



MY BOOK BID TO REMOVE MASKS WE ALL HIDE BEHIND: LISA RAY

pg08

WHEN IS DEAD REALLY DEAD? STUDY ON PIG BRAINS REINFORCES THAT DEATH IS A VAST GRAY AREA

pg04

'GODZILLA II: KING OF THE MONSTERS' TO RELEASE IN INDIA ON MAY 31

pg08



Summit **TIMES**

Vol 04 | Issue 106 | Gangtok | Saturday | 20 April 2019

ON TOP OF THE NEWS

RNI No. SIKENG/2016/69420

Pages 8 | ₹ 5

Will scrap Article 370 once BJP gets majority in Parliament: Shah

DHARAMPUR (GUJ), APR 19 (PTI): BJP president Amit Shah said Friday that his party would abrogate Article 370 of the Constitution which gives a special status to Jammu and Kashmir after getting a majority in both houses of Parliament.

Speaking at a poll rally at Dharampur in Gujarat's Valsad district, he also said the main issue in the ongoing Lok Sabha elections was national security. "We have already said in our manifestos that we will repeal Article 370 once we get majority in both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha so that Kashmir becomes integral part of India permanently," said Shah.

At present, the BJP does not enjoy a majority in the Upper House of Parliament.

Shah was here to campaign for Dr K C Patel, BJP MP and candidate from Valsad. All 26 Lok Sabha seats in Gujarat will go to the polls on April 23. "This fight is not just about development. There is no doubt development took place under Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The issue this time is national security and only Modi and the BJP can provide that," he said.

Darj Assembly Bye-Election on 19 May

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 19 APR:

Election Commission of India, on Friday, announced that the bye-elections to the Darjeeling Assembly seat will be held on 19 May. The results will be declared on 23 May, along with the 2019 General Election results.

The poll panel said that the election notification will be issued on 22 April, and the last date for filing nominations will be 29 April. The last date of withdrawal of candidature will be 02 May.

The Darjeeling Assembly seat fell vacant after the incumbent, Amar Singh Rai, resigned from the post to contest the MP seat.

Mr Rai was a Gorkha Janmukti Morcha MLA



elected in 2016 and now contests the MP election on a Trinamool Congress ticket.

GJM Binay faction and Trinamool Congress have come together to field Mr Rai for the Darjeeling MP seat, hoping that the 'son of the soil' will draw votes for Trinamool which has never

won a Lok Sabha seat in Darjeeling. Meanwhile, Gorkha National Liberation Front (GNLF) has objected to a GJM MLA contesting on a Trinamool symbol.

Amar Singh Rai is former vice-principal of Loreto College and in 2011, was made chairperson of the Darjeeling Municipal-

ity after winning municipality elections. He won the Assembly seat as a GJM nominee in 2016.

Mr Rai was also appointed to the board of administrators of the Binay Tamang-headed Gorkhaland Territorial Administration (GTA) as a member in charge of education.

For the Lok Sabha elections held on 18 April, Mr Rai was up against BJP's Raju Bista, supported by the Bimal Gurung faction of GJM; Jan Aandolan Party's Dr Harka Bahadur Chettri; Congress candidate Shankar Malakar; and CPI(M)'s Saman Pathak. The main contest is expected to be between TMC and BJP, both of which have different factions of GJM backing their candidates.

SpiceJet hires 500 Jet Airways employees, including 100 pilots



MUMBAI, APR 19 (PTI): Budget carrier SpiceJet Friday said it has already absorbed over 500 employees, including 100 pilots, of the grounded carrier Jet Airways and it is open to induct more as it adds more aircraft and routes in the times ahead.

The Gurugram-based no-frills airline has already announced induction of 27 more planes -22 Boeing 737s and five turboprop Bombardier Q400s - in the fleet to help overcome to an extent the capacity deficit due to Jet Airways temporarily withdrawing its domestic and international services.

SpiceJet chairman and managing director

Ajay Singh in a statement Friday said that his carrier is giving "first preference" to Jet Airways staff in recruitment.

"As we expand and grow, we are giving first preference to those who have recently lost their jobs due to the unfortunate closure of Jet Airways," Singh said.

He said that SpiceJet has already provided jobs to more than 100 pilots, over 200 cabin crew and 200 plus technical and airport staff recently.

"We will do more. We will also induct a large number of planes in our fleet soon," Singh added.

The carrier Thursday announced the launch of 24 new flights connect-

ing Mumbai & Delhi with 16 services connecting Mumbai and four Delhi while the remaining four connecting the two metros. These flights are set to be rolled out between April 26 and May 2.

Earlier this week, the carrier said it will connect Mumbai to a host of international destinations with direct non-stop flights to Hong Kong, Jeddah, Dubai, Colombo, Dhaka, Riyadh, Bangkok and Kathmandu, starting May-end.

"SpiceJet is making all possible efforts to minimise passenger inconvenience and serve Indian customers who are finding it difficult to get seats in this busy season," Singh added.

IPS officers condemn Pragma's remark on Karkare

MUMBAI, APR 19 (PTI): Associations of serving as well as former IPS officers on Friday condemned BJP candidate Sadhvi Pragma Singh Thakur's remark that then Maharashtra ATS chief Hemant Karkare died in a terrorist attack because she had cursed him.

The Indian Police Service (Central) Association tweeted from its official handle, 'IPS Association', that Karkare had made the "supreme sacrifice".

"Ashok Chakra awardee late Sri Hemant Karkare, IPS made the supreme sacrifice fighting terrorists. Those of us in uniform condemn the insulting statement made by a candidate and demand that sacrifices of all our martyrs

be respected," the association said.

Julio Ribeiro, chairman of the Retired IPS Association, termed Thakur's statement as unfortunate.

Speaking to PTI, Ribeiro said, "Karkare was one of the finest IPS officers who worked almost everywhere in Maharashtra during his stint and there was not a single complaint against him. He would never do anything wrong.

"When other officers who have worked with Karkare would come across Pragma's remark, they will think what kind of people are being put up (as candidates)," he said.

Karkare, along with Ashok Kamte and Vijay Salaskar, was among the police officers who were

killed during the 2008 Mumbai terror attack.

Before that, the Maharashtra Anti-Terrorism Squad had cracked the September 2008 Malegaon blast case and arrested Thakur and others. Thakur later got bail, but she is still facing trial for the blast in which six persons were killed.

Addressing BJP workers in Bhopal -- from where the party has fielded her for the Lok Sabha poll -- she alleged that Karkare "tortured" her during the probe.

"I told him he will be destroyed. A little over a month later 'satak' (ritual observed after death of a family member) was going to start...just over a month later, he was shot dead by terrorists and the inauspicious period ended," she said.

Launch of Buddha Air's Kolkata-Kathmandu flight deferred due to elections

KOLKATA, APR 18 (PTI): The ongoing Lok Sabha elections has delayed the launch of Nepal's private airlines Buddha Air's proposed flight between Kolkata and Kathmandu by over a month.

The airline will now begin its operation from May 27 instead of its earlier plan to start from April 16, Buddha Air's Marketing Director Rupesh Joshi said.

"We will operate three weekly flights between Kathmandu and Kolkata on Monday,

Wednesday and Friday from May 27," he said.

"Both the India government and all agencies involved with aviation business suggested to begin the service post election. So we decided to defer it," he said.

Buddha Air would be the second Nepali Airline to connect Kolkata with Kathmandu after the Royal Nepal Airlines' withdrawal from Kolkata two decades back, Joshi said.

The Royal Nepal Airlines now operates flights

from Delhi, Mumbai and Bangalore to Kathmandu, he said. Joshi said grounding of Jet Airways will affect tourism in Nepal and a large number of booking for hotels and tour operators have been cancelled.

He said Jet was the key airline to bring foreign tourists to the Himalayan country.

Now, return fare from Indian destinations from Nepal had soared four times the normal rate owing to grounding of the Jet Airways.

324 companies central forces for third phase poll in WB

KOLKATA, APR 19 (PTI): A total 324 companies of central forces will be deployed for the third phase of voting in West Bengal on April 23 and will cover more than 90 per cent of the polling booths in five Lok Sabha constituencies, a senior official of the Election Commission said Friday. According to special observer Ajay Naik, 50 more companies of central forces are being sent by the ministry of home affairs for the third phase on the EC's request.

Balurghat, Malda North, Malda South, Jangipur and Murshidabad parliamentary constituencies will go to the polls in the third phase.

"Deployment of central forces was increased to 70-80 per cent in the second phase and the results were quite apparent. For the coming phases we had requested the Centre for 50 additional companies of central forces and the home ministry has agreed to it. So more than 90 per cent of the polling stations will be covered by the central forces," Naik told reporters. Election office sources said it was earlier decided to deploy 274 companies of central forces for the third phase of elections but now with another 50 additional companies 324 companies will be deployed at the polling stations," he said.

In the first phase the central forces had covered 51 per cent of the booths in Alipurduar and Cooch Behar and in the second phase on Thursday in Raiganj, Darjeeling and Jalpaiguri 194 companies of central forces had covered 80 per cent of the booths. In the first phase on April 11 when polling was held in two Lok Sabha constituencies of Alipurduar and Coochbehar there were reports of booth capturing, smashing of EVMs and intimidation.

Similar incidents were reported in the second phase on April 18 from Chopra in Darjeeling constituency and also from Islampur in Raiganj constituency. There were also reports of damage to the vehicle of sitting CPI-M MP Mohammed Salim at Raiganj. "There is strict directive from the EC New Delhi to ensure that no such incidents get repeated in the third phase.

We are trying to set up arrangements for that," Naik said. There were demands from the BJP, Congress and CPI(M) to deploy central forces in all the polling stations in all the seven phases of the ongoing general elections.

People have decided to remove Modi, says Rahul

RAICHUR/CHIKKODI (KARNA), APR 19 (PTI): Congress president Rahul Gandhi Friday asserted that Prime Minister Narendra Modi would be "removed from Delhi" and his party would form the government after the Lok Sabha polls.

On the final lap of his election campaign in the Congress-JDS alliance ruled Karnataka, Gandhi also hit out at Modi for "what he has done" to his "guru", BJP stalwart L K Advani, saying that he should be "ashamed" of it.

Gandhi addressed rallies at Raichur and Chikkodi in north Karnataka and is not scheduled to again campaign in the state, which will go to the second phase of polls on April 23.

The first leg of the elections was held on Thursday.

At his rally in Raichur, Gandhi said, "People have decided in 2019 that in Karnataka, Congress and JD(S), in Andhra Pradesh Naidu (Chandrababu Naidu) and across the country those who are fighting against BJP, they will win. Narendra Modi will be removed from Delhi."

Gandhi, who addressed a rally in Gujarat earlier in the day said, "People



have decided. I'm telling you people of Gujarat have decided, I am coming from Gujarat. There is an undercurrent in favour of Congress in Gujarat."

"People of Gujarat are saying, leave alone the country, Narendra Modi has not done anything for Gujarat... Lakhs of acres of our land were given to big business people," Gandhi said.

Assuring Congress and JDS workers that the alliance of the two parties would win here (in Karnataka), he said, "in Delhi, Congress will form the government." He also said Modi talks

about security of the nation "but making crores of youth unemployed" does not strengthen the nation.

In his Chikkodi rally, Gandhi raked up the issue of Advani, who has been kept out of the contest in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls.

"In Hindustan there is nothing bigger than Guru.

Narendra Modi speaks about dharma, but see what he has done with Advani. He should be ashamed."

"Advani made Narendra Modji stand, but in two minutes Narendra

Modi sidelined Advani," Gandhi said.

"He does not even do Namaste to him (Advani), he looks at the other side. Then he speaks about dharma."

Accusing Modi of not having fulfilled any of the promises he made, Gandhi said "he has destroyed crores of people, he has spread hate in the country, he spreads hate wherever he goes."

Speaking about the "NYAY" scheme (minimum income guarantee scheme) the Congress has promised to implement if voted to power, he said that under it, Rs 3.6 lakh would be put into the accounts of 20 per cent economically weaker sections over five years.

"You will have to decide between truth, Nyay programme, brotherhood, love on one side, on the other side hate, demonetisation, Gabbar Singh Tax and unemployment," Gandhi told the crowd.

The uneasy alliance of Congress and JDS is fighting the Lok Sabha polls together in all the 28 constituencies, but the electoral arrangement has been hit by resentment at the level of local leaders and workers, who have fought each other for decades and are now finding it difficult to reconcile to the new situation.

No inquiry ordered against editors in Assam: MHA

NEW DELHI, APR 19 (PTI): The Ministry of Home Affairs Friday said it has not asked the Assam government to conduct any inquiry against some editors in the state who have opposed the Citizenship Amendment Bill, terming the information as "absolutely baseless" and "mischievous".

In a statement, the ministry said it has been reported in a section of media that the MHA has asked the Assam government to take action against some editors opposed to the Citizenship Bill.

"This is absolutely baseless and a mischievous interpretation of facts. This is to clarify that the Union home ministry has not asked the government of Assam to initiate any enquiry against any editor or member of the press/media," it said.

"The factual position is that one Vinay Joshi, with the address of Ratnagiri, Maharashtra, sent a public grievance petition to the Home Ministry on the Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS) on February 14, 2019 related to the issue of Citizenship Amendment Bill- 2016 stating that the issue has been exploited by different militant groups like ULFA and the media has propagated militant ideology to give fresh boost to the militant groups," the statement said.

A very large number of such petitions and grievances on a host of issues are received in the ministry on a daily basis on CPGRAMS. The annual figure being 33,000 for the year 2018. Every such petition is routinely forwarded to the ministries and states concerned.

"Following this standard practice, the petition of Vinay Joshi was routinely forwarded to the Government of Assam. No enquiry of any kind has been ordered by the ministry. No report has been called from the Government of Assam in the matter," the statement said.

It is "mischievous" to suggest that the Centre has asked the Assam government to initiate action against any editor or media person in the state, the ministry added.

Jet Airways crisis: Lenders explore ways to utilise 15 Jet planes, protect valuable assets

NEW DELHI, APR 19 (PTI): Lenders are exploring ways to utilise about 15 planes owned by Jet Airways and also discussing with authorities on protecting the valuable assets, including airport slots, of the now-shuttered airline, banking sources said.

As they wait for completion of the bidding process for stake sale, the domestic lenders, led by SBI, are looking at options to raise funds from available assets of the carrier, which has served the Indian skies for nearly 26 years.

Left with no cash to continue flying, the once-mighty Jet Airways on Wednesday suspended operations temporarily -- a decision that has also left more than 20,000 employees as well as various other stakeholders in the lurch.

The sources said the lenders are actively considering proposals, including from Air India, for utilising the planes owned by Jet Airways. The use of these idle planes would ensure that they remain in good condition as well as earn revenues, they added.

Jet Airways owns



16 aircraft, including 10 wide-body Boeing 777-300 ERs, rest of the planes were on lease. The full-service carrier had more than 120 planes in its fleet last year.

Earlier this week, Air India Chairman and Managing Director Ashwani Lohani wrote to SBI Chairman Rajnish Kumar saying that the airline is looking at leasing five of Jet Airways' Boeing 777s and operate them on London, Dubai and Singapore routes. As concerns mount over the future course of Jet Airways,

the sources said lenders have been proactive and cannot be blamed for the current situation at the airlines. "They (lenders) have been actively engaging with the company for almost nine months ever since the airlines started incurring cash losses and have been urging the management to come forward with a definite plan for resolution.

"Unfortunately, the management and the promoter delayed in taking a decision leading to the present situation. The lenders continued

to support the airline during this period," one of the sources said. The decision of founder-promoter Naresh Goyal to step down came as late as March 25 and he signed a binding agreement to facilitate stake sale only in the second week of April. By then, the airline's operations had been severely affected, the source added.

The source also said that banks have now put in place a transparent bidding process for a new investor to take over the airline and the out-

come would be known by May 10. According to the sources, lenders have also reached out to relevant authorities to protect valuable assets for the airline, such as airport slots, as it would improve the chances of a better revival. The best revival prospect would be to have a new investor who brings in sufficient cash and also has a definite plan going forward, they added.

It is also learnt that while the promoter has stepped down and entered into a binding

agreement, there has been no change in complexion of the board of the airline due to technical reasons.

"The conversion of debt into equity was conceived as a way to allow a new investor to come in. Also, while the lenders have nominated A K Purwar and Kapil Kaul to the board of Jet Airways consequent upon stepping down of the promoters, this is yet to take effect on account of some technical reasons," another source said. The banks have been working with

the same executive management team who have been in charge of running the company even after stepping down of the promoter, the source added. On Thursday, lenders said they were "reasonably hopeful" that the bidding process for the airline will end successfully.

"The lenders after due deliberations decided that the best way forward for the survival of Jet Airways is to get the binding bids from potential investors who have expressed EOI (Expression of Interest) and have been issued bid documents on April 16," they had said in a statement.

A consortium of seven domestic lenders led by State Bank of India (SBI), has invited bids from potential suitors. Their debt exposure to the airline is more than Rs 8,500 crore.

"Lenders are reasonably hopeful that the bid process is likely to be successful in determining the fair value of the enterprise in a transparent manner," it said.

Banks had rejected emergency funding request of Jet Airways that forced it to ground operations.

Trump slams 'fabricated' testimony in Mueller report

WASHINGTON, APR 19 (AFP): US President Donald Trump on Friday dismissed unfavorable testimony in the Mueller report on Russian election interference as "fabricated" and labelled the document "crazy."

"Statements are made about me by certain people in the Crazy Mueller Report, in itself written by 18 Angry Democrat Trump Haters, which are fabricated & totally untrue," the president tweeted. A 400-page document outlining the findings of Special Counsel Robert Mueller's 22-month investigation, made public on Thursday, cleared Trump of criminal conspiracy but left open whether he had obstructed justice.

Mueller's report recounts 10 episodes involving the president and potential obstruction of the investigation.

After reviewing the document, Attorney General Bill Barr and his deputy Rod Rosenstein concluded there was insufficient evidence to charge the president with obstruction.

Mueller, however, noted that while he was following Justice Department policy in not charging Trump, the evidence he gathered "does not exonerate" the Republican president.

Trump initially celebrated the publication of the report -- which landed as the United States dives into the ferment of a bitter presidential campaign -- saying at the White House that he was "having a good day."

But he was in a more defensive mood Friday, as he prepared for a long Easter weekend at his Florida golf resort, insisting that he had done

nothing wrong.

"Because I never agreed to testify, it was not necessary for me to respond to statements made in the 'Report' about me, some of which are total bullshit & only given to make the other person look good (or me to look bad)," Trump added, repeating his description of the investigation as an "illegally started hoax."

Mueller said in his report that Trump's "efforts to influence the investigation were mostly unsuccessful, but that is largely because the persons who surrounded the president declined to carry out orders or accede to his requests."

The episodes of potential wrongdoing, which will now be examined by the Democrat-led House of Representatives, include the firing of FBI chief James Comey, Trump's efforts to remove Mueller and his attempts to prevent disclosure of emails about the infamous 2016 Trump Tower meeting between Russians and senior campaign officials.

Democrats meanwhile have demanded action against Barr, arguing that Mueller's report undercut some of the attorney general's key claims about the obstruction issue and the White House's cooperation with the investigation.

"There are at least four significant ways that Mr Barr has misled the public on the contents of the Mueller report," Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said in a joint statement. Eric Swalwell, a California congressman, called for Barr's resignation while several others berated him.

ND Tiwari's son died due to strangulation, smothering: Autopsy report

NEW DELHI, APR 19 (PTI): Rohit Shekhar Tiwari, son of late Uttarakhand chief minister ND Tiwari, died of "asphyxia" as he was strangled and smothered, according to autopsy report.

Following the post-mortem at AIIMS here, police on Thursday registered a case of murder and transferred it to the Crime Branch for investigation, a senior officer said.

The autopsy was conducted by a medical board comprising five senior doctors of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS).

"The medical board unanimously concluded that the cause of death in this case is asphyxia as a result of strangulation and smothering. It is a sudden unnatural death, placed in the category

of homicide," the head of the AIIMS' forensic department, Dr Sudhir Gupta, said.

The case has been transferred to the Crime Branch and it has started investigating the matter, the officer said.

Rohit Tiwari died on Tuesday. He was brought dead to the Max Hospital in Saket in south Delhi.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (South) Vijay Kumar had said that Rohit Tiwari, a resident of Defence Colony in south Delhi, was brought to the hospital around 5pm in an ambulance and doctors declared him dead.

His mother Ujjwala Tiwari, who was admitted at Max hospital, received a call from her house about her son being "unwell and bleeding from the nose", he said.

"Max hospital re-

ceived an emergency call from the residence of Rohit Shekhar Tiwari at 4:41 pm this (Tuesday) afternoon. An ambulance brought Tiwari to Max Hospital, Saket, where he was declared brought dead at the emergency department," the hospital had said in a statement. Narayan Dutt Tiwari died at the age of 93 on October 18, his birthday, last year. He, too, was undergoing treatment for age-related complications at the Saket hospital.

The Congress veteran, who had served in various positions at the Centre, was the chief minister of Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh.

Rohit Tiwari joined the BJP ahead of the 2017 Uttarakhand assembly polls and had recently indicated he could join the Congress.

IIT Mandi hosts workshop to discuss climate change, extreme events in Himalayan region

MANDI, APR 19 (PTI): Scientists from all over the country gathered at the Indian Institute of Technology here to discuss how climate change and other phenomena are affecting the Himalayan region, making the population more vulnerable to extreme climate events.

IIT Mandi is hosting an International Workshop on Climate Change and Extreme Events (C2E2) in the Indian Himalayan region from 18th to 20th April, aimed at understanding the effects of melting of glaciers, increased atmospheric pollution, pollution due to crop residue burning in Himalayan region and applications of remote sensing.

Inaugurating the event Thursday evening, Dr M. Rajeevan, Secretary, Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES), Government of India, said,

Climate is changing and global warming is happening due to release of greenhouse gases. In many parts of the world, including India, the effects of climate change are being seen especially in mountain regions like Mandi.

The Himalayas were one of the world's sensitive hotspots to climate change along with the Arctic Region. The climate change can affect food, water and energy security of the region, Rajeevan said.

"The Himalayan Region is experiencing increasing variability in weather in last many years. This could lead to further snow accumulation over this region and more research is needed to understand this phenomenon, he said.

"By studying data, there are also evidences that the number of ex-

treme warm days and nights has increased in this Himalayan Region, which are clear effects of global warming," he added. The uncertainties in environment have led to many extreme events such as glacial lake outbursts, earthquakes and rock/landslides, which can be mapped and monitored regularly using satellites.

We have to understand climate change and its impact as it is very important for future generations. The workshop has participation from all over India, besides Europe, and the U.S. with over 90 speakers from across India. Over 200 abstracts were received with over 150 listed and more than 90 oral and poster presentations during this workshop," said Ramesh P. Singh, workshop Coordinator and Visiting Faculty, IIT Mandi.

TikTok's parent ByteDance plans USD 1 bn investment in India in next 3 years

NEW DELHI, APR 19 (PTI): Unfazed by the ban on TikTok in India, the popular Chinese short video app's parent ByteDance remains "very optimistic" and plans to invest USD 1 billion in the country over the next three years.

ByteDance -- touted to be among the world's most valuable startups with investors like SoftBank, General Atlantic, KKR and Sequoia on board -- also offers platforms like Helo and Vigo Video in India.

Speaking to PTI, ByteDance Director (International Public Policy) Helena Lersch said the company has been strengthening its content moderation policies over the last many months.

"We are obviously disappointed by the current developments, but we are also very optimistic that we will resolve this issue. We remain committed to our Indian users. As a company, we are looking to invest USD 1 billion over the next three years in India, that is how bullish we will remain to be here," she said.

The company would also be increasing the number of employees in India to 1,000 people by the end of this year.

TikTok, which allows users to create short videos and share them, has more than 120 million users in India and is popular among youngsters.

The Madras High Court on April 3 had directed the Centre to ban TikTok app, saying it was evident from media reports that pornography and inappropriate content were made available through such mobile apps.

Following the Supreme Court's refusal

to stay the Madras High Court order, tech giants Google and Apple removed TikTok from their app stores in India to prohibit further downloads of the app.

Those who have already downloaded the app would be able to continue using it on their phones.

Lersch declined to comment on court proceedings as the matter is subjudice. The hearing of the matter is scheduled for April 22 in the Supreme Court and for April 24 in the Madras High Court.

India is a critical market for social media platforms given the large population of 1.3 billion people. With increasing availability of affordable smartphones and cheap data plans, the country is also the largest mobile data consumer market globally -- an opportunity that global tech companies are vying to tap into.

"We, as a company, abide by local laws, but we also want to be culturally appropriate. We have a content moderation team in India. We increased the capacity of our content moderation team globally by 400 per cent last year because we were prepared for the growth," she added.

According to her, the company has a two-step approach for content moderation.

"First is a tech approach -- a machine learning tool that filters content and then it goes to a content moderation team. In India, the team speaks 14 languages. I think, it is fundamentally important that the team is based in the country and speaks local languages to make culturally relevant decisions," she said.

**CONTACT
SUMMIT
TIMES
REPORTERS
SINGTAM
8170070813
MANGAN/
DIKCHU
9832612485/
9434011213
GANGTOK
8116388176
9832424750
8016270440
NAMCHI
9832048410**

Cong faces uphill task in Ladakh after party rebel files nomination

ANIL BHATT
JAMMU, APR 19 (PTI): Congress is facing an uphill task to win the Ladakh parliamentary seat as a party rebel, backed by an influential religious organisation, has filed his nomination as an independent candidate, making the May 6 election a multi-cornered contest involving BJP.

Rigzin Spalbar, of Congress, is fighting against party rebel Asgar Ali Karbalai.

Spalbar, a Buddhist leader, is a two-time chief executive councillor of Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC), and Karbalai is a former MLA of Kargil.

There are six other candidates in the election fray. Tsering Namgyal, the current CEC of the hill development council and graduate from University of Jammu, is the BJP candidate. Dorji Angchuk is its "covering candidate".

On the last day of filing of nominations on Thursday, five independents, including Karbalai, filed their papers with the election commission.

Ladakh Lok Sabha constituency is the largest in India in terms of area. Out of six parliamentary constituencies in Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh has the distinction of having the least number of polling stations, 559, for the lowest number of voters, 1,71,819. Leh and Kargil districts have 294 and 265 polling stations, respectively.

Karbalai, after denial of Congress ticket, decided to take on Spalbar, in a major setback to the grand old party. He is backed by the influential Imam Khomeini Memorial Trust, Kargil.

The NC-PDP has fielded a joint candidate.

Namgyal, 31, has served as private secretary to former BJP MP and renowned Buddhist spiritual leader Thupstan Chhewang. But, political observers say, the saffron party is struggling to rise to the challenge.

Chhewang had won the seat for BJP for the first time in 2014 but he resigned from its primary membership in November last year, calling BJP's promises "empty rhetoric". In Ladakh, the last date for withdrawal of candidature is April 22. According to the election commission, most of the polling stations have been set up at an altitude of 8,001 or higher, and the maximum number of high-altitude stations, 183, is in Leh assembly segment, followed by 158 in Kargil.

With a polling booth for least number of voters and one at the highest altitude, Leh has it all. The polling station for the least number of voters 12 has been set up at Gaik village in Leh Assembly segment. Five of the voters in Gaik are male and seven female, officials said.

The constituency also has a polling station at the highest altitude in the country at 14,890 ft above the sea level at a place called Anlay Pho.

One more held in assault case for selling beef

TEZPUR (ASSAM), APR 9 (PTI): One more person was arrested for allegedly beating up and force-feeding pork to a Muslim man for selling beef in Assam, taking the total number arrests to 12 including a BJP ward member, police said.

Police Thursday picked up a 24-year-old man in connection with the crime in Biswanath district that created a political storm in the state and outside.

Among the 12 arrested persons, Ram Prasad Das alias Maina (40) is a ward member of the BJP in Gorehagi panchayat.

He is also one of the contractors of the Madhupur market, where the incident took place.

Investigation is going on to find out the role of some other persons in the incident, police said.

A 48-year-old Muslim man, Shaukat Ali, was allegedly beaten up and forced to eat pork by a group of people who were angry over his selling beef in his stall in Madhupur weekly market on April 7. Consumption of pork in a taboo among most Muslims. The group also beat up a Hindu contractor of the market for allowing Ali to sell beef dishes.

Cow slaughter and consumption of beef is not banned in the state but the Assam Cattle Preservation Act, 1950, permits slaughter of only cattle above 14 years of



age after due certification by a veterinary officer. The incident came to light after a video of the incident that has gone viral showed a dazed Ali surrounded by some people who angrily demanded to know from him where he came from and whether his name figured in the National Register of Citizens (NRC)

that intends to weed out illegal migrants. The police registered a case after receiving a complaint from Sahabuddin Ali, the brother of the victim. It created a huge political storm as the Lok Sabha elections in Assam was to begin just four days after that. Chief Minister Sarbananda

Sonowal gave orders to the DGP to nab all the culprits even as widespread condemnation poured in from across the state. Ali claimed that initially his father and now he has been selling cooked beef at his food-stall in the market for over three decades and never faced any such issue earlier.

Struggling RR look for double against formidable MI

DINESH SHARMA
JAIPUR, APR 19 (PTI): Fast running out of time, a struggling Rajasthan Royals will hope to complete the double against Mumbai Indians in a return-leg IPL fixture and revive their campaign here Saturday.

With six losses and two wins, hosts Rajasthan Royals are languishing at the second last position in the points table and they would be desperate to bring their campaign back on track with a much-needed win here.

Rajasthan would be taking heart from the four-wicket win over Mumbai Indians at their own den last Saturday and will hope to get the better of their rivals once again, this time at home.

However, it will be easier said than done considering Rajasthan's dismal record at the Sawai Man Singh Stadium. Apart from their lone victory against Royal Challengers Bangalore, Rajasthan have lost three matches at home.

England's Jos Buttler has done the bulk of scoring for Rajasthan. His fiery 89 off 43 balls was the cornerstone of Royals' four-wicket victory over Mumbai but rest the batsmen have either struggled or not been consistent.

Sanju Samson, who had hit the first ton of this IPL, too has not delivered in past couple of innings.

Skipper Anjikyah Rahane, himself, has got starts but failed to convert them. His decision to go down the order in the last match also didn't bear any fruit as Rajasthan failed to chase down 182 against Kings XI Punjab in Mohali the other day.

The likes of former Australian captain Steve Smith and England all-rounder Ben Stokes also have been struggling.

The pace-spin duo of Jofra Archer and Shreyas

Gopal has spearheaded their bowling attack but rest of the bowlers have been far from penetrative and also proved costly in death overs.

In their last game, Rahane made some changes, bringing in Stuart Binny and Ashton Turner but while the former hit some lusty blows, the Australian was dismissed for a naught.

Rahul Tripathi did excel with a 45-ball 50 after returning to his favourite position at top of the order but he threw his wicket immediately after completing the fifty.

Mumbai Indians, on the other hand, have looked formidable this season with a good mix of power hitters, quality bowlers and perfect all-rounders.

The three-time former champions grabbed the second position after a dominating 40-run win over Delhi Capitals last night and would be eager to avenge their defeat against Rajasthan on Saturday to inch closer to the play-off berth.

If skipper Rohit Sharma, who completed 8000 runs in T20 last night, and Quinton De Kock laid the foundation at the top, the Pandya brothers -- Hardik and Krunal, along with the big-hitting Kieron Pollard have provided the late charge to help MI post huge scores.

MI boasts of two of the best death bowlers in Jasprit Bumrah, who has taken 10 wickets from nine games so far, and veteran Sri Lankan Lasith Malinga.

Young leg-spinner Rahul Chahar's three wicket haul was one of the highlights of MI's win against Delhi and the ever dependable Krunal too have troubled the rival batsmen.

Both the teams have faced each other 22 times and MI has emerged victorious 11 times, while RR won on 10 occasions with one game being abandoned due to rain in 2009.

Trump's initial reaction to Mueller's appointment was "this is the end of my Presidency": report



WASHINGTON, APR 19 (PTI): Donald Trump's first reaction to Robert Mueller's appointment as special counsel was "this is the end of my Presidency" and the US President was so furious that he reacted with an expletive, according to the counsel's report.

In a major relief to President Trump, the nearly two-year probe by Mueller found "no evidence" of a "collusion" between the Trump campaign and the Russian government during the 2016 US elections, Attorney General William Barr announced Thursday.

Barr said the redacted report released Thursday made it clear that the Russian government sought to interfere in American elections, "but thanks to the special counsel's thorough investigation, we now know that the Russian operatives who perpetrated these schemes did not have the cooperation of President Trump or the Trump campaign".

Trump first learned that Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein appointed Mueller as special counsel from then-Attorney General Jeff Sessions during a meeting to interview candidates for FBI director in May 2017, the report said.

Also present were Sessions' chief of staff Jody Hunt and then-White House counsel Don McGahn, the CNN reported. After Sessions deliv-

ered the news, "the President slumped back in his chair," the report said, citing notes from Hunt. "Oh my God. This is terrible. This is the end of my Presidency. I'm f****d," Trump said, according to the report.

Trump became "angry and lambasted" Sessions for recusing himself from the Russia investigation, it said.

"How could you let this happen, Jeff?" Trump asked his attorney general.

Trump told Sessions, "you were supposed to protect me," or words to that effect," Sessions recalled, the Mueller report stated.

"Everyone tells me if you get one of these independent counsels, it ruins your presidency. It takes years and years and I won't be able to do anything. This is the worst thing that ever happened to me," Trump said, according to the report.

He then told Sessions he should resign, the report said.

Sessions agreed, left the Oval Office, and the next day returned to the White House to hand Trump his resignation letter, it said.

Trump tucked Sessions' resignation letter in his pocket, but then proceeded to ask Sessions multiple times if he wanted to remain attorney general, the report found.

Sessions said he wished to remain attorney general, but said it

was up to Trump, the report said.

Sessions would continue serving as attorney general for another year, but was ousted in November 2018 by Trump, who remained upset over his decision to step away from the Russia probe, the CNN report said.

Mueller was appointed following the firing of FBI Director James Comey to oversee the federal investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 election, including potential collusion between Trump's campaign associates and Russian officials. Mueller's team also investigated whether Trump obstructed justice.

The probe could not clear Trump, saying that it was unable to determine that "that no criminal conduct occurred". Earlier on Thursday, President Trump said the Mueller probe was "Greatest Political Hoax of all time!"

"Crimes were committed by Crooked, Dirty Cops and DNC/The Democrats," tweeted Trump, who refers Clinton as "Crooked".

Meanwhile, Democratic Congressman Jerry Nadler said he had sent a letter to Mueller - requiring his testimony before the House of Representatives Judiciary Committee by May 23.

"We cannot take Attorney General Barr's word for it. We must read the full Mueller report, and the underlying evidence," Nadler said.

FLAT AVAILABLE FOR RENT

Fully furnished, 3 Bedroom flat available for rent at Church Road, Near Diesel Power House. Conveniently located by the roadside and a 5-minute walk from M.G. Marg. Suitable for Corporate Office and Guest House.

For further details please
 Contact: 943417687 / 9083826462

KUTSHE SHEGU

The 49 day Shegu of Lt. Meena Kumari Rai w/o Phur Shangey Sherpa who left for heavenly abode on 6 Mar, 2019 falls on 22 Apr, 2019.

All relatives, friends and well wishers are requested to join us for offering prayers for the departed soul at our residence at Upper Phalidara. We also like to take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude towards all those who extended their support during the time of bereavement.
Contact: 90833-85240, 89673-16501.



ANTHYESTHI KRIYA

Anthyesthi kriya of our beloved mother, Lt. Hasti Kumari Subba who left for her heavenly abode on 12 Apr, 2019 falls on 20 Apr, 2019.

All relatives, friends, and well wishers are requested to join us for offering prayers to the departed soul at our residence at Soreng busty.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank those who stood by us during our time of bereavement.

**Jit Bahadur Subba (Husband),
 Deepen Subba, Sachin Subba, Preeten Subba (Sons): 70298 85112, 74309 25608.**



KUTSHE SHEGU

The 49th Day Kutshe Shegu of Late Norden Tshering Lepcha of Naga Namgor, North Sikkim who left for his heavenly abode on 04/03/2019 falls on 21/04/2019. All friends, relatives and well-wishers are requested to join us in offering prayer of departed soul at our residents at Naga Nomgor, North Sikkim.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank all those who stood by us in our time of bereavement and regret our inability to thank them individually.

**Lachhi Tamang (wife) and family members.
 7384321454/9775819998/8945969929**



~ SummitTIMES ~
 CLASSIFIEDS

Required for Summit Times

Two field reporters for Gangtok (East) and one for West District. Should be fluent in English. Have basic knowledge in journalism. Walk in interview:

**Summit Times office
 Church Road, Gangtok
 03592-208698**

URGENTLY REQUIRED:

Urgent Recruitment for a waiter with atleast 3 years experience and one kitchen helper. Contact: Hotel Paramount, Dentam, West Sikkim- 9735909625 / 8348285444

PLOT FOR SALE:

Vacant plot measuring 0.38 Acres for sale at Amdo Golai, Deorali. Contact: 09717191985/097474651223

INTERESTED TO BECOME
 A YOGA TEACHER?

CRITERIA - Academic qualification of minimum higher secondary pass

Complete yoga syllabus will be provided by SYVC Gangtok absolutely free of cost. After one year of basic training and service (karma yoga)/ volunteering in the Centre, the candidate would be sent for Yoga Teacher Training Course at Shivananda Yoga Ashram. After TTC, the candidate would be appointed on part time basis at the Yoga Centre in Gangtok. College students can also apply. If required, food and accommodation would be provided.

**Interested candidates may contact
 : Deepa Yoga Centre at
 Mob: +91 7432043719/ +91 8170953919.**

SummitTIMES

ON TOP OF THE NEWS

Work Harder at Inspiring Excellence

More attention should be diverted to stem the regression from privileges to entitlement

A recent discussion on ideas of identity teased about something which should have been obvious all along – a lot of the passion behind reinforcing and reasserting identities, as much as they may be about ideas of self and belonging, are also about privileges which accrue when such claims fructify. Privileges, however, are only one step away from ingraining a sense of entitlement, and that is where futures can get compromised.

Maybe the minds that should be applying themselves to finding solutions are too occupied with other pursuits or maybe because the fire in the belly is just not burning strongly enough, whatever the reason, measures aimed at securing the futures for the present and coming generations remain perennially short-term in Sikkim. We speak of employment here. Quotas, reservation and guaranteed employment are short-term measures; options put in place till such time that the 'local' workforce acquires the skills and training required for the opportunities available. Make these protections permanent and the policy ends up rewarding mediocrity because it stops placing a premium on excellence. Why, after all, will a 'local' work hard at becoming employable when the carrot of guaranteed placement keeps dancing in front of him/her? In fact, to do so [work hard at becoming employable] would be seen as a waste of energy by many. But this approach is self-defeating. Sikkim is growing, both, in census figures and aspirations, and the job opportunities here will never be able to keep pace. Every job opportunity that opens in Sikkim in the next five years, once it is filled, will remain occupied on an average for the next thirty years. Even if all these job openings are made available only to locals, one still looks at an increasing number of job seekers entering the job market every year. School enrolments are up and the number of graduates has been consistently rising in the State, why, despite the density of "universities" here and one proper Central University, the State is in the process of establishing a state university as well. Given how young the pursuit of education is in Sikkim and the manner in which the population is growing, the number of job-seekers will keep multiplying every year. The State, even after 100% reservation, will soon run out of job opportunities.

The policy makers in government and noise makers outside have to realise that the solution is not in reserving jobs in Sikkim, but grooming generations to become employable anywhere in the world. Once that happens, jobs in Sikkim will automatically go to locals and this will come bundled with pride because they would have been earned on merit and not recommendations or old-fashioned laws. This cannot happen though if people are spoilt for doles. It is not suggested that jobs in Sikkim should not be reserved for locals; what is being suggested is that celebrating protectionism only grooms mediocrity. Protections exist and should be maintained as a safety net, but aspirations have to be set much higher.

One way to do this would be by fixing accountability not just on those who organise skill development programmes [by checking up on how many self-employed youth emerged from the training], but also following up on the funds the government invests on students by way of free education, text books, scholarships and other aids. It would not be a bad idea to release figures on how much the State spends on an average on its youth since the time they join school to the time they graduate. When the figure stares them in the face in black & white, maybe more of the youth will be inspired to put their education to better use than demanding a job from the government. If this happens, they will inspire more to follow in their footsteps. That is the chain reaction of achievers that the State has to aim at setting off, not pampering the youth with a policy that makes them lazy.

WRITE US:

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

Mail us at: news@summittimes.com

When is dead really dead? Study on pig brains reinforces that death is a vast gray area

KATHARINA BUSL
theconversation.com

For the longest time, "death" used to be when the heart stopped beating and breathing stopped. Then, machines were invented in the 1930s that enabled people to receive air even if they could not take in the air themselves. In the 1950s, machines were developed to help sustain heartbeat.

But no machine could bring back an irreversibly brain-damaged patient to have a functioning brain. As a result, the concept of "brain death" was introduced as an additional definition of death to complement death by heart-lung failure.

The concept of brain death, while legally adopted in the U.S. and in large parts of the world, has remained an area of ongoing discussion. It often centers on how someone can be dead when the heart is beating and the body is warm, even if this function is entirely reached through artificial support. Brain death also is more difficult to conceptualize, as it is a less visible form of death. And isn't it so much easier to believe what we can see?

On April 17, 2019, a study published in *Nature* that showed signs of activity in pig brains after they were killed added more fuel to the discussion. I am a neurologist specializing in neurocritical care, with both clinical and research interests in acute brain damage, and broad exposure to catastrophic brain injury and brain death. My analysis of the study is that it reinforces much of what we already know, that death is a continuum.

WHEN PIGS DIE, CAN THEIR BRAINS BE REVIVED?

In the study, scientists took brains from pigs that had been slaughtered at USDA-regulated facilities, connected them to a machine that pumped an artificial blood-like nutritional fluid through the brains four hours after their "death," and measured activity of brain cells. They found that even hours after death, blood circulation – or circulation of the artificial blood – and certain brain cell functions could be restored in this experimental setting.

The conclusion was that demise in the brain after the heart stops beating follows an extended process rather than occurring at a defined moment in time, and that perhaps our brains have a better capacity to heal than is currently known.

Is this news? Yes, on a scientific level – that is, under the microscope, because an experiment like this has not been done before. But, have we not known for a long time that death does not occur within the blink of an eye?

Historic accounts of decapitated bodies vividly

describe decapitated bodies taking a few steps or even running.

That means that such a body was not immediately dead. And, conceivably, if one hooked up such a body to blood supply and healed the wounds, most people could likely imagine that it could continue to be maintained with living body parts or cells.

CAN A HEAD STILL BE ALIVE AFTER DECAPITATION?

Even worse to imagine: Could the decapitated

not had energy.

The end result of how functional such a damaged brain will come out is one of the biggest challenges we have to learn more about.

After an injury, a whole sequence of consecutive processes occurs that is called secondary brain injury and is triggered by the insult to the brain in the first place. And these processes often cause tremendous damage, and sometimes more than the actual first injury.

For example, a hard blow to the head can result in a bruise or bleeding in the brain, which can be removed by surgery in certain cases. Despite the bleeding being stopped or removed, however, the surrounding brain will sometimes start swelling and bruising even more over the subsequent days, like a big bruise on the thigh goes through stages and color changes. There is not yet a preventive therapy for this, but we know that some factors can make this process worse, such as blood pressure that is too low or lack of oxygen to the brain during the healing phase.

Imagine a broken bone: The cast is just the first step, and there is swelling, pain and weakness for weeks to come. In the brain, the process is more granular. And in neuroscience, we are just now beginning to understand this cascade of events.

WHAT TO LEARN FROM THE PIG STUDY
The study of revived pig brain cells does not even come close to touching on this much bigger picture. It is limited to showing that the time span and spectrum of nerve cell function that can persist and at least partially be restored is longer than had been shown so far. Hence, it supports the idea that dying is a process, and puts an additional piece of data on the length of this process.

But it does not show that these brain cells were able to function as a nerve cell network leading to higher brain function such as consciousness or awareness – the features that set us apart as humans. It also just looks at the immediate restoring of cell function, and not at how these brains do days out, when the continuing processes of secondary brain damage set in.

To summarize, in the absence of blood flow, the brain, including all its individual cells will die – eventually. And this study has perhaps expanded the understanding of "eventually."

Death is a process, and not a moment in time. It is the human desire to put things in categories of black and white, and to have definitions that let us operate in daily life. Death – this is becoming more and more clear – is a large gray zone, and we will have to expect that this gray zone grows as science progresses.

[The writer is Associate Professor, Neurology, Chief, Division of Neurocritical Care, Department of Neurology, University of Florida]



head still be conscious for a bit? Perhaps yes.

After the heart stops beating, we consider that someone has died. But, after the heartbeat stops, we also know that sometimes, the heartbeat can come back by itself. This is called autoresuscitation. In this case, someone that appeared dead for a few minutes may not have actually died.

But the situation is different for the brain than for the heart. When there is a lack of blood flow in the absence of a heart that pumps it, or when there is intrinsic brain injury and blood cannot get in, the situation is tricky. Brains are very sensitive to being deprived of oxygen and energy supply, and various degrees of brain injury occur. Depending on how long the energy fuel to the brain is absent, brain function can remain alive to various degrees and be rekindled to a degree we neuroscientists do not yet fully know. We know that brain function is seriously disturbed, with variable permanence of function loss depending on how long the brain has

Notre Dame: how Christ's Crown of Thorns has survived crusades, political upheaval and a fire (but only just)

DR EMILY GUERRY
theconversation.com

When the spire of Notre Dame cathedral collapsed in a fiery blaze on Monday 15 April, it looked as if the priceless treasures inside would be lost forever. This includes sacred paintings, tapestries, sculpture, stained glass windows, as well as a cherished collection of holy relics. So it was wonderful to see, the next morning, that the cathedral's Gothic fabric – which is more than 850 years old – held strong. Its sweeping vaults are damaged but intact – testifying to the brilliant engineering of medieval masons and the bravery of the Parisian firefighters.

As the news of the destruction unfolded, we learned that Father Jean-Marc Fournier orchestrated the rescue of many relics in the cathedral treasury with the firefighters' help. With minutes to spare, they formed a human chain and managed to save some of the most ancient and holy treasures in all of Christendom – including the relic of the Crown of Thorns.

Preserved in a gilded, crystalline reliquary and exposed to the faithful every year for a special service on Good Friday, the crown relic looks like a wreath comprised of brittle but elegantly woven marine rushes. This delicate relic has a long and complicated history and, for the past eight centuries, has been protected by glittering Gothic spaces and worshipped in Paris as tangible, physical symbol of Christ's kingship. In the wake of the fire at Notre Dame and on the eve of Good Friday, it is important to reflect on the significance of this sacred object and its remarkable survival.

'ECCE HOMO'

The Crown of Thorns is named in three of the gospels as one of many tortuous instruments used while Christ is being mocked during his trial and punishment (Matthew 27:27–30, Mark 15:16–19, and John 19:1–3).

In John's gospel, the Passion narrative is extended: Christ is brought before the Roman governor of Judea, Pontius Pilate, to face the crowd while still wearing the Crown of Thorns.

This passage forms the basis of the popular devotional image called the Ecce Homo, in which Christ is imagined as the rejected Messiah, scourged and crowned in thorns. The gospels do note state what became of the Crown after the Mockery.

Interestingly Christ does not wear the Crown of Thorns in early depictions of the Crucifixion. Christ is shown dying on the cross without the crown (with only a handful of exceptions) throughout the first millennium of Christian art. And the existence of a relic cult is unknown until the fifth century. In 409 AD, Saint Paulinus instructed the faithful to venerate Holy Thorns relics in the basilica of Mount Zion in Jerusalem, alongside the Flagellation column and the Holy Lance. In 591 AD, Gregory of Tours offered the earliest known description of the crown relic:

"They say that the Crown of Thorns appears as if it is alive. Every day its leaves seem to wither and every day, they become green again because of divine power."

ON THE ROAD

Only a few accounts of the crown relic at Mount Zion exist after the siege of Jerusalem in 636 AD, due to difficulties in access for pilgrims. A True Cross reliquary, known as the Limburg Staurotheke, is our earliest material witness to the relic's new location in Constantinople. Fashioned in about 950 AD, its inscription states that it holds items from the Byzantine emperor's treasury, including a fragment of the Crown of Thorns. But it remains unclear when or how the crown came to Constantinople, where it was enshrined near in the Bucoleon palace amidst a marvellous assortment of Passion relics.

Writing during a political coup in

1200, Nicolas Mesarites, the palace guardian, praised the survival of the "incorruptible" Crown of Thorns, which was "fresh, green, and un-withered". After the Fourth Crusade, Baldwin of Flanders became the first Latin emperor of Constantinople and took control of the palaces and their treasuries.

In 1228, when Baldwin II took the throne at the age of just 11, crisis seized the Latin Empire. To secure money, he pledged relics as debt collateral. Around 1237, the Crown of Thorns relic was used to secure a loan from a wealthy Venetian merchant named Niccolo Quirino. Baldwin ventured to Europe on a fundraising mission and approached his "cousin" King Louis IX of France (1214–1270) for more help and the French king agreed to pay off the imperial debt.

A DIVINE GIFT

In so doing, Louis IX would become the new protector of the relic. To be clear, this exchange was not a sale, as this would have violated ecumenical rules. Instead, the transfer of the crown from Constantinople to Paris would be framed as a diplomatic transaction and celebrated as a divine gift.

Gauthier Cornut, a 13th-century archbishop of Sens, wrote a detailed account of the transfer of the crown to Paris in a text known as the *Historia Susceptionis Coronae Spinea*. He also orchestrated a number of ceremonies to commemorate the arrival of the relic. Removing his crown and wearing only a humble tunic (another holy relic saved during the fire at Notre-Dame), Louis walked barefoot carrying the relic into Paris in a spectacular procession on August 19, 1239.

The parade ended with a sermon inside Notre Dame cathedral before the relic was locked away in the royal palace. Just nine years later, on April 26, 1248, the Sainte-Chapelle was consecrated in honour of the

Passion of Christ. This shimmering, two-storied Gothic edifice enveloped the Crown of Thorns in a dazzling curtain of Gothic glass and colour, providing an extraordinary stage for the celebration of Christ's presence right in the heart of Paris.

It is here that we first find numerous images of Christ crucified wearing the Crown of Thorns, a thoughtful reinvention of Christian iconography that places the object at the centre of salvation history. In 1297, 27 years after the death of Louis IX, he was canonised; the piety of Saint Louis throughout his life was extraordinary, but his acquisition and procession of the relic was arguably one of the earliest and most public demonstrations of his sainthood.

A NEW HOME

The Crown of Thorns remained in this royal chapel until the French Revolution. In 1790, some of the relics were safely delivered to the abbey of Saint-Denis and, in 1806, Archbishop Jean-Baptiste de Belloy of Paris oversaw the transfer of the relic to the treasury of Notre Dame, where it could be worshipped by all of the people of Paris as a shared, civic treasure.

It has remained in the cathedral, enduring the violence of the Commune and two World Wars, until calamity struck on April 15. It will be housed at the Hotel de Ville during the rebuilding of Notre Dame.

Throughout innumerable wars, disasters, other threats from the vicissitudes of time, this small, sacred object – a little cluster of ancient branches that signify Christian salvation – still remains. Loved by thousands, the Crown of Thorns relic continues to serve its purpose – to inspire hope, to remind us that what is lost can one day flourish again and that the things we love, no matter how small, have great power.

[The writer is Senior Lecturer in Medieval History, University of Kent]

BJP assembly candidate held for destroying EVM in a booth

BERHAMPUR (ODISHA), APR 19 (PTI): The police arrested a BJP assembly candidate on the charge of destroying an EVM in a polling booth in Odisha's Ganjam district during the second phase of elections on Thursday.

BJP candidate for Sorada assembly seat, Nilamani Bisoi, along with his supporters allegedly entered a booth at Renti village under Sorada police station limits, destroyed the EVM and prevented polling officials from discharging their duty, police said on Friday.

Lok Sabha and assembly elections are being held simultaneously in the state.

The incident occurred about one hour before the end of voting time and till then, 414 out of 539 voters of the booth had exercised their franchise, police said.

Bisoi was arrested following complaints received from the presiding officer of the booth PK Jena, Aska Sub-divisional Police Officer Suryamani Pradhan, said.

"The EVM was totally smashed. We have forwarded the report of the presiding officer of the booth to the chief electoral officer," said collector-cum-District Election Officer Vijay Amruta Kurlange. The Election Commission would take the final call on re-poll in the booth, he said. The candidate's brother Basant Kumar Bisoi, however, claimed that the EVM was destroyed by ruling BJD workers and not Nilmani. Nilmani had also lodged a complaint in this regard but his FIR was not registered, Basant said.

He claimed that Nilmani went to the booth after coming to know that BJD activists were trying to rig the polls and after he entered the booth, the BJD men destroyed the EVM.

Sorada police station inspector-in-charge Pravat Sahoo said Nilamani's complaint was not registered as the police did not find any circumstantial evidence on his complaint. BJD candidate Purna Chandra Swain denied that party workers destroyed the EVM.

Army rescues policemen, civilian injured in accident in Assam

KOLKATA, APR 19 (PTI): Four persons, including three policemen, were injured when their car met with an accident while escorting vehicles carrying EVM machines in Karbi Anglong district of Assam, a Defence official said here Friday. The Army, on receiving a request from the additional director general of Police (Law and Order), Assam, rescued the three policemen and a civilian who were seriously injured in the accident at Bokajan village Thursday.

The injured persons were taken to the nearest Army Hospital at Dimapur, the official said. The four, who had suffered head and chest injuries, were immediately resuscitated and admitted in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) of the hospital.

Pragya shocker on 26/11 martyr: He died for treating me badly

BHOPAL, APR 19 (PTI): Malegaon blast accused and BJP's Bhopal Lok Sabha seat candidate Sadhvi Pragya Singh Thakur has said former Anti-Terrorism Squad chief Hemant Karkare died during the 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks as she "cursed" him for torturing her.

Addressing BJP workers here Thursday night, Pragya also claimed Karkare had made up his mind not to release her.

"Hemant Karkare was called by the (Malegaon blast) probe panel member to Mumbai. I was then in a Mumbai jail. The commission member told him that if he didn't have any proof against me, he should not unlawfully hold me in jail," she said.

"But he (Karkare) said he will do anything to bring the proof...Will do anything...will create it, bring it from here and there, but will not release Sadhvi," she said.

Karkare was killed along with two other senior police officers



while fighting terrorists during the 26/11 attacks in Mumbai in November 2008.

The BJP on Wednesday fielded Sadhvi Pragya Singh Thakur from Bhopal seat, where she is set to have a direct contest with Congress heavyweight and former Madhya Pradesh chief minister Digvijay Singh.

"This was his (Karkare's) cunningness. It was treason.

It was against religion. He used to ask all kinds of questions...Why did it happen? Why did that happen? I said, I don't know, God knows. So he asked whether he has to approach God to know all this. I told him, definitely if you want it,

you must go. It will be difficult for you to believe it and it will take time. I told him he will be destroyed," she said.

"He tortured me and subjected me to harsh abuse which was unbearable. I told him he will be destroyed. A little over a month later 'satak' (ritual observed after death of a family member) was

going to start...just over a month later, he was shot dead by terrorists and the inauspicious period ended," she said.

Reacting to Pragya's statement, Digvijay Singh said, "Hemant Karkare was a dedicated officer. He laid down his life for the country and we should be proud of him. No one should

comment on it."

Madhya Pradesh Chief Electoral Office sources said a complaint has been received against Pragya Singh Thakur for her comments on Karkare. The matter is under enquiry, they said.

The IPS Officers Association condemned the BJP candidate's remarks against the late

police officer.

"Ashok Chakra awardee late Sri Hemant Karkare, IPS made the supreme sacrifice fighting terrorists. Those of us in uniform condemn the insulting statement made by a candidate and demand that sacrifices of all our martyrs be respected," the association tweeted.

Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal hit out at Pragya for her "disgraceful" comments.

"Disgraceful comments by BJP's Bhopal Lok Sabha candidate Pragya Thakur on 26/11 martyr Hemant Karkare ji need to be condemned in strongest terms. BJP is showing its true colours & it must be shown it's place now," he tweeted.

Out on bail, Pragya has been discharged by a court on charges under the stringent Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA) in the 2008 case, but is still facing trial under other criminal provisions, including the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

China ready for Wuhan-style summit meet with India despite differences over BRI: Foreign Minister

KJM VARMA

BEIJING, APR 19 (PTI): China said Friday it was ready to hold a Wuhan-style summit meeting with India this year to improve ties, notwithstanding the differences over the trillion-dollar Belt and Road Initiative in which the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a flagship project. Addressing a media conference here ahead of the Belt and Road Forum (BRF) being held from April 25-27 to showcase China's trillion-dollar Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi appealed to India to shed its opposition to the USD 60 billion CPEC, saying it no way "undermined" the basic position on the Kashmir dispute.

Asked if India's opposition to the BRI would undermine the new momentum generated by last year's informal summit between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping, Wang said the two leaders had a very successful meeting at Wuhan city.

"Particularly they have established mutual trust between the leadership and they jointly planned for the future of improvement and strengthening of China-India relations.

"After the Wuhan summit, we see all areas or progress between the two countries and we have bright prospect for this relationship. We are now preparing for the next summit of our leaders," he said without specifying any time line. After the Wuhan summit hosted by China, the second summit will be held by India. President Xi plans to visit India for the 2nd informal summit after the general elections, currently underway, are over.

Wang said so far 37 heads of state and governments had confirmed their participation in the BRF. Representatives from over 150 countries organisations' close to 5,000 participants have confirmed their participation.

Leaders of Pakistan and Nepal are among the countries who would take part in the meeting.

Informed sources here told PTI that there was no official invitation from China to the Indian leadership or at the ministerial level to take part in its 2nd BRF meeting.

For its first BRF meeting held in May 2017, China had invited India to take part in the six separate forums that China organised



as part of the meeting. Indian Ambassador to China, Vikram Misri flagged India's concerns over the CPEC in an interview to state-run Global Times last month stating that "above all, connectivity initiatives must be pursued in a manner that respects sovereignty, equality and territorial integrity of nations. No country can participate in an initiative that ignores its core concerns on sovereignty and territorial integrity". The BRI is a multi-billion-dollar initiative launched by President Xi when he came to power in 2013. It aims to link Southeast Asia, Central Asia, the Gulf region, Africa and Europe with a network of land and sea routes.

The CPEC which has been officially designated as a flagship project of the BRI, has become a stumbling block for India to take part in it as the controversial project is being laid through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK). Foreign Minister Wang said China and India were two major countries, besides being neighbours.

"It is natural for us to have differences. This is only natural. I remember Prime Minister Modi mentioning many times that we cannot escalate our differences into disputes. The Indian side wants to put our difference at a proper level in order not to interfere in the development of our relations," he said. "I believe this is in the fundamental interest of the people of the two countries and that is what China is happy to see," he said.

"One of our differences is how to look at the BRI. The Indian side has their concerns. We understand that and that is why we have stated clearly on many occasions that the BRI including the CPEC is only an economic initiative and it does not target any third country and has nothing to do with the sovereign and territorial disputes left from

history between any two countries," he said. Besides India's protests over the CPEC, China's doling out of huge sums of money specially to smaller countries raised concerns after Beijing acquired Sri Lanka's strategic Hambantota port on a 99-year lease as a debt swap.

"India has its basic position on these disputes. Our cooperation will not undermine any party's position on those issues," Wang said, apparently suggesting that it would not alter even Pakistan's position on the disputed status of the PoK.

China has been maintaining that Kashmir dispute is left over from history and it should be resolved between India and Pakistan.

"Now we are trying to achieve common prosperity through the cooperation under the BRI. Those issues left over from history must be separated from our efforts in this area.

"I think such cooperation will not undermine your basic position on sovereignty and territorial integrity and at the same time provide you with more opportunities of development and help India in your modernisation endeavour. I believe this is a good option and good choice for India," Wang said.

Asked whether the US is taking part in the 2nd BRF meet, Wang, while criticising Washington's stand, said America took part in the first BRF meet in 2017.

"We welcome their participation. According to what we know American diplomats, local government and business leaders have confirmed their participation in the 2nd BRF," Wang said.

Bangladeshi girl killed by madrasa teacher for reporting sexual harassment against him: police

DHAKA, APR 19 (PTI): A teenaged school girl in Bangladesh was allegedly burnt to death by her madrasa principal for reporting a sexual harassment case against him, triggering nationwide protests in the country.

Nusrat Jahan Rafi, 18, was set on fire at her school (madrasa) on April 6 by four burqa-clad assailants few days after she complained against principal Siraj-ud-Daula for inappropriately touching her after calling her in his office.

Siraj is one of the 17 people arrested in connection with the case.

Rafi succumbed to the injuries on April 10. Her death led to protests across Bangladesh with people on Thursday forming human chains and holding demonstrations seeking justice for the victim. The demon-

stration sought stern punishment for the victim's murderers and expressed condolences to her bereaved family, the Dhaka Tribune reported.

Online news portal bdnews24.com quoted police as saying that Siraj orchestrated the killing of Rafi from jail after his arrest on Mar 27 in the case.

Deputy Inspector General Ruhul Amin, who is heading the probe committee, said the investigation will take several more days to wrap up as investigators are examining various documents.

He said Siraj had a history of condemnable behaviour that was known to the madrasa governing body.

The police officer also hinted at involvement of political leaders in the murder.

Local politics is linked with the Nusrat incident. Two councillors from a party organised human-chain programmes for and against the principal, he said.

According to the report, the police is also investigating whether there has been negligence on the part of police while investigating the murder case.

We have found preliminary evidence against the former officer-in-charge of Sonagazi police station and senior police officers. We are taking this very seriously and are looking into it," he said.

But, had the local administration and madrasa managing committee taken action when the sexual harassment was first reported, this tragedy could have been avoided, he added.



Eyeing Tokyo 2020, Indian lifters begin campaign at Asian Weightlifting Championship

NINGBO (CHINA), APR 19 (PTI): Former world champion Mirabai Chanu will look to put the best foot forward to strengthen her chances of Olympic qualification when she spearheads the Indian challenge at the Asian Weightlifting Championship, starting here Saturday.

India's brightest medal prospect, Mirabai, who jumped from 48kg to 49 kg following the International Weightlifting Federation's (IWF) rejig of weight categories, has made a strong comeback from a lower back injury that kept her out of action for nearly nine months.

In February, the 24-year-old lifted 82 kg in snatch and 110 kg in clean and jerk to clinch the gold medal at the EGAT Cup in Thailand, which was the first of the six Olympic qualifying events for Mirabai.

In order to ensure a spot on the podium here, the Commonwealth Games gold medallist will have to significantly better that performance.

Thai weightlifter Chayuttra Pramongkhon, who is currently embroiled in a dope scandal, had lifted 209kgs



(89+120) in the 49kg category to clinch the gold medal at the World Championship in 2018. The remaining medalists -- Hou Zhihui and Jiang Huihua of China -- lifted 208kg (93+115) and 206kg (92+114) respectively. The bronze medal total a whopping 14 kgs more than Mirabai's 192kg at the EGAT Cup.

However, the diminutive Manipuri is aware of the competition and is working towards at least breaching her personal best of 196kg here.

"Mira's aim for the Olympics is 210 kgs. In the Asian Championship

we aim to go above the 196kg mark," National coach Vijay Sharma told PTI.

Among male lifters, all hopes will be riding on Youth Olympic Games gold medallist teenager Jeremy Lalrinnunga after two-time Commonwealth Games champion Sathish Sivalingam pulled out of the tournament owing to performance issues.

"Sathish and RV Rahul haven't traveled to China. They won't be participating in the Championship because their performance has not been up to mark," Sharma said.

The 16-year-old from

Mizoram has bulked up from 62kg to 67kg to abide by the revised weight categories set by the IWF. Jeremy had won the silver medal in the EGAT Cup lifting 131kg in snatch and 157kg in clean and jerk and would be again eyeing a podium finish.

Other Indians participating include Commonwealth silver medallist Vikas Thakur (96 kg) and Asian Youth and Junior Weightlifting Championships bronze medallist Ajay Singh (81kg), who had finished a creditable fifth in the 77kg category at the Asian Games last

year. While none of the athletes will be able to qualify for the Olympics from this tournament alone, a good performance at the gold level Olympic qualifying event will bolster their chances of making it to the Tokyo Games next year.

"Our aim is to keep improving our total at every event we participate," Sharma said.

The qualification process for the 2020 Olympics is based on the performances of the weightlifters in six events over a period of 18 months, out of which the four best results logged by a lifter will be considered.

Every athlete also needs to participate in at least one gold level and either one gold level or one silver level event during the one-and-a-half year's time-frame.

Squad:
Men: M Raja (61 kg), Jeremy Lalrinnunga (67kg), Achinta Sheuli (73 kg), Ajay Singh (81 kg), Vikas Thakur (96 kg), Pradeep Singh (102 kg) Gurdeep Singh (+101 kg).

Women: Mirabai Chanu (49 kg), Jhilli Dalabehera (45 kg), Swati (59kg), Rakhi Halder (64kg).

'Host' of problems for DC ahead of Kings XI Punjab clash

NEW DELHI, APR 19 (PTI): Seeking home comforts after multiple reverses at the Feroz Shah Kotla, Delhi Capitals will be desperate to buck the trend when they take on a rejuvenated Kings XI Punjab in the IPL here Saturday.

Rechristened before the start of the cash-rich event's 12th edition, Delhi Capitals have been at ease on the road, winning three matches on the trot after an authoritative beginning in Mumbai.

However, things have turned out quite differently in their home ground, where they found the pitches far from friendly.

The unwavering support, cheers and chants, from the galleries have not helped so far and the side, coached by Ricky Ponting and mentored by Sourav Ganguly, will look to play in the manner that befits the two greats' status in world cricket.

For they know that if they are able to live up to Ponting and Ganguly's expectations, chances of the fans going back home with smiles on their faces will increase mani-

fold. And so will be their prospects of reaching the playoffs. Standing in their way will be mid-table team Kings XI Punjab, who are also eyeing the title that has so far remained elusive.

Ravichandran Ashwin's outfit will not be short on confidence, having easily beaten Rajasthan Royals three days ago.

The likes of Chris Gayle, KL Rahul, David Miller and Mohammed Shami will look to capitalise on Delhi's miserable record at home, and with Ashwin leading from the front, it may not be an improbable task for the confident visiting team.

Shreyas Iyer and Co have only one win from their four home matches, the lone victory coming in the Super Over after the match against Kolkata Knight Riders ended in a tie.

Rishabh Pant will again be in focus after his fiercely-debated World Cup exclusion, having failed in Thursday's defeat at the hands of Mumbai Indians. Disappointed at being ignored

for the showpiece, the highly-rated young wicketkeeper-batsman will certainly look to prove a point. Smarting from the onslaught by the Pandya brothers -- Hardik and Krunal, who smashed 54 runs in the last 19 balls on a slow pitch, the Delhi bowlers will hope for a better outing at the death.

In batting, the onus will be on senior pro Shikhar Dhawan to lay the foundation, and he will have the talented Prithvi Shaw at the top of the order.

After suffering their third defeat in four outings here this season, Iyer had said, "It's really important for us to win home games, especially on these tracks.

"Unfortunately we lost the toss, and we got outplayed in all three departments. We practice on the pitches that are also slow. But when you come here, it's totally different. We have to get used to these conditions."

For his team to harbour hopes of a rare win, skipper Iyer, himself, will need to lead by example.

Hardik has become a better cricketer after forced break: Krunal



NEW DELHI, APR 19 (PTI): Mumbai Indians all-rounder Krunal Pandya feels that the time his younger brother Hardik spent away from the game has helped him become a better cricketer.

Hardik seems to be in menacing form with the bat ahead of the World Cup, having overcome a back injury and a massive controversy following his sexist comments on a popular TV show.

"When he was away from the game due to injury and the other reasons (controversy), he worked a lot on his fitness. We started playing the game together and one thing that I can say that cricket has always been his priority.

"Honestly, there are very few players who have a work ethic like him. His goal is always to improve and if you do that, you become consistent," said Krunal after the Pandya brothers guided Mumbai to a 40-run win over Delhi Capitals here Thursday.

Be it spinners or bowlers with express pace, Hardik has developed the ability to hit them out of the park.

"Earlier he used to smash spinners, now he is also doing the same to pacers. He worked on that area during the off time he got and he has gotten the desired results," said Krunal.

"What like I most about is never give up attitude. Every year, he is adding something or the other to his game. In fact, I have also learnt a lot from him."

Hardik (32 off 15) and Krunal (37 off 26) had amassed 51 off last 18 balls to propel Mumbai to 168 for five against Delhi Capitals.

Krunal said the extra 20 runs in the death overs made all the difference on a difficult Kotla wicket.

"I guess while batting it was a very tricky wicket. When I went inside and when Hardik came in we were not aiming for 170, we thought 145 was a good total on this wicket. The way Hardik batted, it changed the momentum for us and we ended up with those extra runs," he said.

"While bowling we knew how the wicket would behave and our bowlers knew to how to bowl on it."

While bowling, Krunal, who picked up the wicket of Colin Munro, also tried to bowl with a slingshot action like Kedar Jadhav.

"The way T20 is going, you have to keep coming up with something new. The batsmen are hitting sixes from ball one and Rishabh (Pant) was batting, so I thought it was a good time to try something new," said Krunal.

Two Indian boxers enter pre-quarters of Asian Championship

BANGKOK, APR 19 (PTI): Indian boxers were off to a good start in the Asian Championships claiming two pre-quarterfinals berths in the opening session of the continental showpiece here Friday.

National champion Deepak (49kg) and Rohit Tokas (64kg) advanced to the last-16 stage with confident victories.

Deepak defeated Vietnam's Loi Bui Cong Danh, fetching a unanimous verdict from the

judges before Rohit put it past Taiwan's Chu-Yen Lai with a similar scoreline.

Deepak kept it simple and focussed on hitting straight to ensure clean and impactful punches. Danh wasn't particularly a pushover but lacked power in his attacks, not to mention the poor precision.

Rohit Tokas (64kg) was up against a more aggressive one in Lai but he hardly broke a sweat to advance.

The Indian, a winner of three King's Cup bronze medals here, literally toyed with his rival, who seemed under-prepared for bout.

Lai was cautioned several times for failing to keep his head up. He went for the jugular in the last three minutes but Rohit thwarted him with a smart defensive strategy that involved keeping the opponent at arm's length and avoiding the corners.

Mallya accuses SBI of wasting Indian taxpayers' money on UK legal fees

LONDON, APR 19 (PTI): Embattled liquor tycoon Vijay Mallya once again used social media to reiterate his offer to pay back the debt owed to public sector banks in India, targeting this time the State Bank of India (SBI) for allegedly wasting Indian taxpayers' money on expensive legal fees in the UK.

Days after a UK High Court judge refused to dismiss an interim order freezing nearly 260,000 pounds in one of his London bank accounts, the 63-year-old issued a string of statements on Twitter to allege that the SBI led consortium of PSU banks were wrongly going after him in the UK courts.

"SBI Lawyers in UK making presentations on their accomplishments against me. Indian Tax payers cost. Despite full recovery in India confirmed by the Prime Minister himself, he tweeted on Friday.

His statements were illustrated with a series of document screenshots showing TLT LLP, the banks' law firm, hailing its victory in the 1.142 billion pounds worldwide freezing order judgment in their favour last May.

SBI UK Lawyers in self-promotion at Indian public cost. SBI must answer, reads Mallya's tweet.

In his characteristic style, the media was once again at



the receiving end of the former Kingfisher Airlines boss' social media comments.

He noted: Whilst media love sensational headlines, why doesn't anybody ask the PSU State Bank of India under RTI [Right to Information] on how much they are spending on legal fees trying to recover money from me in the UK when I have offered 100 per cent payback in India.

To substantiate my point, assets belonging to me in the UK were sold and the costs of sale were almost 50 per cent of value. The remaining assets yet to be sold won't cover legal costs. So what's this all about? To enrich UK Lawyers? SBI please answer. On Thursday,

Mallya had made another reference to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's interview from last month, in which he had claimed that the government had recovered assets worth Rs 14,000 crores related to the now-defunct airline's loan defaults.

Mallya is wanted in India on charges of fraud and money laundering amounting to an alleged Rs 9,000 crores.

The series of statements follow a ruling by Master David Cook, a judge in the Queen's Bench Division of the Royal Courts of Justice in London, earlier this week which went against Mallya. Master Cook ruled that an interim debt order in favour of SBI and other

11-year major drought with a thrilling and emotional Masters victory on Sunday.

Aged 43, Woods trails only Jack Nicklaus who won at age 46 in 1986. Woods has 15 major championships, second to Nicklaus' 18. Just two years ago his back pain was so bad Woods thought he might never play again, let alone win another major. "Mentally, you always think you can. But you can't answer to what your body has to deal with," former NBA superstar Jordan said of Woods. "I'm pretty sure he questioned himself, whether he could get

back, and he had to put a lot of work in. But he took it head-on. He had to change his game; he had to change his perspective a little bit.

"Dealing with his emotions, obviously he believed in himself. But until you put that into action, sometimes it's a struggle," Jordan added that Woods' confidence will be soaring and that should translate into more victories. "I think he's gotten over the hump. I think he's going to win more. It's tough mentally. And then you think about the physical. I'm elated.

The DRT case was registered in the UK under the Foreign Judgments (Reciprocal Enforcement) Act 1933 and went in favour of the Indian banks in an appeal in May 2018.

The banks SBI, Bank of Baroda, Corporation bank, Federal Bank Ltd, IDBI Bank, Indian Overseas Bank, Jammu & Kashmir Bank, Punjab & Sind Bank, Punjab National Bank, State Bank of Mysore, UCO Bank, United Bank of India and JM Financial Asset Reconstruction Co. Pvt Ltd have since also filed a bankruptcy petition against Mallya, which is being challenged by the former Kingfisher Airlines boss and is expected to come up for hearing around December this year.

TLT LLP, the law firm acting for the Indian banks, has been pursuing a series of court orders in the UK courts as part of efforts to enforce last year's High Court judgment in favour of the banks.

The funds held in the account 258,559.79 pounds will meanwhile remain frozen as part of the worldwide freezing order in favour of the Indian banks last year.

Mallya's lawyers had argued for the dismissal of the interim order on a number of grounds, including a claim that it was a deliberate ploy to prevent Mallya reasonable court-sanctioned living ex-

penditures. However, the judge rejected the assertion and noted that the Indian banks are within their rights to discover the true extent of Mallya's assets in order to recover the estimated 1.142 billion pounds owed to them, arising from proceedings in the Bangalore Debt Recovery Tribunal (DRT) against Kingfisher Airlines and others.

The DRT case was registered in the UK under the Foreign Judgments (Reciprocal Enforcement) Act 1933 and went in favour of the Indian banks in an appeal in May 2018.

The banks SBI, Bank of Baroda, Corporation bank, Federal Bank Ltd, IDBI Bank, Indian Overseas Bank, Jammu & Kashmir Bank, Punjab & Sind Bank, Punjab National Bank, State Bank of Mysore, UCO Bank, United Bank of India and JM Financial Asset Reconstruction Co. Pvt Ltd have since also filed a bankruptcy petition against Mallya, which is being challenged by the former Kingfisher Airlines boss and is expected to come up for hearing around December this year.

Journalist shot dead in N.Ireland in 'terrorist incident'

NORTH LONDONDERRY, APR 19 (AFP): A journalist was shot dead during riots in Northern Ireland in what police Friday were treating as a terrorist incident following the latest upsurge in violence to shake the troubled region.

"Lyra McKee was murdered during orchestrated violence in Creggan last night," Assistant Chief Constable Mark Hamilton said in a statement.

McKee had earlier posted an image that appeared to be from the riots in the Creggan housing estate in the city of Londonderry, also known as Derry, accompanied by the words "Derry tonight. Absolute madness."

Images of the unrest posted on social media showed a car and van ablaze and hooded individuals throwing petrol bombs and fireworks at police vehicles.

"A single gunman fired shots in a residential area of the city and as a result wounded Ms McKee," said Hamilton, adding that police believed the gunman was a "violent dissident republican."

"We are treating this as a terrorist incident and we have launched a murder enquiry," he added.

Journalist Matthew Hughes earlier identified the dead woman as one of his friends.

"I just received the heartbreaking news that my friend @LyraMcKee was murdered tonight in a terrorist incident in Derry," he wrote on



Twitter. McKee had written for The Atlantic magazine and BuzzFeed News and was named by Forbes Magazine in 2016 as one of their "30 under 30" outstanding figures in media, according to her literary agent Janklow & Nesbit.

Leona O'Neill, a reporter with the Belfast Telegraph, said she saw McKee get hurt.

"I was standing beside this young woman when she fell beside a police Land Rover tonight in Creggan #Derry. I called an ambulance for her but police put her in the back of their vehicle and rushed her to hospital where she died. Just 29 years old. Sick to my stomach tonight," she tweeted.

Thursday's unrest raised memories of past decades of violence in Northern Ireland.

Ireland's Prime Minister Leo Varadkar warned that "we cannot allow those who want to propagate violence, fear and hate to drag

us back to the past". His British counterpart Theresa May said the killing was "shocking and truly senseless".

In Brussels, a European Commission spokesman condemned the "terrible incident".

"We condemn such violence, and we are confident that the UK authorities will ascertain the exact circumstances of this tragic event," he said. The violence came in the run-up to the Easter weekend, when Republicans opposed to the British presence in Northern Ireland mark the anniversary of a 1916 uprising against British rule.

A car-bombing and the hijacking of two vans in Londonderry earlier this year were also blamed on a dissident paramilitary group.

Michelle O'Neill, the deputy leader of Irish republican party Sinn Fein, condemned the killing.

"My heart goes out to the family of the young

woman shot dead by so-called dissidents," she wrote on Twitter. "This was an attack on the community, an attack on the peace process and an attack on the Good Friday Agreement," the peace deal that largely brought an end to violence on the island exactly 21 years ago, she added, calling for calm.

Arlene Foster, leader of the Democratic Unionist Party, which is in favour of Britain's presence in Northern Ireland, described the death as "heartbreaking news".

"A senseless act. A family has been torn apart. Those who brought guns onto our streets in the 70s, 80s & 90s were wrong. It is equally wrong in 2019. No one wants to go back," she wrote on Twitter.

The Good Friday Agreement in 1998 largely brought an end to three decades of sectarian bloodshed in Northern Ireland between republican and unionist

paramilitaries, as well as British armed forces, in a period known as "the Troubles". Some 3,500 people were killed in the conflict -- many at the hands of the Irish Republican Army (IRA).

Police have blamed a group called the New IRA for the flare-up in violence in recent months.

Some have expressed fears that recent attacks could be a sign that paramilitaries are seeking to exploit the current political turbulence over Northern Ireland and its border with the Republic of Ireland caused by Brexit.

Londonderry was the scene of one of the darkest episodes in the Troubles in 1972, known as Bloody Sunday, when British troops opened fire on a civil rights demonstration and killed 13 people. A 14th victim later died of his wounds.

A former British soldier was charged with murder last month over the killings.

Peace hopes suffer setback as Taliban-Afghan talks derailed



DOHA, APR 19 (AFP): Hopes for a breakthrough in a push to end Afghanistan's gruelling conflict suffered a major setback Friday after a key summit between the Taliban and Afghan officials was indefinitely postponed.

The so-called intra-Afghan dialogue, due to take place in Doha this weekend, fell apart at the last minute in a row over the large number of delegates Kabul wanted to send.

The collapse comes at a critical time and amid continued bloodshed. The Taliban now control or influence about half of Afghanistan and 3,804 civilians were killed there last year, according to a UN tally.

Washington, which is leading an effort to end the war, signalled its disappointment and urged both sides to return to the table, though organisers provided no hint about when the conference might be rescheduled.

Sultan Barakat, who heads the group that was to host the event, said in a statement the postponement was "necessary to build further consensus as to who should participate".

"Clearly the moment is not yet right," added Barakat, the director of the Center for Conflict and Humanitarian Studies.

President Ashraf Ghani's administration had on Tuesday announced a list of 250 people from all walks of Afghan life, includ-

ing government figures, who it wanted to send to Doha.

But the Taliban poured scorn on the lengthy list, saying it was not "normal" and that they had "no plans" to meet with so many people.

The conference is "not an invitation to some wedding or other party at a hotel in Kabul," the Taliban said this week.

Though the insurgents insisted they would only talk to Ghani officials in a "personal capacity", any contact between the two parties in Doha would have been hugely significant, especially at a time when Afghanistan is being ripped by fresh violence after the Taliban announced their annual spring offensive.

Ghani officials blamed the Qatari government for the summit's derailment. In a statement, the presidential palace said Qatar had rejected the long list of delegates and suggested a shorter one which was "not acceptable".

Analyst Michael Kugelmann of the Wilson Center in Washington said the breakdown illustrated the tough path ahead for peace.

The conference "mess and its dysfunction amplifies just how much of a long, hard slog a reconciliation process will be," he told AFP.

"If an event billed as a mere informal ice-breaker causes so many problems, imagine what could happen when it's time

to put something more formal together." Even some of those Ghani said would attend dropped out, slamming the guest list as rigged to politically strengthen the president, who faces delayed elections in September.

The Doha summit was separate from ongoing direct talks between the Taliban and the US.

While the insurgents did meet with Afghan politicians outside the government in Moscow in February, they have steadfastly refused to meet with Ghani and his administration, which they view as a puppet regime.

US Special Representative to Afghanistan Zalmay Khalilzad said he was "disappointed" the summit had been postponed.

"We're in touch with all parties and encouraged that everyone remains committed to dialogue," the envoy wrote on Twitter.

"I urge all sides to seize the moment and put things back on track by agreeing to a participant list that speaks for all Afghans." Barakat said both parties had undertaken "tireless and well-intentioned" efforts to find a way to a way for the summit to proceed, but ultimately a "shared understanding on how to achieve inclusivity couldn't be reached." After US-Taliban talks in February, Khalilzad announced a "draft framework" for a peace deal, though he warned major hurdles remain.

Sudan protest leaders to unveil civilian ruling body

KHARTOUM, APR 19 (AFP): Protest leaders Friday announced plans to unveil a civilian body to take over from Sudan's ruling military council as crowds of demonstrators kept up the pressure outside army headquarters and Washington said it will send an envoy to encourage the transition.

The military council, which took power after ousting Sudan's longtime leader Omar al-Bashir on April 11, has so far resisted calls from protesters to quickly make way for a civilian administration.

The Sudanese Professionals Association, which has been spearheading the protests, said in a statement that the civilian council members would be named at a news conference at 1700 GMT on Sunday outside the army complex to which foreign diplomats are also invited.

"We are demanding that this civilian council, which will have representatives of the army, replace the military council," Ahmed al-Rabia, a leader of the umbrella group of unions for doctors, engineers and teachers, told AFP.

Four months after anti-regime protests started, access roads were packed on Friday with crowds flocking to huge square outside army headquarters.

Activists mobilised demonstrators through

social media to keep up the pressure for replacing the military council, now led by General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan. "Power to civilians, power to civilians," protesters chanted through Thursday night.

"I won't leave until Burhan transfers power to a civilian government," said Wali Aldeen, who has camped outside the complex since the day Bashir was ousted.

Activists have called for large crowds to gather after weekly Muslim prayers, as on previous Fridays. Protests first broke out on December 19 in response to the tripling of bread prices, swiftly turning into nationwide rallies against Bashir's three-decade rule.

After his ouster, protesters demonstrated against General Awad Ibn Ouf who took over as the first head of the military council, insisting he was a tool of the old regime.

Ibn Ouf stepped down in less than 24 hours and was replaced by Burhan, who so far has appeased protesters by lifting a night-time curfew and vowing to "uproot" Bashir's circle.

The United States on Thursday praised orders by Sudan's new military leader to free political prisoners and end the curfew as it dispatched Makila James, a deputy assistant secretary of state, on a mission to Khartoum this weekend.

Malian PM resigns as anger mounts over massacre



BAMAKO, APR 19 (AFP): Mali's prime minister resigned along with his entire government on Thursday following criticism over their handling of an upsurge of violence in the centre of the country and a massacre last month that left 160 people dead.

A statement from President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita's office said he had accepted Soumeylou Boubeye Maiga's resignation, along with those of his ministers, two weeks after mass protests erupted over the rising tide of violence.

Lawmakers from both ruling and opposition parties had submitted a motion of no confidence against the government on Wednesday, blaming Maiga and his administration for failing to clamp down on the unrest.

"A prime minister will be named very soon and a new government will be put in place after consultations with all political forces" from

both the ruling and opposition sides, the statement from Keita's office said. The president had on Tuesday said in a televised address that he had "heard the anger", without explicitly naming the prime minister. The government had come under mounting pressure over its handling of violence in the restive Mopti region and especially a massacre on March 23 in which 160 people were killed in the village of Ogossagou near the border with Burkina Faso.

Members of the Dogon ethnic group -- a hunting and farming community with a long history of tension with the nomadic Fulani people over access to land -- were accused of being behind the mass killing.

leaders, organisations representing the Fulani herding community, opposition parties and civil society groups.

Mali has been struggling to restore stability since Islamist extremists linked to Al-Qaeda took control of the country's vast desert north in early 2012. While the jihadists were largely driven out in a French-led military operation that began in January 2013, huge areas are still in the grip of lawlessness, despite a 2015 peace agreement with some armed groups that sought to definitively stamp out the Islamist threat.

Since then, militants have shifted from the north towards the more densely populated centre of the country, where they have sharpened ancient rivalries and ethnic conflicts that date back years. Jihadist attacks have also spread to Burkina Faso, Chad and Niger, forcing tens of thousands of people from their homes.

Eight essays put the spotlight on the journey coursed by hydel projects in Sikkim and the region, the cost exacted by this "development" and some of the stories it birthed, not all of which have been shared before.

Also finding place in this collection is the arrival of Climate Change and its impact on Sikkim and how the State could negotiate with this new disruption.

ESSAYS ON TEESTA, HYDEL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IN SIKKIM

LOKTA BOOKS
Empire State
info@loktabooks.com
+91 981040 6280, +91 981288 0763

My book bid to remove masks we all hide behind: Lisa Ray

NEW DELHI, APR 19 (PTI): Supermodel-actor-cancer survivor Lisa Ray, who is all set to publish her debut book, says she attempts to remove the mask people hide behind and hopes that by sharing her harrowing journey, she will come out stronger while also helping others become stronger.

"Close to the Bone" is an insightful travelogue of Lisa's life-changing experiences, which goes beyond the memoir and will be out in May, publisher HarperCollins India says.

According to Lisa, "Close to the Bone" is not a memoir but her writing debut.

"It has taken years and it's been worth the effort. When I began writing this book, I realised that my disease did not happen in isolation from the rest of my life. Life and experience have taught me many lessons, and today, I have the ability to honour all the places I've been, and a drive to find deeper meaning and truth. "In writing the book in my 40s, I have the perfect vantage point from which to understand that I am more beautiful for having been broken, and that I am living my best life on my own terms," she says.

Lisa sees the book as an offering.

"I truly hope that, in sharing the harrowing journey back to myself, I will come out stronger and that the book will make others stronger. It is honest, raw, an attempt to remove the mask we all hide behind. It's a way to rise in truth and love. "It's my attempt to take back my story and voice - as a woman - and a way to connect with all the wounds and tender aches that make us human. There is humour. And tragedy. And celebration. Just like life," she says.

Lisa was first approached to write a book after she documented her 2009

cancer diagnosis with multiple myeloma in a blog called "The Yellow Diaries". "This is the story of Lisa Ray. An un-

the birth of her twin daughters via surrogacy, writing and speaking about it as a way to normalise fertility op-



flinching, deeply moving account of her nomadic existence: her stumbling into the Indian entertainment industry at sixteen; her relationship with her Bengali father and Polish mother; life on the movie sets and her brush with the Oscars; her battle with eating disorders; being diagnosed with multiple myeloma at 37; her spiritual quest; lovers and traitors, mentors and dream-makers; and the heartaches and triumphs along the way. It is also about Lisa's pursuit of love, the publisher said.

Lisa is a well-known advocate for cancer awareness through her writing and public talks. She writes poetry centred on identity and a life of no fixed address. She recently announced

tions and choices for others.

Her long and serendipitous career in the modelling and entertainment arts began when, at 16, she appeared on the cover of Gladrags, an image that made her an overnight sensation.

Lisa also starred in Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan's famous "Afreen Afreen" video. One of India's first supermodels, Lisa made several forays into acting, memorably in the Oscar-nominated "Water", and television ("Top Chef Canada" and "Oh My Gold").

She was recently seen in the Amazon Prime Video's original series "Four More Shots Please!" and her upcoming acting releases include A R Rahman's first production, "99 Songs".



WAAH! Hyun Ah always makes fashion forward choices, and wore this furry lavender top with crystal embellished netted pants.

'Avengers: Endgame' trailers might have featured fake footage, say Russo brothers



LOS ANGELES, APR 19 (PTI): Director duo Anthony and Joe Russo say they might have included some fake footage in "Avengers: Endgame" trailers and teasers to guard the secrets of the much-awaited film.

In an interview with Rotten Tomatoes, the Russo brothers said their intent behind keeping the plot under wraps was to take the load off the stars who face probing

queries from the press about the film's storyline.

"Maybe. Maybe it's all fake. Maybe there's not a real frame in that whole trailer?" Anthony teased.

"Part of our motivation to do that is that it just takes a lot of pressure off of people, because it is hard to constantly censor yourself, about what you're saying and how you talk. We take a lot of pressure off of people by say-

ing, 'Ok, the less you know the less you have to mind yourself,'" he added.

Joe said they were extra careful about "Endgame" as it contains a lot more spoilers than its predecessor "Infinity War". "We kept it going even more so than 'Endgame'. There are more secrets in 'Endgame' than there are 'Infinity War'," he said.

"Endgame" will release in India on April 26.

'Godzilla II: King Of The Monsters' to release in India on May 31



MUMBAI, APR 19 (PTI): Following the global success of "Godzilla" and "Kong: Skull Island", comes the next chapter "Godzilla II: King Of The Monsters", an epic action adventure which will be releasing in India by Warner Bros Pictures on May 31.

A presentation of Warner Bros Pictures and Legendary Pictures, in association with Toho Co Ltd, the film will be released in English, Hindi, Tamil and Telugu.

The film, directed by Michael Dougherty stars Millie Bobby Brown, Oscar nominee Vera Farmiga, Oscar nominee Sally Hawkins, Kyle Chandler, O'Shea Jackson Jr, Ken Watanabe, Bradley Whitford, among others.

"The approach that my writing partner Zach Shields and I took was that Godzilla, the MUTOs, Mothra,

Rodan, King Ghidorah they're a super-species. These creatures were worshipped as ancient gods; they are the reasons we have stories about dragons and giants and titans.

"Because if you look at the entire world's collection of ancient myths, you realize that they all have stories about monsters. What we're trying to establish is the idea that Godzilla and his brethren are the reason for that," Dougherty said in a statement here.

According to the statement, the new story follows the heroic efforts of the crypto zoological agency Monarch as its members face off against a battery of god-sized monsters including the mighty Godzilla, who collides with Mothra, Rodan and his ultimate nemesis the three-headed Ghidorah.

Prakash Jha's next 'Pareeksha' on education as great leveller

MUMBAI, APR 19 (PTI): "Good education is the greatest social leveller" is the theme of Prakash Jha's next film "Pareeksha" (The Final Test), the filmmaker said here Friday. The film is about an autorickshaw driver who takes children to school daily and dreams of giving the same quality education to his own child, Jha said. The film's first poster has been released, Jha told PTI.

The film is in the post-production stage and the release date will be announced very soon, he said. "Inspired by real incidents and real people, this was a story living and growing with me for some time," he said. "I am really fortunate to have had the collaboration of right actors and technicians to make this film. The shoot is complete...we plan to bring it to the audience later this summer," he said.

The film is about Buchhi, who drives children from affluent homes to an expensive private English school every morning and dreams of giving his child the same quality education, Jha said. "This dream sets him on a dangerous path. The rest of the film is about the consequences of his dream," said Jha who has made a string of critically acclaimed sociopolitical films like "Mrityudand" (1997), "Gangaaajal" (2003), "Apaharan" (2005) and "Raajneeti" (2010). Written and directed by Jha, the film stars Adil Hussain, Priyanka Bose, Sanjay Suri and Shubham Jha and is produced by Prakash Jha Productions. The director of photography is Sachin Krishn and film editor is Santosh Mandal, he said.

Jha last directed "Jai Gangaaajal" (2016).

ARIES: Emotional surprises await you at every turn today, as the full moon in Libra—the second in a rare, consecutive pair—activates your partnership zone. You like to keep a lid on your more intense feelings, but you could experience murmurs and flutterings you didn't even know you were capable of.

TAURUS: You can get a head start on your spring training under today's full moon in Libra—the second one in a row to land in your sixth house of healthy living. Been waiting for an excuse to kick it into a higher gear? This full moon brings it. Lace up your trailrunners or book a few private sessions with a personal trainer or yoga instructor who can help you break a sweat, improve your form AND tailor a nutritional plan just for you.

GEMINI: When it comes to romance, your motto is "supersize me!" as today's full moon in Libra powers up your fifth house of glamour, passion and fame. Full moons reveal what's been hiding, and under this sultry one, you could tap into a trove of unexpressed de-

sires. Attached? Share some of your wilder fantasies with your partner, and don't worry about being judged.

CANCER: While you may be up to your ears in work today, Cancer, be sure to carve out quality time with a good friend. Putting your to-dos on hold for this person sends a strong message about how important he or she is to you. Doing so isn't completely selfless, either. Bonding will reduce your own stress levels and remind you where your priorities lie.

LEO: The world's your oyster as quicksilver Mercury makes a global entry into your ninth house of travel and adventure until May 6, sparking your wanderlust. Grab your car keys—or passport—and enjoy a spur-of-the-moment getaway. If you can't get out of Dodge on such short notice, consider this your long-lead nudge to start planning your late-spring or summer vacay NOW.

LIBRA: Body language isn't just a dialect spoken by a few—it's the universal language of love! And today, your cosmic ruler, silver-tongued Mercury, flits into your sultry,

seductive erotic eighth house until May 6, inviting you to flirt with abandon. It's a time to let your desires be known, directly or with more secretive subtlety.

VIRGO: Even someone with superhuman powers couldn't keep up with everything you've got piled on your plate, Virgo. Compromise is mandatory if you hope to maintain some semblance of sanity, so find ways to scale back and streamline. In order to accomplish your most important work mission today, you'll need to back-burner each and every nonessential to-do on your list. Tune out those around you, and you'll cross the finish line before the end of the day. Pheew.

SCORPIO: Today's emo moon brings out your empathetic side. Don't fight those feelings, Scorpio! If you feel a surge of sadness or anger in response to a friend's plight, express it! Let the tears flow and open your heart to those who mean the most to you. Go out of your way to let them know how important they are in your world. When you need a steady shoulder and a compassionate ear, they'll be there for you with bells on.

SAGITTARIUS: Pull off that oversized cashmere sweater and slip into something more glamorous—or better yet, sexier. Today, messenger Mercury wings into your amorous, glamorous fifth house until May 6, turning you into an unabashed flirtaholic. Harboring a secret crush? It's time to act on it, Archer. Plan more playful dates over the next few weeks, whether you're single or spoken for. Think: private whisky tasting or an adventurous road trip to see Hamilton on tour. You'll be a magnet for magnates, so don't be shy about approaching the power players in any room!

CAPRICORN: Trying to make everyone happy, Capricorn? Today's stars turn that into an exercise in futility. If you've piled one too many obligations on your plate, your stress levels are liable to peak. Your best bet is to graciously bow out of a few responsibilities in the name of preserving your peace of mind. Don't worry—the people who really count will understand. And if anyone tries to send you on a guilt trip, remember that their emotions are not

your responsibility!

AQUARIUS: You've been moving at the speed of light lately, and you're looking forward to life calming down a bit. News-flash, Aquarius: Things will slow down when YOU decide it's time. All this action is actually generated by your love of excitement, so it's up to you to give yourself a much-needed breather. Today's stars encourage you to create a space in your schedule for a bit of solitude. Unroll your yoga mat, turn to your trusty journal or simply take yourself to lunch!

PISCES: A groundbreaking full moon in Libra revs up your eighth house of intensity and transformation. You may have been vibing that some aspect of your life needed to change—ever since the preceding full moon in Libra this past March 20, the first in a rare consecutive pair. Today, you're finally ready to face the music. But don't leave yourself any wiggle room, or you just may shimmy out of your decision. Boil it down to a black-or-white choice, and whichever you pick, make it stick.