2008 with Iron Man, RDJ has reprised his iconic superhero role eight times (with another one coming in next year's Avengers 4). There's been talk about the actor walking away from his Marvel gig for years now, and Downey Jr. has candidly said that he wants to retire from the MCU "before it's embarrassing." Many feel that Stark biting the bullet for the greater good in either Infinity War or the still-untitled Avengers 4 is perhaps the best way to cap off the character's tremendous personal narrative.

Taking the stage just before the first full screening of Infinity War went down last night, RDJ got the audience both laughing and tearing up a bit as he looked back at the last 10 years of the MCU, and reflect on what the fu-



ture will bring. During his speech, the actor also subtly reflected on the difficult journey he had before landing his career-changing role as Tony Stark/Iron Man in the MCU more than a decade ago:

"I want to talk about the past, present, and future. The past for me was 30 years of dependency, depravity, and despair .... otherwise known as 'An Actor Prepares!' The present is this moment of glory for all of us. And the future...? That is always uncertain. But looking at these friends behind me, it seems like things might brighten up after all. None of us are in competition with each other. We are all competing for each other -- and for you."

After (respectfully) chastising Marvel Studios' lack of diversity, especially behind the camera, RDJ went on to laud the company for changing its

ways starting with the upcoming Captain Marvel movie. He also acknowledge Black Panther's impressive success and even did the now-iconic Wakandan salute. The actor's tone got more serious when he started talking about how these films can actually make a difference in the real world:

"This is the MCU, right in front of you. It's all about fighting for equality. The whole idea is to make space for others to succeed, and exceed our expectations. [The movies] are inviting us to surrender and love and be of service. They are metaphors for how our world should be -- or could be one day, if we fight for it."

But before he handed the microphone to Infinity War directors, Joe and Anthony Russo, the actor didn't forget to thank those who have been with him since the beginning of the MCU -- Iron Man director

Jon Favreau, who was a major proponent of his casting, and Gwyneth Paltrow, who plays Stark's romantic interest, Pepper Potts. The three of them (including Favreau who also stars in the MCU as Happy Hogan) are set to appear on-screen together for the fifth time in next year's Avengers 4. Depending on how everything pans out, it may be the last time fans will see all of them in a MCU film together.

RDJ was naturally emotional during the speech, considering that he's part of the original team that kick started the franchise. And since he's the godfather of the MCU, it's his job to usher in new talents joining the film series and hype people up for what's to come. But it can't also be helped thinking that this may very well be his farewell speech before he officially retires as the genius, billionaire, playboy, and philanthropist. It's no secret that Tony Stark, alongside Thor and Steve Rogers, are the top three characters poised to die in the forthcoming films because of the emotional impact that their deaths would have. Fans won't have to worry yet, however, as regardless of what goes down in Avengers: Infinity War, all aforementioned heroes are still set to appear in Avengers 4.



## THIS WEEK'S TOP 10 SONGS ON BILLBOARD HOT 100

1. Drake- Nice For What
2. Drake- God's Plan
3. Bebe Rexha and Florida Georgia Line- Meant To Be
4. Post Malone featuring Ty Dolla Sign- Psycho
5. Zedd, Maren Morris and Grey- The Middle
6. BlocBoy JB featuring Drake- Look Alive
7. Ed Sheeran- Perfect
8. Lil Dicky featuring Chris Brown- Freaky Friday
9. Cardi B, Bad Bunny and J Balvin- I Like It
10. Nicki Minaj- Chun-Li

**ARIES:** You can relax a little at last! That's what you could be thinking with today's celestial energy. The time is perfect to get ready for the challenges that up to now were just anxieties inside you. If you're thinking clearly today, Aries, it's because you have the strength to face your problems. Now that you have your self-confidence back, you might open your heart even wider to someone dear.

**TAURUS:** You're interested in better understanding yourself and your reactions to the world around you. Well, Taurus, today you should take the time to look over your successes and failures, especially where your family life is concerned. The at-

mosphere is changing and things will be much more positive over the next few days. Think about sharing with other people what you have learned.

**GEMINI:** This is a perfect day for falling in love, Gemini! You can expect anything to happen today. You could even meet someone who is ready to love, support, and listen to you when you need him or her most. You need to put all your fears and hesitations behind you on a day like today. Besides, a little madness every now and then won't hurt. Throw caution to the wind! **CANCER:** Today, Cancer, you'll really be in the limelight. This could help you change what is sometimes a very negative im-

age you have of yourself. You have a certain kind of energy and magnetism about you - it's about time someone noticed! It's only natural that you should be proud of yourself, and that other people should acknowledge your hard work and effort. Revel in this moment of glory!

**LEO:** If you've been feeling a little under the weather, today's planetary configuration will make you feel a whole lot better, Leo. In a few days you'll have the strength to pick up where you left off on the projects you perhaps began last month. A lot of things are changing in your life. Your motivations are evolving and your ambitions could be taking a different direction.

**VIRGO:** Today is another passionate day in a series of passionate days! Usually, Virgo, you're a fairly reserved person where feelings are concerned. You'll be much more demonstrative with your emotions over the next few days. You can be like a fire trapped inside a wall of ice, and today that ice is beginning to melt! Let it -- and enjoy it! **LIBRA:** If you come across someone a little strange or eccentric today, try and get to know him or her, because that person could be a reflection of part of you. The person will help you to see how modern and innovative you are, and how much you should appreciate your wonderful qualities. Meeting this person

could be a kind of exercise in self-satisfaction.

**SCORPIO:** If you often help people in need, or if helping people is part of your profession, this day will bring certain ideas to light, Scorpio. You need to take the time on a regular basis to take care of yourself. If you don't, you won't be able to continue to help others. Think about it and stop making excuses for why you can't do it. Think of yourself for a change.

**SAGITTARIUS:** One couldn't really say that you have a hard time making decisions regarding your love life, Sagittarius. You're a passionate person and you believe in love at first sight. You're probably the most spontaneous lover in your immediate circle!

Add to that, you're entering a period in which your emotions will be heightened. All the elements are there to ignite your creativity in every aspect of your life.

**CAPRICORN:** You enjoy reaping rewards for all your efforts. But in your love life, you have to admit that you can never be sure of the quantity or the quality of the fruits of your labors. Yet, today, Capricorn, you could realize that it's time to plant some new seeds. You might not know how they'll turn out, but you do know better than anyone else that you can't win if you don't play.

**AQUARIUS:** You probably know that you don't attain freedom in one fell swoop, but rather bit by bit as you go through

life, Aquarius. Perhaps you've been feeling as if you don't have enough freedom. Over the next few days you could find the situations or people you need in order to liberate yourself. Don't forget that love is the greatest freedom of all. It could be time to make room for it in your life.

**PISCES:** Throughout the day you may get the feeling that something has changed in the way people relate to each other, Pisces. It will be as if people are surer of themselves, more open, more expressive. Where, exactly, do you fit into all of this? Are you in a mood to charm other people just for fun? This period is perfect for taking care of your appearance and getting in shape. Do it!