

SummitTIMES

Vol 03 | Issue 102 | Gangtok | Thurssday | 19 April 2018

O N T O P O F T H E N E W S

RNI No. SIKENG/2016/69420

Pages 8 | ₹ 5

CM lays foundation stone of Gaushala at Mamring

MAMRING/ RHENOCK, 18 APR (IPR): The ninth day of the 32-day Jan Seva Abhiyan of the Chief Minister reached Mamring under Rhenock constituency in East Sikkim today.

The highlight of the day was the foundation stone laying ceremony of the Gaushala in the area (see accompanying pic) which was preceded by all-faith prayers. This Gaushala at Mamring Chakkapey, upon completion, will be able to house 256 cows.

The CM then proceeded to Mamring where the public had gathered for his address.

The programme began with a welcome ad-



dress by area MLA Hemendra Adhikari who placed thanked the Chief Minister of behalf of the people of the constitu-

ency for the Gaushala which, he said, would be a boon for the people of the area and the State as well.

He further stated that development in the area and the State was possible only due to the far-sighted stewardship of

the Chief Minister.

The Chief Minister, in his address, shared his happiness and gratitude at the overwhelming re-

ception by the public at Mamring.

Speaking on the setting up of a Gaushala in the area, the Chief Minister hoped that the Gaushala would benefit the people of the area and directed the concerned officials to expedite the construction process and complete the Gaushala even earlier than the proposed time frame.

He took note of the demands placed by the locals and assured that they would be addressed at the earliest.

Addressing the students in attendance, the Chief Minister urged them to realize

turn to pg02

Sikkim selected for six National Awards in Panchayati Raj

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 18 APR: Sikkim's Rural Management & Development Department has been named for six National Awards for excellence in Panchayati Raj which will be officially conferred on it later this month.

The State has won three Deen Dayal Upadhyay Panchayat Sashaktiran Puraskar, one e-Puraskar, Nanaji Deshmukh Rashtriya Gaurav Gram Sabha Puraskar and Gram Panchayat Development Plan Award, bringing the total tally of National Awards to five.

One of the Deen Dayal Upadhyay Panchayat Sashaktikaran Puraskar will be conferred to South District Zilla Panchayat while the other two Deen Dayal Upadhyay Panchayat Sashaktikaran Puraskar will be conferred to Martam Gram Panchayat Unit,

West Sikkim and Namphing Gram Panchayat, South Sikkim respectively.

Sikkim managed to secure the first position among first-category States for excellence in implementation of e-Panchayati initiatives.

Sikkim also bagged one of the three National Awards for effective implementation of Gram Panchayat Development Plan in the very first year of the institution of such an Award by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, informs the release.

Gram Panchayat Development Plan Award will be conferred to Maniram Phalidara Gram Panchayat, South Sikkim. The awards will be handed over by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the occasion of National Panchayat Raj Day on 24 Apr at Jabalpur in Madhya Pradesh.

Cash crunch: SBI Research pegs shortfall at Rs 70,000 cr

MUMBAI, APR 18 (PTI): Even as government and Reserve Bank have asserted that there is no currency shortage, SBI Research today pegged the cash shortfall in the system at a whopping Rs 70,000 crore, which is a third of the monthly withdrawals at ATMs.

In a note that comes a day after reports of currency shortages made national headlines, it depended on nominal economic growth, currency with the public and the rise in digital transactions to arrive at the shortfall estimate.

A 9.8 per cent nominal GDP growth would have taken the currency available with the public to Rs 19.4 trillion by March 2018, as against the actual availability of Rs 17.5 trillion, it said, stressing that the gap of Rs 1.9 trillion is not the shortfall.

The proportion of digital transactions stands at a low Rs 1.2 trillion only, much down the immediate months following the November 2016 note-ban.

"The apparent shortfall thus could be around Rs 70,000 crore or even less," it said.

The note estimates that Rs 15,291 billion were withdrawn from ATMs through debit cards in the second half of FY18, which is a good 12.2 per cent growth over the previous six months.

Reacting to reports of the currency shortage, it said the currency in circulation has breached the pre-note ban levels of Rs 17.84 trillion and added that such reports are "intriguing and defy logic".

The report explains that a part of the rea-

turn to pg02

SPCC holds demonstration in Lal Bazaar against veggie ban

SAGAR CHETTRI

GANGTOK, 18 APR: Sikkim Pradesh Congress Committee (SPCC) held a demonstration at Lal Bazaar today against the ban on import of non-organic vegetables imposed by the state government. An SPCC team led by its president, Bharat Basnet, wore black masks, and with hands tied with chains toured the vegetable market at Kanchenjunga Shopping Complex.

Mr Basnet criticized the state government for the ban, which he said, deprives people of their basic human rights since it forced not only shortage but also much more expensive purchases.

He alleged that it is 'injustice and suppression' of the freedom and



fundamental rights of the people in the State.

While criticizing the government for burying seized non-organic vegetables at Majhitar, he said, "Not vegetables but humanity was buried

that day."

He asserted that if the Government really wants to enforce the ban then it should provide subsidy to make organic vegetables affordable for all people.

Mr Basnet further said that establishing an organic market at Gangtok will not fulfill the demand of the entire State.

"We have already survived 18 days of the ban but there is no sub-

stantial technological evidence or test to prove that the produce being sold right now is organic," he said.

He alleged that it is just propaganda by the state government to fulfill vested interests and gain publicity.

Mr Basnet further said that if the state government is sincere in the mission then it should have an authentic certification agency to certify the soil and produce of the State.

He also asserted that the government should withdraw its notification on the ban. He also urged the people to understand their fundamental rights.

SPCC announced another demonstration in front of the Mahatma Gandhi Statue at M.G Marg on Thursday.

Erasing history: On World Heritage Day, experts raise voice

KUNAL DUTT

NEW DELHI, APR 18 (PTI): Author Amit Chaudhuri's heart sinks every time he sees a sign up on the boundary walls of old Kolkata bungalows, announcing their impending demolition. He sees the sign as an obit notice for another building that has long been a part of the city.

"While travelling on Theatre Road, and seeing those signages put up on the boundary walls of bungalows by private builders, announcing their impending demolition, I feel a sense of incredulity, on how the city is relentlessly doing this (demolishing its heritage)," he rued.

Angered by the loss of architectural legacy, a group of people took to the streets today in Kolkata to highlight the importance of built heritage in urban landscape.

To mark World Heritage Day and exert pressure on the West Bengal government, the march -- organised by the Calcutta Architectural Legacies (CAL), a citizens' initiative led by Chaudhuri -- started from the Subodh Mullick Square and winded up in front of the office of the Kolkata Municipal Corporation (KMC).

From Kolkata to Bengaluru to Mumbai and Delhi, there is rising

concern over the destruction of heritage structures.

In Kolkata, activists including Chaudhuri and INTACH Kolkata Chapter's convener G M Kapur are worried over the fate of the colonial-era 'Old Kenilworth Hotel' on Little Russel Street.

They claim it has been "downgraded from its Grade IIA status" to make way for its demolition and allege that a branch of the 19th-century Metropolitan Institution in Pathuriaghata has met with a similar fate.

"Calcutta was a city of great architecture, arts and space and urban aesthetics. Slowly, we lost so many beautiful buildings of such immense architectural, cultural and historical value. And, the Kenliworth and Metropolitan cases, perhaps, proved the last straw. So, we are protesting," the author told PTI.

In Bengaluru, the over 100-year-old Krumbiegel Hall in Lalbagh was demolished last November, triggering outrage among heritage lovers.

Now the Asiatic Life Assurance Company building, which houses the Janatha Bazaar, is facing demolition, local activists, who also held a protest recently, alleged.

The building on Kempe Gowda

Road was inaugurated in 1935 by then Mysore Yuvaraja Kanteerava Narasimharaja Wadiyar, said Bengaluru-based conservation architect Yashaswini Sharma.

"Tangible heritage such as the Janatha Bazaar are landmarks and serve as links that narrate the story of the development of the city. In the event of disappearance of such landmarks, one feels disconnected with the history of the place," Sharma said.

Mumbai-based urban conservationist Kamalika Bose said while the city has a law that allowed it to protect not just buildings but also precincts, there was a threat to structures outside the ambit of the legislation.

"The Fort area has heritage regulation but outside that zone, old buildings, not listed, continue to face the onslaught of urban expansion and concrete invasion," she said.

Kapur of the West Bengal Chapter of the Indian Trust of Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) said the KMC has about 900 heritage buildings on its list and alleged the number was going down.

"A part of the building of the Metropolitan Institution's Bara Bazaar

branch on Prasanna Coommar Tagore Street is being demolished. It was a Grade IIB building, which means it cannot be demolished. For demolition, buildings are being downgraded," Kapur alleged.

The KMC, however, denied the allegation. No heritage building had been delisted in the last one year, said Subrata Sil, director-general, project management unit of the KMC.

"Our current laws do not allow delisting of heritage buildings," he said.

On the status of the Metropolitan Institution Building, Sil said, "We have received complaints that some work is being done without taking requisite permission. We are inquiring into it."

Kapur believed that the process of grading a building was opaque.

"We don't even know when Kenilworth was downgraded. Maybe a year ago," he said, adding that the Gholam Rasool Mosque, a Grade-I heritage structure in Park Circus, was demolished in 2015 to make way for a bigger mosque.

Kolkata had served as the capital of the British Empire till 1911 and is endowed with a wealth of architectural beauties.

Chaudhuri said urban con-

servationists, heritage lovers and "well-meaning people inside the government" had been feeling this "terrible sense of frustration" of just mutely watching one building after another disappear.

If old monochrome images of Chowringhee and the Maidan and postcards bearing pictures of buildings in Dalhousie Square still evoke the grandeur of the city that once rivalled London and New York, Mumbai is known for its Art Deco structures and Victorian-Gothic architecture.

"In 1995, Mumbai established itself as the first Indian city to adopt heritage regulations for the protection of its urban heritage under the Heritage Regulations for Greater Bombay," Bose said.

In Delhi, a legal battle is being fought for the protection of old havelis in the city. The Shahjahanabad area in the Walled City is a goldmine of history but many of its havelis have either vanished or face the onslaught of modernity.

Author Chaudhuri lamented that heritage was seldom taken up by the intelligentsia which "talks of politics, climate change and even literature". "Architecture, sadly, has never been part of the conversation," he said.

Sikkimese students bag fourth position in national level exhibition

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 18 APR:

Sikkimese students studying in Dev Bhoomi Group of Institutions, Dehradun have bagged 04th position in a national level exhibition 'Navadhara 2K18' held at Dehradun on 16 and 17 Apr.

Three students of Sikkim namely Dewash Dahal, Shaheel Pradhan and Prawant Lama Tamang had represented Department of Agriculture in the exhibition.

In a brief interaction with the team leader Dewash Dahal, who hails from

Namchi South Sikkim, he informed that their model was based on the principle of adsorption and was called 'Pollution Controller Chimney'.

It was further informed that the project was initiated by Bikash Pradhan, a teacher in Namchi Senior Secondary School.

The project has been highly appreciated by the jury members and the college administration also informed that they are going to patent the Pollution Controller Chimney designed by the students of Sikkim.



Cash crunch: SBI Research pegs...

contd from pg01

son why the shortage is being felt could be the introduction and faster-acceleration in printing Rs 200 notes.

"This may have altered the demand for smaller denomination notes in a larger way to possibly substitute for the currency of larger denominations," it said.

"As ATMs have to be replenished more frequently, it can lead to the conjecture that cash is not available," the report added.

It can be noted that in a statement, the RBI had yesterday attributed the shortage to "logistical issues" in both replenishing ATMs with cash and also recalibrating those to accommodate the Rs 200 notes.

The higher level of economic activity in the fourth quarter may have also resulted in more withdrawals at ATMs, the report said in the note.

The report also dismisses notions of the rising demand being due to proposals in the Financial Resolution and Deposit Insurance Bill, saying those were mooted over five months ago.

But it can be noted that the cash crunch originated in the Southern states, particularly in Andhra and Telangana last month following rumours that money in banks is not safe due to a certain provision in the proposed Financial Resolution and Deposit Insurance Bill 2017, finance ministry officials had said yesterday.

The most contentious part in the Bill is a suggestion to have a "bail-in" provision, which if incorporated result in cancellation of a liability on the part of the bank and can extend to bank deposits.

This Bill also seeks to set up a resolution corporation with powers relating to transfer of assets to a healthy financial firm, merger or amalgamation or liquidation.

The proposed corporation will have power to use depositors money to save a failing bank.

Government tabled the Bill last August in the Lok Sabha, which was referred to a Joint Committee of Parliament.

It was supposed to come up in the Winter Session that was a complete washout.

Prog on ICS and Organic Certification held at Samlik Marchak

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 18 APR:

International Panacea Limited, a Service Provider Agency under Sikkim Organic Mission, Government of Sikkim, organised a Gram Panchayat Unit level programme on Internal Control Systems [ICS] for Organic Certification and organic vegetable production at Samlik Marchak, East Pendim today, a press release informs.

Horticulture Development Officer, Sherap Palden Lepcha and Agriculture Inspector, Meena Sharma, informed about the different types of schemes such as Pradhan Mantri Krishi Vikas Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Krishi Si-



tionaries and locals attended the programme.

Agriculture Inspector, Meena Sharma, informed about the different types of schemes such as Pradhan Mantri Krishi Vikas Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Krishi Si-

chai Yojana and Rashtriya Krishi Vikash Yojana. She also emphasized on Mission Organic Value Chain Development [MOVCD] and Crop Insurance for the farmers' community. She further explained about

soil health and soil test HDO, Sherap Palden Lepcha, addressing the farmers highlighted about production of vegetables and other crops in both summer and winter season. He talked about

the present market value of leafy and leguminous vegetables and educated farmers on crop rotation, land and manure preparation and organic seeds and seed treatment for different crops

IPL Block in-charge, Pushpa Lal Dahal mentioned about the standard of Organic Certification and mandates for ICS such as Aadhaar Card Number and Bank Account of each farmer to be recorded in the documentation. He also briefed the gathering about National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP) and National Organic Program (NOP).

RMDD launches nationwide Gram Swaraj Abhiyan in Sikkim

GANGTOK, 18 APR [IPR]:

Directorate of Panchayati Raj, Rural Management and Development Department has announced a string of activities to be conducted during the nation-wide outreach campaign 'Gram Swaraj Abhiyan' from 14 Apr to 05 May.

Government of India had previously directed all the State Governments of the country to observe the period starting from the birth anniversary of Dr. BR Ambedkar on 14 Apr to 05 May as Gram Swaraj Abhiyan.

The initiative aims for 100% coverage of seven schemes launched by Central Government for eligible beneficiaries in the three-week window from 14 Apr to 05 May.

The seven schemes covered under it are Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana, Ujala scheme, Saubhagya, Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana, Prad-

han Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana and Mission Indradhanush.

A press release informs that the Central Government has appointed around 600 officials per District of Director/Deputy Secretary/Under Secretary level to monitor and document the Abhiyan activities district wise in three separate spells.

According to the release Sikkim has been assigned four teams to take stock of the activities under Gram Swaraj Abhiyan. The first segment of the field visits of the team assigned for East District has already covered Ronggyek Tathangchen GPU, Kopi Bari Shyari GPU and Rey Mindu GPU.

Four more GPUs under Additional District Collector, Pakyong namely Aho Yangtham GP, Parakha GP, Riwa Machong GP and Latuk Chuchenperi GP are

scheduled to be inspected by the officials this week.

Central Government officials for inspection of other districts have also arrived, reads the release.

14 Apr was observed as Samajik Nyaya Diwas (Social Justice Day) while 18 Apr was observed as Swachh Bharat Day (Swachh Bharat Diwas).

20 Apr will be observed as Ujjala Divas, 24 Apr as Rashtriya Panchayati Raj Diwas, 28 Apr as Gram Swaraj Divas, 30 Apr as Ayushman Bharat Divas, 02 May as Farmers Welfare Day and lastly, 05 May as Aajeevika Divas.

Chief Secretary, Government of Sikkim has issued a direction to the Line Departments Secretaries, District Collectors for converging their schemes for compliance in the District and Gram Panchayat level, reads the release.



Chardham Yatra begins in Uttarakhand

UTTARKASHI (U'KHAND),

APR 18 (PTI): The annual Chardham Yatra in Uttarakhand began today on the auspicious occasion of Akshay Tritiya, with the portals of Gangotri and Yamunotri shrines thrown open to devotees amid elaborate rituals and chanting of Vedic hymns.

After being closed for nearly six months during winter, the gates of the Gangotri shrine were reopened at 1:15 PM and that of Yamunotri shrine were thrown open at 12:15 pm, officials of the temple committees concerned said.

The palanquin carrying the idol of Goddess Ganga reached the Gangotri temple at around 10 am from her winter

abode in Bhairav Ghati.

Special prayers were conducted by the priests for over three hours before the formal opening of the portals, secretary of Gangotri temple committee Suresh Semwal said.

A similar ceremony was held at Yamunotri, secretary of the temple committee Kriteswar Uniyal said.

The portals of Kedarnath and Badrinath shrines, the other two major temples of the Chardham Yatra, are scheduled to be reopened on April 29 and April 30 respectively.

All these Himalayan temples in Uttarakhand are visited by lakhs of pilgrims from across the country and abroad every year.

SDF counters SKM allegations on State OBC benefits

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 18 APR:

Sikkim Democratic Front party has advised the Sikkim Krantikari Morcha not to create misinformation among the people by politicizing every issue. The party has further suggested that SKM not deceive the people with the politics of press releases.

An SDF press release issued by its publicity secretary, Chudamani Mishra, states that the SDF Government had provided State OBC status to Chettri, Bahun and Newar communities in the year 2003 itself and that these communities have been enjoying all their rights and benefits under this status in the State ever since.

The release adds that the SDF government has

provided all possible reservations in social, economic, political and other areas to all communities of Sikkim under the inclusive and proportionate system.

The SDF government has done an exemplary work in the country by providing State OBC recognition to Chettri, Bahun and Newar, who have been left out from Centre OBC list, the release adds.

The release further mentions that the SDF Government and the Chief Minister himself have been working tirelessly for tribal status recognition for the eleven left out communities of the State. It is added that all these demands of the State were now on the verge of the fulfillment.



Prez condemns Kathua gangrape, murder

KAKRIYAL (REASI),

APRIL 18 (PTI): President Ram Nath Kovind today termed as "barbaric" the Kathua gangrape and murder case and said it was the collective responsibility of society to ensure such things do not happen with any girl in the country.

The President spoke on the matter while addressing the 6th convocation of the Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University here.

"It is the collective responsibility of all of us, anything like this should not happen with any girl in any part of the country", he said, terming the incident as "heinous and barbaric".

The president said he was hopeful that "all among us will fulfill the responsibility of secur-

ing our girl child".

The brutal gang rape and murder of the eight-year-old girl has already seen a nationwide outrage with protests being observed across the country.

Earlier in the day the president arrived here on his maiden two-day visit to Jammu.

The president was received by Governor N N Vohra, Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti, Legislative Assembly Speaker Kavinder Gupta and Legislative Council Chairman Haji Anayat Ali at the Technical airport here, a spokesperson said.

Deputy Chief Minister Nirmal Singh and Revenue Minister Abdul Rehman Veeri were among those who received the president.

to book
advertisements in
SummitTimes, call
03592-208698
9734152541

CM lays foundation stone of Gaushala at Mamring

Contd from pg01

the value of education and informed them that the State government has implemented various pro students schemes and policies like the setting up of different specialized colleges in the State and the provision of free education among others.

He stated that education, along with pure thought, was what will foster individual growth and bring about change in the society.

The Chief Minister also made some significant announcements today and directed govt officials to fol-

low-up:

- The process of allotting unused government lands to the Sukhumbasi is to be initiated immediately by the concerned Districts Collectors in consultation with the Panchyats and MLAs immediately.

- Unused government lands will be allotted to religious institutions for crematoriums, graveyards etc.

- All under-construction houses falling under various state and central schemes to be completed at the earliest.

- 3000 houses to be completed within one year for the

rightful beneficiaries.

- Various benefits of the State government have been distributed at Janta Melas/ Gram Swaraj Abhiyan and the process will continue.

- All the grievances of the public to be kept in mind while framing regulations and policies.

- The youth were urged to come forward with innovative and progressive ideas and take optimum benefit of the facilities being provided by the government.

- The government to set up roadside shops in coordination with concerned MLAs

in the rural areas for those interested in selling their locally grown products.

- Pensions, including kisan pension, old age pension, disability pension amongst others to be released at the earliest.

- School upgradation work all over the state to be initiated. Rorathang School and Mamring School to be upgraded.

- PHSCs, dispensaries and safe drinking water facilities in the area to be undertaken.

- Sikkim to target TB-free status by 2022. BPL patients to be allotted travel allowance

and provided free treatment.

- Girl child from 9-14 years to be given free HPV vaccination against cervical cancer.

In conclusion, he highlighted the various pro-people and pro-development initiatives of the state government.

Earlier in the day, the Chief Minister was felicitated by the people of Rhenock constituency for the various developmental Initiatives in the area; by members of the local Takchang and Sunakhari SHG who presented him with fresh organic produce of the area; and the

ICDS women workers of the area presented the Chief Minister with silk scarves in gratitude for the recent increase in their wages.

Earlier, Principal Chief Engineer, Rural Management and Development Department, Shital Pradhan, presented the technical report of the Gaushala.

Cheques and silk scarves were also presented by the Chief Minister to the land owners who donated land for the Gaushala.

Students of Mamring Secondary School presented a cultural show.

*Gangtok on
Thursday,
19 Apr*

Temp: 24°C / 12°C
Forecast: Mostly
cloudy; a thunder-
stormer in spots
in the morning,
then afternoon
thundershowers.
Sunrise: 05:08 AM
Sunset: 6:02 PM

Sri Sri Ravi Shankar conferred with International Leadership Award in LA

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 18 APR:

Founder of Art of Living, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, was conferred the Simon Wiesenthal Center's International Leadership Award at a ceremony held at the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles on 16 Apr, a press release informs.

He was recognized for promoting human dignity, interfaith relations and tolerance among people, reads the release.

The ceremony was attended by several Government officials, Congressmen, Mayors and Council Members of 28 cities across California, and Ambassadors of Japan, Sweden, Myanmar, Brazil, Mexico, Germany, Netherlands, Switzerland, Azerbaijan, Italy, Czech Republic and Turkey.

Ink shortage at Govt mint, say unions

NASHIK, APR 18 (PTI):

Non-availability of ink has resulted in a halt in printing of Rs 200 and Rs 500 denomination banknotes at the Currency Note Press here, an employees' union leader claimed today.

"The ink used to print the notes is imported, which is not available now, leading to a halt in printing of these Rs 200 and Rs 500 banknotes," Jagdish Godse, the president of press workers federation told reporters here.

He said this can be one of the reasons why there is a shortage of notes at the national level, stating that the press in Nashik Road area is one of the leading ones engaged in printing all the denominations, except the Rs 2,000 bills.

However, he did not specify when the printing of notes stopped.

Usually, the Reserve Bank gives an order for printing after which the CNP, a unit of Security Printing and Minting Corporation of India, starts printing, he said, adding the government-run mint is awaiting central bank's orders to start printing.

The company falls under the finance ministry, which takes care of its daily functioning, and not the Reserve Bank, he said.

The comments come a day after government ordered a five-fold increase in printing of Rs 500 notes to supply up to Rs 75,000 crore worth of new notes next month.

turn to pg05

Meet Nosang Lomboo, the Butterfly Man of Sikkim

YOUGAN TAMANG

GANGTOK, 18 APR:

Nosang Limboo is a butterfly enthusiast, naturalist, wildlife photographer and a social worker from Sikkim. Born in Darap, West Sikkim, to Sushma Gurung and KB Limboo, Nosang studied at St. Mary's School, Gyalsing and Pelling Senior Secondary School and went on to graduate in English Literature from St. Joseph's College, Darjeeling.

Some time back, Nosang had penned a pictorial guide-book on butterflies and moths and has been extensively carrying out butterfly conservation in Sikkim.

SummitTimes caught with the naturalist during an event in Gangtok and tried to delve into his passion for butterflies, nature and environment. "As a student of English Literature, I always romanticized nature whenever possible in my writings. I have always been fascinated with nature. The rich green forests of the Northeast have always been very appealing to me and allured me to walk through its deepest woods and explore, whether it is the Namdhapha National Park in Arunachal Pradesh, Nameri National Park in Assam or our very own Khangchendzonga National Park. Every minute element of the forests makes me fall in love with the wild beauty that it is. I always get



passionate when I talk about nature," says Nosang.

When he ventured into tourism with 'The Himalayan Rumveek' travel agency with his friend Sonam Palzor Bhutia in the year 2009, Nosang did not yet know that he would become a butterfly enthusiast one day. That happened when he met Field Biologist Tarun Karmakar from the National Centre for Biological Sciences, Bangalore, and accompanied him to different parts of Sikkim as part of a research project on butterflies of Sikkim.

Looking at the enthralling photographs of butterflies shot and collected by Karmakar, Nosang was smitten and

slowly developed an urge to explore the world of butterflies through his camera as well.

His interest in butterflies soared and during the three-month tour with the Field Biologist, Nosang too had built an impressive portfolio of photographs of more than 200 butterflies from Sikkim.

"Sikkim has been blessed with unique flora and fauna. Sikkim is home to many species of butterflies, but sadly we, Sikkimese, especially the younger ones, have failed to recognize this wealth and are hardly aware of it. So this may be also considered as one of the reasons why I chose to

become a butterfly enthusiast and delve into the world of butterflies and make people aware of the wealth of butterflies that we all own," Nosang adds.

In the year 2013, Nosang became the first Sikkimese to write a pictorial guide book on butterflies of Sikkim when he published, 'The Flying Pearls of Sikkim' which included pictures, descriptions and taxonomic classification of the butterflies that he had collected during his field visit to different parts of the state.

Nosang was supported by Monsoon Jyoti Gogoi, Butterfly expert, Peter Smetecsek, Founder of Bhimal Butterfly

Research Centre and Issac Kehimkar, author of "The Book of Indian Butterflies" and Assistant Director of Bombay Natural History Society for the taxonomic classifications of the butterflies.

"The publishing and launch of the first 500 copies of the book was very tough for me because I lacked resources and was new to writing books. I had no idea about any publication house but Divisional Forest Officer (T), West Sikkim, Tshering Pintso Bhutia and my friends Sunit Dahal, Akhil Gurung, Usen Gurung supported me in all the way," said Nosang.

Nosang created history in the year 2014 by discovering 'Papilio xuthus asiatic swallowtail' butterfly from Walong, Arunachal Pradesh, India which was recognized by the Bombay Natural History Society.

The detailed scientific article on the same was also published in the Journal of Bombay Natural History Society in the year 2016.

Apart from being a butterfly enthusiast, Nosang also has maintains a keen interest in Ornithology. He is currently associated with the Sikkim Ornithological Society (SOS) and has been involved with various initiatives to promote and disseminate knowledge on birds and butterflies among the young minds of the

state.

Through SOS he has been engaged in distributing the 'Birds and Butterfly Charts' to around 500 schools across the State and has been conducting surveys and awareness programmes on birds and butterflies in many schools and villages. He is also creating bird calendars, and is actively involved in identifying bird watching areas in the State.

Besides his engagements with birds, butterflies and nature, he is also involved with many social organizations and initiatives.

Considering all the efforts and initiatives of Nosang, in the year 2015, a Delhi-based NGO, CMS Vatavaran conferred him with the 'Green Ambassador' award [2014-15].

"Walking around 30 kilometres everyday in the forests of Mukrung, Yuksam, Tashiding and Rimbi capturing butterflies with my camera was not really understood by my parents initially. Now, however, when I see many young faces around coming to me with high degree of inquisitiveness to understand butterflies, birds and biodiversity, I feel I have earned my life and somehow been successful in becoming a useful resource to my State and country," Nosang believes.

Today, Nosang Limboo is recognized as the "Butterfly Man of Sikkim".

State Govt has nothing to do with SU complex construction: SU

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 18 APR:

Sikkim University, in a press release, has said that construction of its campus is under the University Grants Commission and has nothing to do with the state government.

This is in response to recent allegations made by opposition parties against the State Government regarding the delay in completion

of Sikkim University campus at Yangang.

"Though we appreciate the concern regarding campus construction, Sikkim University is not a State University but a Central University established by an Act of Parliament. Construction of campus at Yangang depends on the flow of funds from the Central Government through University Grants Commission (UGC) to the

University for the purpose. State Government has nothing to do with Campus Construction or release of grants to Sikkim University," SU has clarified.

Bharatiya Janata Party Sikkim Pradesh had previously accused the state government of 'negligence and irresponsibility' regarding the delay in construction of Sikkim University complex at Yangang.



SLA conducts State level inter college debate competition

ARPAN PRADHAN

GANGTOK, 18 APR:

State level inter-college debate competition was held here at Chintan Bhawan in Gangtok today.

Organised by Sikkim Legislative Assembly Secretariat as a part of the Best Legislator Award function, the competition had participants from Government colleges from all four districts.

The results of the competition will be declared on 26 April during the Best Legislator Award Ceremony.

The first, second and third position winners will be awarded with cash prize of Rs 30,000, Rs 20,000 and Rs 10,000 respectively along with certificates and trophies.

The function today was attended by Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha), PD Rai as the chief guest. He was accompanied by Deputy Speaker, Sikkim Legislative Assembly, Sonam Gyatso Lepcha and former Speaker Kalawati Subba and KT Gyaltsen.

Members of the selection committee of the Best Legislator Award were also present on the occasion. The final round of the State level debate competition on 'Climate Change Debate - A Challenge For Legislators' had 20 finalists from different colleges of the State.

Sikkim Government Law College, Sikkim Government College Tadong, SGC Burtuk, SGC Gyalshing, SGC Mangshila, SGC Namchi, SGC Chakhung, SGC Rhenock and Sikkim Institute of Higher Ningma Studies were among the participating colleges.

Students from Deorali Girls School, West Point Senior Secondary School, Enchey SSS, Tadong SSS, Paljor Nam-

yal Girls SSS and Modern School also attended the programme.

Speaking on the occasion, the chief guest, Mr Rai congratulated the participants for being part of the event. He also congratulated the Sikkim Legislative Assembly Secretariat for coming up with a great initiative to organize the competition.

He urged the students to be well informed and talked on various topics.

He highlighted on various schemes and achievements of the State Government and expressed his happiness on being part of the programme.

Member of the Award Selection Committee and primary judge of the State level debate competition, KT Gyaltsen while addressing the function said that the event was fruitful and very informative.

He also gave a deliberation on the subject whilst appreciating the debater's role in making the event more informative and exciting. He elaborately explained the various forms which encompass democracy and the freedom it gives to an individual.

The judges of the debate competition were retired Principal Director, Rudra Poudyal, Head of Political Science Department [Sikkim University], Durga Prasad Pradhan, Additional Director, Department of Science and Technology and Climate Change, DG Shreshtha, and Principal Secretary, Forest and Wildlife Management Department, Government of Sikkim, Thomas Chandy.

A video of MP, PD Rai raising concerns over climate change and environmental issues in the Parliament was also shown during the function.



SummitTIMES

ON TOP OF THE NEWS

The Politics of Intolerance

Time to get worried and hold up the mirror more often

In a democracy, politics, despite all its subterfuge, should have been inclusive and about blurring divisions. If the endorsement of the people is required to achieve power, then the net would naturally require to be cast wider. Unfortunately, in the present times the world over and also in our country, the initial burst of wider consensus and ideology was lost to the convenience of vote-bank politics which continues to be commandeered to sail into power. A multi-party democracy has its many benefits, but a major fallout is the option it presents of slivers getting amplified when the masses have too many options giving rise to the curse of vote-bank politics. When there are many agents picking selective votes, even a minority endorsement ends up commanding majority control. The present dispensation at the Centre for instance, had more people not voting for it and still has dominant control of the Parliament. The problem with vote-bank politics is that it ends up corralling people to ensure en-masse endorsements. Corraling is antithetical to everything that democracy stands for but that is where we find ourselves now. Politics is being increasingly played to convince people to stay hemmed-in, a segregation put into effect by creating a situation which requires them to join ranks and hold the line against an “enemy”. It serves the leaders even better if people can also be called in to “defend” something they all hold dear. A look at the graph mapping the rise of right-wing politics in the country reveals how this consolidation happened, starting with a call which promoted a collective aspiration for a temple, and from thereon moving to realms of protecting their faith and flock and now, leapfrogging from hurt sentiments to extending their concepts of virtues and propriety to a wider population. Even if this imposition does not win new converts, it consolidates the base and keeps it busy doing what they believe is “right”.

But this process is fraught with dangers and we are already experiencing this macabre reality in the lives lost to marauding thugs who believe they are rakshaks (protectors) and in their wake arrive the bhakhs who defend and justify even the most heinous of excesses because they see a conspiracy even when it is fairness and justice that is being sought. We have always believed in stereotypes and have traditionally been prejudiced, but we have not always been this bloodthirsty and hateful, at least not so many of us. When one looks around for an explanation, the only new ingredient to our mix of mutual suspicions is the politics of deep divisions which has to now be recognized as the catalyst which has set light to the fuse.

Those scandalized by recent developments in which indefensible positions have been taken to defend something universally reprehensible as rape, would do well to remember that such experiments began with the unleashing of gau rakshaks and anti-romeo squads, and before that the ghettoisation of Muslims in Gujarat and the officially-endorsed demonization of conversions in Rajasthan and the genocide unleashed on the Sikhs before any of this happened. Take the “anti-conversion” Bill passed by the Rajasthan Legislative Assembly a little over a decade ago for instance. Even though understood as an anti-conversion Bill, this was actually named “Rajasthan Religious Freedom Act”. Even if they wanted to, the Rajasthan government could not, at least not at that time, ban conversions altogether because that would be against the secular Constitution of the country which allows every citizen the freedom to practice whichever religion she wants to and this includes her right to convert to another faith. Rajasthan, whether it wears BJP, RSS or Congress colours cannot deny anyone the right to abandon the faith they were born into and convert to another that appeals to them. And the Act made no such attempts either. It prohibited ‘conversion by use of force, allurement or fraudulent means.’ That said, no leader explained the fine print to saffron-blinded supporters. They just went to town claiming that they had banned conversions. A signal goes out, the supporters get emboldened and practitioners of religions which convert become easy targets. The same happens when a government goes after “illegal abattoirs” or tries to criminalise Triple Talaq after it has already been declared inconsequential by the Supreme Court.

You will never catch a leader admitting that they are painting enemies because they will always claim they are protecting the weak, but they are winking on the side all along, conveying a clear message that they are putting the other in its place, a signal to its frustrated mobs to take action and deliver violent justice. And while everyone squabbles, kills, rapes and walks free, vote-banks are being consolidated. India has probably the most clearly spelled-out Constitutions in the world which is explicitly secular. Unfortunately, vote-bank politics by all parties has lacerated this fabric and worrying trend is developing to mono-culturalise this diverse country.

visit us at:

www.summittimes.com

Weaning African leaders off addiction to power is an ongoing struggle

KEALEBOGA J MAPHUNYE
theconversation.com

Some African countries have recorded democratic victories in the past 12 months. Ethiopia has a new leader whose ascent holds great promise for change, despite the country’s problematic 2015 election. Liberia and Sierra Leone have new leaders.

But elsewhere on the continent, leaders continue to disregard their countries’ own constitutions and laws governing presidential tenure. The Democratic Republic of Congo’s Joseph Kabila has been in power since 2001. He refuses to go even though he was meant to step down in December 2016. In Uganda, Yoweri Museveni has clung to power since 1986. Denis Sassou Nguesso has ruled Congo for almost 30 years.

Their refusal to step down at the appointed time flies in the face of several governance blueprints adopted as African countries shifted away from liberation politics to the new post independence struggle for democracy in the early 2000s.

The Organisation of African Unity was transformed into the African Union in 2001 with this shift in mind. The continent adopted progressive governance tools like the African Peer Review Mechanism. This was spearheaded by former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo and South Africa’s Thabo Mbeki as a tool for African countries to review one another’s performance.

Numerous African countries adopted and agreed to uphold the terms of the African Union Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance. It came into force in 2012 and was designed to guard against undemocratic governance.

These plans promised a great deal. They were designed to usher in good governance, democracy and security. It was hoped Africa’s image as a continent of ignorance, poverty, disease, misrule and corruption could be erased.

The rhetoric pointed in the right direction. But not all African leaders were willing to be swept by this wave of democratic reforms. Some are quite simply addicted to power,



President of Uganda Yoweri Museveni refuses to relinquish power.

as shown by their reluctance – if not outright resistance – to leave at the end of their legal terms.

Leaders continuing to overstay their welcome undermines Africa’s attempts at overhauling its leadership and negates the noble intentions of the AU’s founders.

TERM LIMITS

Term limits regulate leadership succession. They are meant to counteract leaders’ temptation to overstay their welcome. This helps to consolidate and legitimise democratically elected leadership.

Of course, they’re not enough. Regular transfer of power as seen in countries like Mauritius, Ghana, Botswana and Zambia, among others, cannot guarantee political and socio-economic stability. Other ingredients such as accountable, legitimate leadership are critical.

But regular transfers of power give citizens hope that new policies, programmes and approaches will be adopted by the new leadership. In turn, this could overturn numerous political, social, economic impacts of uninterrupted strangleholds on power in Africa.

The benefits of frequent power transfers are evident in African countries that have them, such as Senegal; Botswana and Mauritius. Incumbents are kept on their toes because there’s a real chance they can be removed from power if they fail to govern

properly.

Term limits have recently become controversial and divisive. Some leaders have used dubious constitutional amendments to extend their stay in power. Usually, governing parties and their leaders almost exclusively pass such amendments with minimal or no opposition participation. That’s what happened in Rwanda, Uganda, Burundi and Congo Republic.

Similarly, despite constitutional provisions and regular elections, countries such as Angola, Togo, Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea are virtually de facto one party or one leader repressive states wherein resignation, retirement and term limits are meaningless.

Leaders have different reasons for refusing to leave office. In some countries, the answer lies in a lack of succession planning to transfer power. In others, leaders blatantly refuse to resign because of their despotic and kleptocratic tendencies. They abuse their states’ minerals, oil and money with their families and friends. Stepping aside would cost them these “benefits”.

For instance, the eventual departure of Angola’s Eduardo Dos Santos from office after decades in power has left his family exposed. His children stand accused of amassing billions during their father’s many terms.

Without strong constitutional safeguards and a democratic cul-

ture to counter the negative consequences of the “sins of incumbency” – as corruption associated with state power is often described by South Africa’s governing party, the African National Congress – can be menacing. It breeds “Big Men, Little People”, to borrow a phrase from the title of a book by journalist Alec Russel.

WEANING LEADERS OFF POWER ADDICTION

Perceptive leaders know when to leave office, whether through resignation or retirement. Botswana’s past and current presidents have established this practice despite the country’s continued one-party domination.

With the emergence of a strong democratic culture, South Africa has experienced

the opposite of such presidential power mongering. Two presidents were recalled by their political party the ANC, albeit for different reasons. Thabo Mbeki readily accepted his fate when he was told to pack up and go, although he was not accused of any specific wrong doing. Jacob Zuma remained defiant and only stepped aside when faced with the very real prospect of a vote of no-confidence.

Ghana, Zambia, Namibia, Nigeria, Malawi and Tanzania are other African states where regular transfer of power has occurred.

African voters are not blameless. They habitually relax their vigilance on leaders and fail to hold them to account after elections. This, coupled with winner-take-all election systems, renders some African countries vulnerable to autocratic, despotic and non-accountable leaders who would rather die in office than leave.

What, then, is the solution? It may be time for ordinary voters across the continent to begin to collaborate through non-governmental organisations and other cross-border institutional mechanisms to share experiences and begin to enforce durable continental democracy. Africa needs democracy from below.

[the writer is Professor, Department of Political Sciences, University of South Africa (UNISA), University of South Africa]

Pope Francis’ apology for abuse in Chile would once have been unthinkable

MATHEW SCHMALZ
theconversation.com

In a letter on April 11 to the bishops of Chile, Pope Francis asked forgiveness for his “serious errors of assessment and perception.” His apologies were directed to the victims of Fr. Fernando Karadima, whose abuse of at least three men when they were children was witnessed and covered up by Chilean Bishop Juan Barros. Until recently, Pope Francis had maintained that Bishop Barros was actually the victim of “slander.” In 2011, the then 80-year-old Fr. Karadima was found guilty by a Vatican tribunal, and sentenced to a life of “prayer and penance.”

In times past, a personal apology from the pope would have been close to unthinkable.

POPES CAN MAKE MISTAKES

Catholics believe the pope is the successor to the Apostle Peter, one of the first followers of Jesus. But Peter was a flawed human being: When confronted by a crowd, he denied his association with Jesus three times. Afterwards, according to the Gospel of Matthew, Peter “wept bitterly.”

For Catholics, Peter’s experience shows that even those specially chosen by God have deep-seated weaknesses for which they must show sorrow.

Popes are not always right in what they do, but their errors have been admitted only years – sometimes centuries – later. In 1992, for example, John Paul II apologized for the Catholic Church’s condemnation of Galileo that happened over 350 years earlier.

Once rare, papal apologies increased under the reign of John Paul II. While those apologies admitted that the Church made mistakes, they did not ask for forgiveness for past popes.

CHURCH HISTORY ON APOLOGY

In the middle ages, popes were not inclined to apologize at all, or even accept apologies. Most famously, in 1077 A.D., Pope Gregory VII initially rejected King Henry IV’s apology concerning a dispute over who had the power to appoint local bishops. The pope forced Henry, then the king of the Holy Roman Empire, to wait in a blizzard for three days before accepting him back into the Catholic Church.

This dismissive attitude gave way to



soul-searching during the Second Vatican Council, a seminal meeting that modernized the Church, held in Rome from 1962-65. One of the most important issues Catholicism had to confront was its historical persecution of Jews. Thousands of Jews were killed as Crusaders made their way to Jerusalem. Jews were expelled from Catholic Spain in 1492. And most horrible was the Holocaust, or “Shoah,” the organized slaughter of over 6 million Jews, which occurred in Christian-majority nations during the Second World War.

In one of the council’s most important documents, *Nostra Aetate*, the Catholic Church rejected the idea that Jews were responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. *Nostra Aetate* also established a foundation for a more cooperative and respectful relationship between Christians and Jews.

In 1966, the Church moved to apologize for centuries of distrust between Catholics and Protestants, when Pope Paul VI gave his ring to Michael Ramsey, the head of the Anglican church – the 100th archbishop of Canterbury – as an offering of reconciliation.

Pope John Paul II gave many apologies, but usually on behalf of the Church for what was done centuries ago. Most notable was the “Day for Pardon” in March 2000, that asked forgiveness for a series of sins, including those “against the dignity of women and the unity of the human race” and “actions against love, peace, the rights of peoples, and respect for cultures and religions.”

But many remember how Pope John Paul II remained largely silent on the issue of clerical abuse

because it “did not fit with his image of the Church,” according to Australian bishop Geoffrey Robinson. In a 2002 address to American cardinals, John Paul II did say he was “greatly grieved” that priests “had caused such suffering and scandal to the young,” but he stopped short of offering a personal plea for forgiveness.

Following John Paul’s example, Pope Benedict XVI stated in a 2010 letter that he was “sorry” that Catholics of Ireland had “suffered grievously” because of the “abuse of children and vulnerable young people.” But he did not apologize for lack of Vatican oversight over Irish bishops and priests.

Perhaps the closest parallel to Pope Francis’ apology was Pope Benedict’s expression of regret over “reactions” to his address in 2006 at the University of Regensburg, Germany, where he seemed to criticize Islam.

WHAT IS POPE FRANCIS DOING?

Fully accepting that the pope is a fallible human being can be somewhat of an emotional struggle for Catholics. While the pope – also called “The Vicar of Christ” – is considered to be infallible when he formally makes a statement about Catholic doctrine concerning “faith and morals,” the pope certainly makes mistakes in his priestly service and personal life.

Francis, however, is not shy about admitting his own fallibility as a pope and as a person. In fact, he said in a 2013 interview: “I am a sinner. This the most accurate definition. It is not a figure of speech, a literary genre. I am a sinner.”

With that statement, Pope Francis was saying that he – a leader of 1 billion people – needs forgiveness and mercy too. And mercy and forgiveness have been the central themes of his pontificate.

Of the many responsibilities of a pope, chief among them is being a teacher. And when Francis apologized to the people of Chile and to victims of sexual abuse, he also was teaching the rest of us how to admit our sins as a first step in making things right.

[the writer is Associate Professor of Religion, College of the Holy Cross]

Panchayat violence: SEC asks police to act against culprits

KOLKATA, APR 18 (PTI): The West Bengal State Election Commissioner A K Singh has asked the police administration to take stern action against those involved in clashes over panchayat poll nominations in various districts.

The Left Front, the Congress and the BJP have accused the ruling Trinamool Congress (TMC) of letting loose a reign of terror in order to stop opposition parties from filing nominations for panchayat polls. The TMC has termed the alle-

gations as baseless.

"It has come to notice that clashes in different districts are taking place (in connection with panchayat polls). I am to request you to take stern action against the culprits at this stage otherwise it may flare up," Singh said in a letter to all police commissioners and SPs of districts last night.

The Calcutta High Court on April 12 had stayed till further orders from filing nominations for panchayat election process in the state.

Assam Cong asks state govt to deal with crimes against women

GUWAHATI, APR 18 (PTI): Leader of the Opposition in the Assam Legislative Assembly, Debabrata Saikia today urged Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal to immediately promulgate an ordinance with provisions for stringent punishment for crimes against women.

Immediate deterrent action is necessary following uncontrolled spree of rapes and murders of women across the state, he added.

"The Congress Legislature Party had during the just concluded Budget session had moved an adjournment motion to discuss crimes against women and the chief

minister had promised to enact a stringent law in the next session to combat crimes against women but this would lead to delay of several months," Saikia said in a release.

The judiciary is already overburdened with various cases and the chief minister should urgently establish at least six or seven special fast track courts in the state to deal with crimes against women, the Congress leader said.

"These courts should be given wide-ranging territorial jurisdiction till such time as similar courts are set up in all districts of the state," Saikia added.

Petrol bomb hurled at newspaper editor's residence in Shillong

Contd from pg01

gation, told PTI.

The attack was widely condemned, with Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma describing it as "unfortunate".

"Such an act of cowardice is unfortunate... I have spoken to the Home Minister and we have co-ordinated with the DGP in this regard," he told PTI.

Home Minister James Sangma said the police department was doing its best to arrest those involved in the case.

"The police are examining the case from all possible angles. Once the arrests are made, we will be able to tell the reasons why she was targeted," the SP said.

Hours after the incident, Mukhim took to social media, urging the police to take action.

"Criminals are getting away too easily. Police should take every case of arson and attack on press freedom with the seriousness it deserves. Please rise to the occasion," she wrote on her Facebook page.

Mukhim told PTI she saw some flames and initially thought an electric short-circuit had caused a fire.

"I tried to douse the flames outside the bedroom window thinking that an electric short-circuit had caused it. The smell of petrol and the broken bottle pieces on

the floor made me realise that it was an attack," she said.

The Opposition Congress today expressed concern over the incident and said the government should "pull up its socks to tackle the criminals".

"Journalists are being attacked across the country. It seems miscreants are free to commit such crimes," Congress spokesperson Zenith Sangma said.

An attempt was being made to suppress the right to freedom of speech enshrined in the Constitution, he added.

David O Laitphlang, the president of the Shillong Press Club, urged the authorities to take all measures to book the assailants.

The culprits must be given exemplary punishment at the earliest, he said.

"Peace has been our hallmark but we will not cower down before forces of evil and no attempt to dissuade us from discharging our professional duties and rendering our service will be ever fruitful," he added.

Mukhim has been vocal on issues concerning the safety of women and children on her editorial pages and on social media platforms.

In an edit piece on April 13, she had written against a government plan to allow regulated mining in Meghalaya.

Tripura CM Internet remarks open floodgates of humour

NEW DELHI, APR 18 (PTI): Tripura Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb's claim that Internet existed in the days of Mahabharata has set off a flurry of reaction from Twitter users, who were largely unforgiving for his bizarre statement.

While a section of the Twitterati used humour to ridicule Deb's claim, other took a swipe at him with tweets loaded with sarcasm.

"Chief minister of Tripura Biplab Kumar Deb said that internet exist during Mahabharat times So was he communication Minister there at time?"

..... Thank god he didnt said that he gave training to Bheem in his Gym," a user, with handle @naina4ucozy, wrote on the micro-blogging site.

Users mentioned characters like Krishna, Arjuna and Draupadi from the Hindu epic to mock the newly-elected chief minister of the northeastern state.

"If according to Biplab deb internet existed during the times of Mahabharat, the main question is, what was Draupa-



di's favorite Snapchat filter?," tweeted another user @ThePolanator.

"Biggest joke of the millennium. Tomorrow some other BJP Leader will claim there was Mobile phone in Mahabharat ,otherwise how could Dharma-raj answered questions from Yaksha, of course only by seeking lifeline!," @anumakondaj tweeted.

The reaction was triggered by Deb's remarks yesterday at a workshop on public distribution system (PDS) computerisation and reforms in Agartala.

In the Mahabharata, it has been mentioned that Sanjay gave a live relay of the war between the Pandavas and the Kauravas to the blind king Dhritarashtra, he said.

dia wasn't available in the age of Mahabharata," the chief minister had said.

The 48-year-old Deb had taken charge as the chief minister of Tripura on March 9, following a spectacular electoral victory of the BJP that ended unchallenged 25-year rule of the Left in the state.

"Internet In The Time Of Mahabharat: Tripura Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb's interpretation of Mahabharat... When Krishna used Google Maps and Arjun ran out of data. #InternetMahabharata," @ArreTweets posted.

"Internet was there in Mahabharat-Tripura CM Biplab dev.. Thanks a lot for not saying Bhishm pita-

mah existing today," said another user @Abidebyconstin.

User @KumarShreshtha had a question for Deb: "...Can you please answer which happened first Ramayana or Mahabharat ? Any citation against what the broad minded like you claim".

"Of course, there was #internet for Sanjay to see and recount the #Mahabharat to Dhritirashtra. In fact, the warriors used GPS on their weapons to locate their targets during the war. The gems just keep coming in!," wrote @aartiishere.

But, a few also tweeted in Deb's support apparently.

"Tripura CM Biplab Deb said about Vedic Science,you may call it internet or WiFi or anytime else. Atomic weapons were used during Mahabharat & Harappa, Mohenjo-daro ruined due to atomic war. @BjpBiplab," wrote @ippatel.

Another user @t.d.h.nair said: "Internet and satellite technology is not new to India; it was prevalent at the time of Mahabharat. Sanjay regularly updating Dhritarashtra about the war sitting at a distant place wdnt hv been possible without satellite. - Biplab Dev, BJP's Tripura CM." But, the tweet sounded more of a sarcasm than support.

Eighteen dead as squall hits WB, govt to provide compensation

KOLKATA, APR 18 (PTI):

The nor'wester that hit the city and several districts of West Bengal yesterday left 18 people dead, and the state government would provide compensation to all those affected by it, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said today.

She said providing compensation for disaster-affected people is outside the purview of the model code of conduct currently in force in the state for the panchayat elections.

"The affected people will be compensated. The amount of compensation will be decided later," she told reporters at the state secretariat.

The chief minister said of the 18 dead, eight died in Kolkata, six in Howrah district and two in Bankura and one each in Hooghly and North 24 Parganas districts.

According to the police, nearly 50 people were injured in incidents of wall collapse, uprooting of trees and electrocution.

"It was a sudden storm. It happens sometimes. No one can control nature," Banerjee said and asserted that



the administration acted properly following the nor'wester, otherwise the situation "would not have improved this much" by today.

In Kolkata, 155 houses were fully damaged, followed by 52 in Hooghly district and 23 in Howrah. As many as 256 trees and 225 electric poles were uprooted in Kolkata Municipal Corporation area, she said.

Banerjee has instructed the chief secretary to look into the

situation and prepare a report on the damage and deaths caused by the storm. The disaster management department has been asked to send teams to the affected districts, state secretariat officials said.

Among the casualties in the city, an autorickshaw driver and a woman died when a tree fell on the vehicle on Lenin Sarani in central Kolkata, the police said.

Two other passen-

gers of the autorickshaw succumbed to their injuries at a hospital late last night.

Of the six deaths in Howrah, four people died after being struck by lightning in Bali and Belur areas of the district. One death was reported from Andul Road area when an electric pole fell on a person who was riding a two-wheeler.

A woman died in Dumurjola area of Howrah district, the police said.

The nor'wester that lashed Kolkata with a gale force of 98 km per hour at around 7.42 pm yesterday had thrown the city out of gear.

Metro services were disrupted for over two hours from 7.50 pm.

Suburban train services in Sealdah and Howrah divisions were affected as overhead wires had snapped.

Departure and arrival of some flights, too, were delayed because of gusty wind.

Ink shortage at Govt mint, say unions

Contd from pg01

ATMs in some parts of the country continued to remain dry today as government scrambled to rush currency to meet an "unusual spurt in demand" which according to it are due to abnormal season demand.

ATMs across UP, Bihar, Andhra, Telangana, MP, Chhattisgarh and the poll-bound Karnataka are either not operating or out of cash, reminiscent of post-demonetisation scene. Some ATMs in the national Capital too are reporting out of service.

Meanwhile, sources in the CNP also said printing of the Rs 10 denomination notes has also stopped as the Centre is yet to give a go-ahead for a revised design of the note.

The press is printing currency notes of Rs 20, 50, 100 denominations as a result of this, they said, adding work is happening in three shifts.

Much to the chagrin of the workers at the CNP, an ATM run by a top nationalised bank inside the campus has also gone dry since the past few days, Godse said.

Himalayan Blue Sheep: States responsible for protection of wildlife: MoEF to NGT

NEW DELHI, APR 18 (PTI):

The Ministry of Environment and Forests has told the National Green Tribunal that the Uttarakhand government was responsible for the management and protection of wildlife in the state, where the Himalayan Blue Sheep were suffering from an eye infection.

It submitted that the subject of forests and wildlife is included in the Concurrent List of the Constitution and, therefore, the state governments are responsible for implementation of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 and preservation of wildlife.

The ministry said that the states are responsible for checking and preventing disease in affected species in their national parks and wildlife sanctuaries.

"In order to promote effective and scientific management of the national parks, financial and technical assistance is being accorded to the states



by the central government (MoEF) under the centrally sponsored scheme of Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats.

"Over the past five years, it has released an amount of Rs 19.19 crore to the State of Uttarakhand, including the Gangotri National Park, under the scheme," it said in an affidavit filed before the tribunal.

The ministry said that one of the major components of the scheme was strengthening

wildlife care by improving the veterinary facilities for health care of animals and for controlling diseases, including setting up facilities required for diagnosis of diseases.

The submissions were made in response to a plea filed by advocate Gaurav Bansal, who had contended that Himalayan Blue Sheep, locally known as 'bharal', were suffering from an eye infection in the Gangotri National Park.

The matter is scheduled to

come up for hearing on May 16.

The tribunal had earlier directed the Uttarakhand government to submit an action plan to address the issue of eye infection among these animals.

Earlier, the Uttarakhand's forest department had filed an affidavit stating that blue sheep have been spotted with "symptoms of eye infection" and were having difficulty in movement in the Gangotri National Park.

The species live on high-altitude mountains mainly in India, Nepal, Tibet, Pakistan and Bhutan. Many Buddhist monasteries protect the bharals found around them. Their population faces threat of poaching for meat.

According to the plea, a group of BSF officers camping in Kedar Tal area of the park in September spotted several blue sheep with their eyes popping out and bleeding.

"One of the officer found several blue sheep with their

eyes popping out or bleeding or eye socket empty. He took photographs of some of the infected blue sheep.

"The applicant also came to know that the BSF officer had informed the state forest department about the condition of the prevailing disease in the blue sheep, but it has failed to take proper measures to prevent and control the spreading of the disease," the plea had alleged.

It had said that according to the National Wildlife Action Plan, 2017-2031, issued by the environment ministry, the infectious disease was a concern not only to humans but to wildlife as well. It said the authorities were not taking action to protect the animals.

The petitioner has sought the setting up of a high-level team to inspect the Gangotri National Park and formulate an action plan for the conservation of the eco-system and bio-diversity of the ecologically sensitive area.



Barcelona hold on for draw at Celta Vigo after Roberto sent off

MADRID, APR 18 (AFP): Lionel Messi was thrown on as a substitute but 10-man Barcelona were relieved to escape with a draw as Celta Vigo came within a whisker of inflicting the Catalans' first league defeat of the season on Tuesday.

Messi was introduced after an hour at the Stade Balaidos and looked to have inspired another Barca victory when Paulinho gave the visitors a 2-1 lead four minutes later.

But Sergi Roberto was sent off for preventing Iago Aspas sprinting clear and in the 82nd minute the former Liverpool striker made it 2-2, albeit with a large slice of luck given the ball brushed his hand on its way into the net.

Vigo pushed for a late winner and should have had it when substitute Lucas Boye went through one-on-one but he took too long and Marc-Andre Ter Stegen made a crucial stop.

"I think we deserved to win the game," Celta Vigo coach Juan Carlos Unzué said.

Earlier, a superb strike from Ousmane Dembele had been cancelled out by Jonny Castro's close-range finish as Barcelona stretched their record unbeaten run to 40 La Liga games.

They also extend their lead at the top of the table to 12 points, which could be cut to nine if Atletico Madrid beat Real Sociedad on Thursday.

"You always have to accept a point but our intention was to win," Barca coach Ernesto Valverde said afterwards.

"When we lost Sergi, we had difficulties but it is one more point. We need only two more victories and we have to fight for them." With one eye on Saturday's Copa del Rey final against Sevilla, Valverde made several changes to his Barca starting line-up as the likes of Messi, Luis Suarez, Gerard Pique, Samuel Umtiti, Sergio Busquets and Ivan Rakitic were all rested.

"There were players who came from playing a lot of games and I thought it suited us," Valverde said. "Let's see if we can give our fans some joy on Saturday." Ter Stegen, Philippe Coutinho and Dembele were the more established names selected and Dembele took his chance, capping an excellent attacking display with a brilliantly taken goal in the 39th minute.

Coutinho played wide to Paco Alcacer whose return ball was bouncing as Dembele controlled and sent a dipping half-volley into the corner.

On the stroke of half-time, however, Vigo were level. Andre Gomes gave the ball away and then, after the break developed, allowed Maximiliano Gomez to fire in a cross, which Castro bundled in.

SCA hosts farewell dinner for players selected for Northeast Camp

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 18 APR:**

Sikkim Cricket Association President, Lobzang G Tenzing hosted a farewell lunch for the players selected in different categories for Zonal Cricket Academy NE Zone/Bihar Camp that will be conducted in Northeast States from 22 Apr to 13 May, a press release from SCA informs.

It was reported earlier that eight players from Sikkim have been selected in different categories for the Zonal Cricket Academy Camp from North East/Bihar Zone.

The selected players are Nur Pandi Lepcha, Tshering Yangden Lepcha, Enema Yanki Lepcha and Songkit Lepcha in U-19 girls category, Robin Limboo and Tarun Sharma in U-16 boys category and Anwesh Karan



Sharma and Albert Rai in U-19 boys category.

The camp for U-19 boys category is set to take place in Nagaland whereas for U-16 boys and U-19 girls, the camp will be held in Nagaland and Manipur respectively.

The players and their coaches, Amos Rai, Som Tshering Lepcha, Kikam Bhutia were all honoured for their achievements.

Coach Kikam Bhutia was also honoured for being appointed by Board of Control for

Cricket in India as Fielding and Wicket Keeping Coach for the U-19 (Girls) Zonal Cricket Academy NE Zone/Bihar Camp to be held at Manipur.

SCA president and other members of the association along with the

coaches gave their best wishes to the selected players and motivated them to give their best in the camp. The president also thanked the sponsors of the camp for providing support to the players for the upcoming camp.

Kane strikes, but Spurs held by Brighton

BRIGHTON, APR 18 (AFP): Harry Kane stepped up his bid to win the Premier League's golden boot as Tottenham warmed up for the FA Cup semi-finals with a 1-1 draw at Brighton on Tuesday.

Kane fired Tottenham ahead in the 48th minute when his close-range shot deflected in off Brighton defender Bruno.

It was Kane's 26th of the season and kept him in with a chance of catching Liverpool's Mohamed Salah,



who sits ahead of the Tottenham striker on 30 goals in the race to finish as the Premier League's top scorer.

But Mauricio Pochettino's side, who face Manchester United at Wembley on Saturday, left the Amex Stadium frustrated after conceding an equaliser two minutes after Kane's opener.

Albion drew level when Pascal Gross slotted home a penalty awarded for

Serge Aurier's foul on Jose Izquierdo.

Tottenham have gone two games without a league victory, but they are still in pole position to qualify for next season's Champions League via a top four finish.

They are in fourth place, eight points ahead of fifth placed Chelsea, who have only five matches left to close the gap.

"It was a difficult game, the first half was even and the second half we started really well. We scored but in the next section we conceded," Pochettino said.

"We created chances but not enough to win the game. The draw is a little bit disappointing because the intention was to get all three." Brighton are eight points clear of the bottom three and should be safe from relegation at the end of their first season back in the top-flight.

Lewis helped me settle down: Rohit

MUMBAI, APR 18 (PTI): Mumbai Indians skipper Rohit Sharma, who steered the defending champions to their first win of the season with a 52-ball 94, credited West Indian Evin Lewis for allowing him to settle down on the crease in the IPL clash against Royal Challengers Bangalore.

Mumbai Indians notched up their first victory by defeating Royal Challengers Bangalore by 46 runs, here last night courtesy Rohit's 94 and Lewis' 65. The Mumbai franchise posted a steep 213/6 before restricting the opposition to 167/8 in 20 overs.

"...with Evin Lewis batting, anything can happen, he is a great striker of the ball and anything in his area he is going to smash it and that is what he did. It allowed me to take my time, which was very crucial. We always wanted one set batsman to bat as long as possible and (it was a) perfect platform for me to do that, explained Rohit.

The hosts started off horrendously as RCB pacer Umesh Yadav removed opener Suryakumar Yadav and Ishan Kishan in successive balls with MI struggling at 0/2.

Rohit also said that his team was positive in its approach despite the first three losses.

"The only thing we did not do as a group in the last three games was sometimes (when) we batted well, (then) we did not bowl well. (When) we bowled well, we did not bat well.

The idea was to get both of these departments going and we wanted to be consistent - our bowling as well as batting," said the MI skipper.

He also praised the performance of his bowlers Mitchell McClenaghan, Krunal Pandya and Mayank Markande.

"Today we did that and we got wickets with



the new ball. Mitch bowled a great spell upfront to get the experienced batsmen out, and then Krunal came in and used his variation to his advantage.

"He reads the batsman really well and not to forget Mayank, he is just 20-year old playing his fourth game and to come out and bowl in such difficult conditions, it is not easy," the 30-year-old batsman added.

Asked about the batting order, the skipper said he would continue to bat at number three, allowing the new players to settle down.

"I do not think we are looking to change anything. It is important to give the guys the comfort, because they should know where they are batting for the next few games so they can plan accordingly. If you keep changing too much it does not help anyone."

"All of us, myself, Pollard, Krunal (Pandya), Hardik (Pandya), we can take the pressure and make sure that the team gets into good position all the time. This is the ideal combination for us right now, he concluded.

Meanwhile, RCB head coach Daniel Vettori



Neeraj the star as track and field athletes land back from CWG

NEW DELHI, APR 18 (PTI): Gold medal-winning javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra was the undisputed star as the Indian track and field team returned from the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games to a warm reception here.

The entire athletics team, except for silver medalist discus thrower Seema Punia, landed at the Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi late Tuesday night to an exuberant reception from fans here and the neighbouring state of Haryana. Punia had arrived two days ago.

Over 100 people gathered at the arrival terminal of the IGI airport to receive the athletes. Officials of the Athletics Federation of India, Sports Ministry and Sports Authority of India and senior Army officers were also present.

Relatives and people from Neeraj's village in Haryana came to receive him. Officers of India Army, where Neeraj is a

junior commissioned officer, were also there to welcome him.

Neeraj had scripted history by becoming the first Indian javelin thrower to claim a gold with a throw of 86.47m, just one centimeter short of his personal best of 86.48m, which is also the existing junior word as well as national record.

Punia and Navjeet Kaur Dhillion had won a silver and bronze respectively in women's discus throw. The track and field athletes bagged three medals, the final count being the same as in the 2014 Glasgow edition.

"A lot of people came to receive us at the airport. It was a great feeling to see so many people coming to receive me and my teammates. My uncle was there and also officials from the federation, SAI and ministry as well as from my army unit," Neeraj said. "It is heartening and motivating to know that you have support of people."

lamented Hardik Pandya's escaping dismissal on a DRS referral and said it cost the team another 20-30 runs.

"Things also went against us. Hardik's dismissal, had we got him, may be they would have been 20-30 runs short. It does make a difference in the final score, said Vettori.

He said Washington Sunder and Yuzvendra Chahal were defensive while their MI counterparts were more attacking in their approach.

"I think with Washington and Yuzi, they were probably in defensive position with Rohit and Lewis being very aggressive. When Mumbai spinners came on, their team was in a good position and that allowed them to actually bowl and be a little more attacking.

"We saw the rewards that they got. So, it's different styles of bowling. Mumbai were on top when they came into bowl but we weren't able to do a similar thing," he signed off.

Terming the freak injury to wicketkeeper Ishan Kishan as "unfortunate", Rohit said he is expected to be fine.

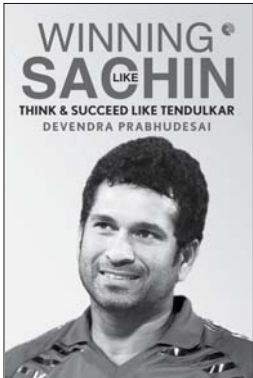
Kishan sustained injury on his face in the 13th over of the game after a throw from Hardik Pandya bounced off the practice pitch and hit him on his face.

Kishan was immediately taken off the field and was replaced by Aditya Tare, who captains Mumbai in domestic tournaments.

"That was very unfortunate but he seems all-right. He has got (a) little swelling in his eyes, which should be ok by tomorrow (or) day after.

"We have got few days before we play the next match on the 22nd (April), we will assess (him) and hopefully he will be fine," Rohit said.

A decision by Sachin's father that changed his life, Indian cricket: Book



NEW DELHI, APR 18 (PTI): It was the summer of 1984 when a decision by Professor Ramesh Tendulkar -- to let his youngest child Sachin switch school changed the boy's life.

The anecdote finds a mention in a new book, Winning like Sachin: Think & Succeed like Tendulkar', authored by Devendra Prabhudesai.

Sachin was just 11 when his elder brother Ajit took him to coach Ramakant Achrekar, who was of the view that young boy had

it in him to go a long way in the sport and it was therefore prudent that he be given access to competitive cricket.

The issue was that Bandra IES, the English-medium school in Mumbai where Sachin studied, did not have a cricket team. Achrekar recommended that Sachin be shifted to Shardashram Vidyamandir, whose English-and Marathi-medium cricket teams were coached by him, the book says.

Sachin's residence at Sahitya Sahawas in Bandra was a fair distance away from Shar-

dashram in Dadar. There was no bus that plied between the two locations directly, which meant that Sachin would have to change buses on the way, that too early in the morning, as the school opened at 7 am.

Boys of his age were generally inducted into inter-school cricket team when they were studying in Class 7 or 8. Sachin, on the other hand, was to begin Class 6, it says, adding the commute to and from Shardashram would eat into his leisure and study time.

"Professor Tendulkar could have taken the easy

way out and 'played safe'. He could very well have told his son to play cricket during the holidays and concentrate on studies for the rest of the year. He could have put his foot down on the idea of changing schools. But he did not. He and the rest of the family left the final decision to Sachin himself," says the book.

"They assured him that they would back him, regardless of the decision he made.

"Little did they know that was the moment when the boy's life changed and when the history of Indian

cricket took an unexpected turn. The youngest member of their family, whom they all doted on, informed them that he was ready for the change, and the challenge," it adds.

Sachin had found his calling and had decided to let his love for cricket, which had grown into a passion under the tutelage of Achrekar, override every other aspects of his life.

Published by Rupa Publications, the book offers insights into the winning attributes and lessons from the cricketing icon's life.

Swaraj’s visit will enhance political trust with India: China

BEIJING, APR 18 (PTI): China today said its relations with India have seen “great strides” and the upcoming visit of External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj will further enhance “political trust” between the two countries.

Swaraj will arrive here on April 21 for a four-day visit and hold talks with Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi on April 22 to take forward attempts by both countries to reset ties strained by last year’s 73-day Doklam military standoff as well as a host of other issues.

“We believe Swaraj’s visit will further enhance political trust between the two countries and elevate the China-India strategic cooperation partnership,” said Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying.

“We have seen great strides in all-around cooperation. This year, there is a positive momentum in bilateral ties. We would like to work with the Indian side to maintain high-level exchanges, expand practical



cooperation, properly manage disputes and move forward bilateral ties,” Hua said.

The issues of discord between the two countries include the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) being built through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, China blocking India’s entry into the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) as well as its opposition to efforts to list Jaish-e-Muhammad chief Masood Azhar as a global terrorist by the UN.

This will be Swaraj’s first meeting with Wang after he was elevated last month to

be the state councillor, which makes him the top diplomat in the Chinese hierarchy. He holds the dual posts of state councillor and foreign minister.

During their talks, Wang and Swaraj will exchange views on bilateral ties, international and regional issues of mutual concern, the Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson said.

Swaraj is also scheduled to take part in the Foreign Ministers’ meeting of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) on April 24 besides meeting Chinese Hindi scholars and students.

Hua said Foreign Ministers of all eight-member countries of the SCO will take part in the meeting on April 24.

SCO, in which China plays an influential role, is comprised of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India and Pakistan.

This is the first Foreign Ministers’ meeting after India and Pakistan were admitted into SCO last year.

All parties will exchange views on SCO cooperation and major international and regional issues, Hua said.

The meeting will lay the groundwork for the upcoming summit of the SCO at the Chinese city of Qingdao in June, she said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to take part in the SCO summit.

The Chinese leadership will have group meeting with heads of delegations. Foreign Minister Wang will chair Foreign Minister’s meeting.

The ministers will exchange views on all important interna-

tional and regional issues.

At the end of the meeting, the ministers will witness signing of outcome document, she said, adding that “we believe all sides will take the opportunity to build on consensus, reach more cooperation and ensure success of Qingdao summit.”

Swaraj and Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will be visiting China virtually around the same time. Sitharaman is also due to take part in the SCO defence ministers’ meeting on April 24.

The visit of Swaraj and Sitharaman were taking place as India and China stepped up high level exchanges to defuse tensions following the Doklam standoff.

Ahead of Swaraj’s talks with Wang, National Security Advisor Ajit Doval met Director of China’s Foreign Affairs Commission and member of the ruling Communist Party of China (CPC) Yang Jiechi in Shanghai on April 13 during which the two sides held in-depth talks on improving relations.

China moots India-Nepal-China economic corridor through Himalayas

BEIJING, APR 18 (PTI): China today proposed a India-Nepal-China economic corridor with multi-dimensional connectivity through the Himalayas as it seeks to expand its influence over the new Nepalese government headed by Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli, widely regarded as pro-Beijing.

China’s proposal came after visiting Nepalese Foreign Minister Pradeep Kumar Gyawali held talks with his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi.

“Let me say China and Nepal have agreed on long term vision of a multi-dimensional cross Himalaya connectivity network,” Wang told a joint press briefing along with Gyawali after their talks.

Gyawali is on his maiden visit to Beijing after the Oli-led govern-

ment came to power in recent elections.

Wang said China and Nepal have already signed an MOU on the China’s multi-billion-dollar Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in which connectivity cooperation is a part.

It included a long-term vision such as connectivity network and covering the links between the two countries though ports, railways, highways, aviation, power and communications.

“We believe that such a well-developed connectivity network can also create conditions for an economic corridor connecting China, Nepal and India,” Wang said.

“We hope that such cooperation will contribute development and prosperity for all the three countries,” he said.

China holds live-fire drills in Taiwan Strait

BEIJING, APR18 (AFP): China held live-fire drills in the Taiwan Strait today but Taipei dismissed the exercises as “routine” after expected large-scale naval manoeuvres failed to materialise.

Beijing had announced the drills last week, further ramping up tensions following stark warnings against any independence moves by the self-ruled island which China sees as its sovereign territory.

Vessels had been told to avoid a certain area off the Chinese mainland’s coast, triggering speculation that a flotilla spearheaded by China’s sole aircraft carrier would take part in the exercise.



Donald Trump’s nominee for secretary of state- CIA boss Mike Pompeo - travelled to North Korea to meet Kim Jong Un, US officials have confirmed. Mr Pompeo made the secret visit to Pyongyang during the first weekend in April, according to the Washington Post. Speaking on condition of anonymity, the two officials said the trip was to prepare for an upcoming meeting between Mr Trump and the country’s leader. Mr Trump is due to meet Mr Kim this month, with five locations being considered for the talks, he said.

FB rolling out privacy choices under EU rules

MENLO PARK (US), APR 18 (AFP): Facebook announced today it would begin rolling out changes to how it handles private data this week to comply with forthcoming EU rules, with European residents seeing the measures first.

The social network, which has been rocked by disclosures about hijacking of personal data on tens of millions of its users, said it will start implementing “new privacy experiences” to comply with the EU’s General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) which become effective May 25.

“Everyone -- no matter where they live -- will be asked to review important information about how Facebook uses data and make choices about their privacy on Facebook,” said

a statement from chief privacy officer Erin Egan and deputy general counsel Ashlie Beringer.

“We’ll begin by rolling these choices out in Europe this week.” Under the new policy, Facebook users will be asked to review and make choices about ads they receive, including whether they want Facebook to use data from third parties. Facebook users will also be asked to review and choose what to share about the political, religious, and relationship information on their profiles.

Additionally, users will be allowed to opt in or out of use of facial recognition technology.

The statement said users will be told that facial recognition is optional, but that it could offer some benefit, such as being notified when someone is using

an unauthorized picture.

“We not only want to comply with the law, but also go beyond our obligations to build new and improved privacy experiences for everyone on Facebook,” Egan and Beringer wrote.

The news comes a week after Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg faced 10 hours of questioning in two congressional panels following revelations that personal data was harvested on 87 million users by Cambridge Analytica, a consultancy working for Donal Trump’s 2016 campaign.

Zuckerberg testified that Facebook intends to offer the same privacy protections embodied in GDPR for its worldwide users, but that there could be some differences in format.

Egan and Beringer said Face-

book users in the EU will start seeing the requests this week so they can make choices before May 25.

“As part of our phased approach, people in the rest of the world will be asked to make their choices on a slightly later schedule,” they said.

They added that Facebook would take steps to comply with the EU rules that limit advertising and public viewing of data for teens.

This will mean no use of facial recognition for anyone under age 18 and limitations on who can see certain information teens have shared.

To comply with GDPR, Facebook will also limit what it shows to users between the ages of 13 and 15 unless they get permission from a parent.

But Taiwan’s defence ministry said Wednesday that the drills only involved land-based artillery conducting “routine” shooting practice.

Beijing has yet to release any information about the drill, which Chinese authorities had said would run until midnight, without giving any details about which military equipment or personnel would be involved.

“China deliberately released fake information to exaggerate it, to make it sound huge when in fact it’s small,” Taiwanese defence ministry spokesman Chen Chung-chi told AFP.

“It’s the cheapest way of verbal intimidation and sabre-rattling,” Chen said, adding that such exercises had been held every year since 2007, except for last year.

The drills coincided with Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen’s visit to Swaziland, one of Taipei’s few remaining international allies.

China’s Taiwan Affairs Office director Liu Jieyi had said Monday that the drill was “an action to safeguard the sovereignty and territorial integrity of our motherland”.

MIZORAM STATE LOTTERIES

LABHLAXMI GEMINI

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

1st Prize Rs.10,000/- 4574

2nd Prize Rs.1,000/- 6804 3rd Prize Rs.500/- 2341

4th Prize Rs.300/- 5473 5th Prize Rs. 202/- 6752

6th Prize Rs.100/-

1023 1026 1038 1049 1101 1127 1213 1271 1306 1311

1312 1352 1373 1375 1397 1416 1441 1442 1448 1477

1502 1503 1522 1528 1529 1545 1548 1562 1564 1577

1589 1619 1630 1707 1722 1773 1790 1804 1812 1852

1879 1884 1904 1906 1910 1966 1990 2042 2115 2209

2242 2249 2289 2330 2391 2397 2401 2409 2437 2450

2459 2511 2564 2594 2603 2605 2680 2685 2724 2736

2770 2772 2792 2802 2819 2847 2853 2863 2952 2976

3018 3030 3063 3066 3075 3096 3108 3148 3155 3164

3179 3210 3225 3349 3355 3376 3382 3383 3421 3473

3486 3538 3556 3559 3600 3645 3669 3704 3711 3713

3734 3755 3765 3788 3809 3820 3858 3859 3890 3999

4085 4107 4108 4125 4153 4210 4214 4216 4217 4251

4269 4288 4289 4310 4377 4415 4441 4570 4593 4599

4602 4619 4626 4628 4688 4689 4705 4716 4724 4737

4782 4803 4864 4871 4890 4900 4906 4907 4917 4947

5001 5007 5045 5151 5161 5177 5211 5288 5315 5319

5321 5335 5358 5394 5402 5419 5424 5433 5466 5507

5509 5517 5575 5621 5622 5633 5728 5730 5755 5770

5819 5884 5887 5890 5899 5942 5958 5961 5982 6033

6048 6061 6134 6150 6168 6191 6233 6234 6246 6268

6273 6327 6341 6346 6421 6443 6478 6485 6542 6567

6583 6595 6601 6618 6632 6642 6653 6692 6695 6729

6730 6808 6818 6823 6850 6852 6909 6937 6977 6983

Issued by:
The Director ,Mizoram State Lotteries,
For result please visit: www.mizoramlotteries.com

ARUNACHAL PRADESH STATE LOTTERIES

MUMBAILAXMI SEETA

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

1st Prize Rs.10,000/- 4805 2nd Prize Rs.2,000/- 3885

3rd Prize Rs. 1,000/- 3348 4th Prize Rs. 502/- 3036

5th Prize Rs.200/-

1035 1095 1166 1240 1308 1315 1353 1375 1495 1515

1524 1574 1630 1635 1740 1770 1782 1789 1798 1816

1827 1925 2022 2097 2128 2129 2163 2231 2316 2349

2605 2623 2624 2627 2655 2843 2960 3008 3087 3113

3161 3238 3329 3333 3373 3404 3431 3447 3467 3743

3753 3774 3802 3858 3875 3987 4042 4171 4224 4226

4301 4422 4507 4534 4539 4569 4627 4670 4731 4736

4739 4742 4943 4998 5001 5018 5019 5083 5097 5110

5205 5237 5261 5286 5291 5356 5361 5392 5397 5456

5503 5635 5730 5790 5839 5902 5913 5924 5942 5992

6th Prize Rs.100/-

1013 1029 1073 1109 1142 1172 1236 1260 1264 1289

1295 1329 1359 1364 1386 1391 1430 1437 1455 1516

1537 1546 1578 1580 1594 1615 1626 1631 1644 1685

1686 1690 1703 1718 1753 1772 1777 1833 1844 1846

1859 1942 1966 1979 1987 1997 2033 2048 2075 2113

2116 2142 2162 2188 2193 2314 2333 2380 2454 2499

2540 2553 2576 2748 2782 2802 2848 2849 2859 2873

2915 2934 2937 2955 2973 2983 2986 2987 3011 3027

3034 3037 3053 3058 3118 3126 3214 3235 3256 3273

3288 3295 3330 3360 3386 3389 3419 3458 3463 3468

3560 3573 3600 3609 3640 3642 3656 3705 3737 3741

3763 3795 3815 3827 3857 3883 3955 3979 3985 3995

4018 4020 4023 4046 4149 4211 4263 4318 4366 4371

4383 4409 4413 4436 4466 4471 4487 4515 4639 4641

4656 4672 4699 4765 4766 4790 4820 4831 4844 4851

4862 4872 4879 4895 4898 4942 4956 5028 5034 5044

5093 5134 5137 5190 5270 5331 5346 5348 5391 5409

5415 5430 5441 5444 5466 5474 5487 5499 5545 5555

5565 5570 5577 5586 5590 5621 5684 5695 5744 5760

5765 5792 5798 5833 5856 5931 5956 5964 5984 5996

Issued by:
The Commissioner,
ARUNACHAL PRADESH STATE LOTTERIES,ITANAGAR.

NAGALAND STATE LOTTERIES		NAGALAND STATE LOTTERIES		NAGALAND STATE LOTTERIES	
DEAR FAITHFUL MORNING		DEAR VALUABLE		DEAR EAGLE EVENING	
Draw Time: 11:55 am onwards Draw No:20 DrawDate on:18/04/18 1st Prize Rs.26.02 Lakhs/- 86L 77165 Cons. Prize Rs.9500/- 77165 (REMAINING ALL SERIALS)		Draw Time: 04:00 pm onwards Draw No:20 DrawDate on:18/04/18 1st Prize Rs.26.02 Lakhs/- 81A 72312 Cons. Prize Rs.9500/- 72312 (REMAINING ALL SERIALS)		Draw Time: 08:00 pm onwards Draw No:38 DrawDate on:18/04/18 1st Prize Rs.26.02 Lakhs/- 83D 13115 Cons. Prize Rs.9500/- 13115 (REMAINING ALL SERIALS)	
2nd Prize Rs.9000/- 02201 26259 32180 35866 36746 44453 54226 86309 89502 97352 3rd Prize Rs.500/- 1309 2084 2842 3214 3591 4146 4682 5605 6004 6729 4th Prize Rs.250/- 0612 0692 3008 4466 5112 5335 7242 7588 8610 9499 5th Prize Rs.120/- 0067 0195 0402 0436 0726 0749 0816 0829 1047 1098 1243 1262 1349 1503 1684 1700 1735 1755 1893 2310 2496 2684 2689 2729 2804 3020 3046 3261 3324 3344 3369 3424 3455 3493 3613 3751 3873 4115 4263 4283 4477 4480 4647 4663 4747 4780 4964 5038 5040 5213 5276 5327 5443 5513 5674 5710 5909 5923 6029 6042 6239 6257 6349 6467 6540 6586 6610 6837 6886 6936 6972 7035 7111 7128 7298 7426 7443 7538 7560 7579 7621 7624 7802 7819 7939 8138 8169 8187 8311 8452 8529 8783 8787 8962 9149 9196 9221 9239 9309 9467		2nd Prize Rs.9000/- 09747 13976 21363 29606 31512 42527 61238 96499 98557 99605 3rd Prize Rs.500/- 0176 0601 1348 1525 3797 3970 5379 8731 9602 9998 4th Prize Rs.250/- 0048 2166 3973 4108 4426 5593 7425 8535 9816 9853 5th Prize Rs.120/- 0101 0191 0283 0291 0292 0419 0506 0516 0722 0898 0907 0915 0925 1057 1143 1163 1181 1192 1203 1535 1539 1641 1727 1832 1874 1938 1954 1981 2104 2193 2311 2370 2535 2546 2665 2714 2816 2847 2961 2974 2999 3077 3233 3460 3702 3829 3987 4047 4118 4333 4351 4387 4711 4942 5132 5133 5337 5470 5531 5719 5765 5778 5784 6008 6163 6174 6180 6181 6230 6776 7105 7351 7368 7475 7668 7750 7868 7911 7956 8124 8318 8497 8551 8574 8597 8659 8701 8790 9011 9039 9099 9201 9270 9272 9277 9327 9343 9470 9563 9666		2nd Prize Rs.9000/- 06999 15613 17486 42805 56261 56636 67360 75802 87818 95219 3rd Prize Rs.500/- 0256 0510 2149 2248 2336 2982 6987 7197 8743 8751 4th Prize Rs.250/- 0187 0339 7070 1243 1866 1922 2491 7381 9423 9877 5th Prize Rs.120/- 0053 0064 0419 0467 0539 0599 0647 0679 0783 0787 0907 1130 1312 1505 1650 1651 1736 1855 1935 1995 2257 2278 2323 2413 2427 2634 2932 2963 3082 3148 3208 3289 3418 3432 3565 3901 4209 4237 4385 4505 4560 4617 4894 5021 5096 5234 5320 5338 5390 5470 5476 5548 5621 5627 5759 5833 5868 5879 6007 6086 6140 6247 6583 6702 6901 7099 7012 7232 7471 7494 7581 7638 7673 7753 7756 7828 7908 7916 7987 8285 8290 8439 8632 8656 8799 9014 9132 9227 9321 9425 9505 9614 9623 9692 9773 9806 9895 9965 9971 9973	
Issued by: The Director, Nagaland State Lotteries, Kohima, Nagaland For Results, Please visit: www.nagalandlotteries.com					
KINDLY CHECK THE RESULTS WITH THE OFFICIAL GAZETTE					

VIN DIESEL IS MAKING XXX 4 WITH D.J. CARUSO & NOW OWNS THE FRANCHISE

Vin Diesel is making xXx 4 with director D.J. Caruso after finalizing a deal to buy back franchise rights from Revolution Studios. Diesel first played extreme athlete turned government agent Xander Cage in 2002's Rob Cohen-directed action thriller xXx. A sequel, xXx: State of the Union, was then released in 2005.

With Diesel becoming occupied by the Fast and Furious franchise, Xander Cage would disappear from movie screens for over a decade. Some were surprised when Diesel did bring back the character for 2017's xXx: The Return of Xander Cage, directed by D.J. Caruso. The film did well enough that, according to Diesel, Paramount Pictures expressed interest in doing a fourth installment but those plans apparently stalled out.

With Paramount uninterested in continuing xXx, Diesel reportedly has put to-

gether a deal to purchase the franchise rights and press on with the series. As reported by THR, Diesel has teamed up with finance company The H Collective to make the deal happen. Now, Diesel says he will move forward with xXx 4, with D.J. Caruso returning to direct. The plan is for production to begin in late 2018. In a statement, H Collective CEO Nic Crawley made it pretty clear that the Chinese market was a big reason why the deal was made:

"During my time at Paramount I was lucky to be involved in the development

and distribution of xXx: Return of Xander Cage. The response from the Chinese box office was unprecedented. Bringing the next installment of the xXx franchise to The H Collective complements our diversified slate and mission to produce content for a global audience."

Released in January 2017, The Return of Xander Cage did only modest box office in the U.S., grossing \$44 million. However, the film blew up overseas and came in at a total worldwide gross of \$301 million. \$164 million of that worldwide take came from

China alone, placing it above Spider-Man: Homecoming, Thor: Ragnarok, Logan and other huge franchise titles in the Chinese market.

xXx: Return of Xander Cage also starred Deepika Padukone, Ruby Rose, Samuel L. Jackson, Nina Dobrev and Toni Collette.

Will Deepika Padukone come back for the fourth installment? Well, the Padmaavat actress' people have emphasized that she will return to Hollywood but it will not be with Vin Diesel.

But if director D.J. Caruso to be believed, he wants all the preliminary cast members of the threequel to return.

During a Q&A with fans on Twitter, Caruso said 'All coming back' when asked if he has replaced any of the stars for the next movie in xXx franchise. When someone specifically pushed him about Deepika's character Serena, Caruso replied with insistent 'Oh Yes.'

MALEFICENT SEQUEL CASTS DEADPOOL'S ED SKREIN AS VILLAIN

Deadpool and Game of Thrones actor Ed Skrein has signed on to play a villain in the upcoming Maleficent sequel from Disney. Released in 2014, Maleficent starred Angelina Jolie as the titular spell-casting Sleeping Beauty villainess. In a twist, Maleficent came to regret putting Sleeping Beauty to sleep, thus making Maleficent not so malevolent after all.

Part of Disney's drive to remake most of its classic animated properties as live-action films, Maleficent grossed \$241 million domestically and \$758 million worldwide. Plans for a sequel remained in limbo while star Jolie pursued other acting and directorial projects, but finally got going again in 2017, with Jolie confirming her return in September. Pirates of the Caribbean 5 director Joachim Ronning later jumped aboard to helm, and a spring 2018 start date was revealed. Elle Fanning also returns to play Aurora.



The chiseled Skrein became the answer to a trivia question when he took on the role of Daario Naharis on Game of Thrones, only to later be fired and replaced with the much more popular Michiel Huisman. Skrein made up for that disappointment by scoring the role of Ajax in the R-rated superhero blockbuster Deadpool. The actor now has multiple big roles lined up,

including Zapan in James Cameron and Robert Rodriguez's Alita: Battle Angel. He will also appear in director Barry Jenkins' Moonlight follow-up If Beale Street Could Talk. Later this year, he stars with fellow Game of Thrones actor Natalie Dormer in the thriller In Darkness. He also stars in the techno thriller Tau alongside Maika Monroe and Gary Oldman.

K-POP GROUP BTS WINS TIME 100 READER POLL

K-pop group BTS can add another accolade to their list of successes: winner of the 2018 TIME 100 reader poll. The seven-person group of multitalented South Korean artists has been tapping a vein of global popularity since 2013. The group has topped Billboard's Social charts for almost all of 2017 and 2018 (so far), won the Top Social Artist title at last year's Billboard Music Awards, earned a spot on TIME's list of the Most Influential People on the Internet in 2017 and regularly spark social media trends, thanks to their 14-million-strong "Army" of fans.

BTS, which consists of singers RM, Jin, Suga, j-hope,



Jimin, V and Jungkook, is just one of a number of K-pop groups with massive fanbases. But in particular they

have proven themselves capable of transcending the Asian market with their hip-hop-meets-pop songs,

sharp choreography and high-concept music videos. Their next full-length album, Love Yourself: Tear, is due out on May 18.

While TIME editors are responsible for selecting the TIME 100, the online reader poll opens up voting to the general public. BTS — which stands for "Bangtan Sonyeondan" or "Beyond the Scene" — easily dominated this year's poll, garnering over 15% of the vote. Runners-up included South Korean President Moon Jae-in with five percent and Barack Obama with three percent. Other popular musical acts, including Rihanna, Beyoncé, Shawn Mendes and Bruno Mars, brought in two percent each.

KARAN JOHAR'S EPIC DRAMA KALANK TO BRING MADHURI AND SANJAY DUTT TOGETHER

Trust Karan Johar to bring you grandeur in Hindi cinema whenever possible. Dharma Productions in collaboration with Fox Star Hindi and NGE Productions has decided to excite the fans with an epic star cast including Alia Bhatt, Varun Dhawan, Madhuri Dixit, Sanjay Dutt, Sonakshi Sinha and Aditya Roy Kapur in one film. Titled Kalank, the film is touted as a drama of epic proportion and looking at the star-cast, there are no doubts about that.

The official handle of Dharma Productions tweeted the announcement poster of the film.

Stoked about working with a star-studded cast, Alia tweeted, "KALANK- an EPIC DRAMA! So so sooo excited to be working with these phenomenal beautiful actors!!! Directed by my dearest friend #AbhishekVarman *Next year. here we come.."

Confirming the news Karan Johar said, "Kalank has been an emotional journey for me! A germ of an idea that I had nearly 15



years ago...a film that was in a pre-production stage helmed by my father...am now proud to Pass it onto the extremely capable and visionary hands of our director Abhishek Varman! A beautifully structured story by Shibani Bathija and an exceptionally fluid narrative and screenplay by Abhishek."

The film is being directed by Abhishek Varman who has previously directed Alia in 2 States opposite Arjun Kapoor. The film marks the fourth collaboration between Alia-Varun. It also marks the return of 90s popular onscreen pair Madhuri and Sanjay who mesmerised fans with their chemistry in films like Saajan, Khalnayak among others.

The film is set to releases on April 19, 2019.

ARIES: Those who know the real you find your lack of confidence frustrating, Aries. Your talents are startling to mere mortals, yet you rarely take credit for all your abilities. Today you get an opportunity to participate in a project that could make or break your career. You may hesitate, weigh your capabilities in your mind, and come up short. Not only can you do this, you can do it better than anyone else!

TAURUS: You may be in a quiet, reflective mood today, Taurus. You could receive a communication from an old friend that sets you remembering the good old days of your youth. You can't help but look at some of your pivotal decisions and wonder how your

life would have been different had you made other choices. It's pointless to play that game. Don't wonder about "what if." Embrace what you have.

GEMINI: Today, Gemini, forget socializing, working, and answering the phone. Stay home and cuddle in a blanket by the fire. Get out your old yearbooks or photo albums and have fun reflecting on good times from your past. Enjoy being quiet and still. Listen to the ticking of the clock and the wind outside. Measure time by the shadows moving across the room. Give yourself this day of meditation.

CANCER: Don't be surprised if neighbors come to your door asking for a favor — and not just to borrow a cup of sugar! While

your initial response will be to say yes (it's your nature, after all), think twice. This "favor" could involve a major time commitment. Is this what you want to do? You can put your needs ahead of your friends' and still be a good neighbor. Don't worry, they'll understand.

LEO: You're likely to wake up today with a compulsion to clean or organize something, Leo. This may be rather unlike you. If we didn't know better we'd say that you were feeling a parental urge, and your nesting instinct is kicking in. Indulge your domestic desires today. Tomorrow you're probably going to be in quite a different frame of mind!

VIRGO: Today should be a "no holds barred" day as you str-

egize your next career move, Virgo. If you were in the army, you'd be a five-star general by now - your tactical sense is that good. Unfortunately, your office isn't handing out stars. You'll have to be satisfied with a raise and promotion - the least they can offer after all your hard work. If no such offer is forthcoming, go and ask for it!

LIBRA: Today might be largely devoted to household tasks, Libra. It isn't exactly the most glamorous assignment, but you take a certain pleasure in attending to daily necessities. Pay some bills, throw in a few loads of laundry, do some yard work and cooking. Your partner or family will appreciate your efforts. It's even more fun if it isn't expected

of you. And who knows? Maybe they'll reciprocate.

SCORPIO: This is going to be a rather busy day for you, Scorpio, and you're likely to love every minute of it. You can expect to meet many people as you go about your day. There will be side trips and detours that you weren't anticipating, but they're all the more delightful because of their spontaneity, like the unexpected lunch with a friend. Such stolen moments enrich your life.

SAGITTARIUS: You've been working hard lately and deserve the professional acclaim that comes your way, Sagittarius. As a result of your efforts, it's likely you've received or will soon receive a bonus, raise, or promo-

tion of some kind. Celebrate, but just one night. If you let the party continue indefinitely, the bill could be too large even for you! Be frugal and work hard. That's your real ticket to the good life.

CAPRICORN: This is likely to be a day geared to fulfilling the needs of family. Lesser persons would resent the obligation, but not you, Capricorn. You have a nurturing spirit. As long as you feel appreciated, you're happy to go the extra mile (or two). You can expect to feel loved by those around you. You have a willing, giving nature, and it shows in your aura like a beacon for all to see.

AQUARIUS: Guilt can be a powerful motivator, Aquarius, but it isn't a pure one. Today you could feel obligated to help a fam-

ily member with something you'd prefer to take no part in. There are times, like this, when familial duty trumps personal desires. Do your best to be helpful and gracious even though it could be a trying time for you. You'll feel good about yourself once it's all done.

PISCES: Today you could feel overwhelmed with obligations and commitments to others. There isn't a moment free for yourself, not even for a bathroom break! Clearly, something's out of balance, Pisces. It's time to take charge of your life. It's wonderful that you have such a giving, generous spirit, but you do no one any favors if you burn out from exhaustion. Take some time to refill the well of your soul.