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SummitTIMES

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SDF COMPLAINS TO ECI AGAINST GOLAY AS CM CANDIDATE ANNOUNCEMENT

SDF wants SKM deregistered for spreading false info

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 28 MAR:

Sikkim Democratic Front has written to the Election Commission of India seeking the deregistration of Sikkim Krantikari Morcha for violation of model code of conduct and for propagating false and misleading information. SDF's complaint stems from SKM's announcement of its president, PS Tamang [Golay], as the party's chief ministerial candidate even though he stands disqualified from contesting elections for a period of six years following his conviction

and imprisonment in a corruption case.

In a letter to the Chief Election Commissioner dated 26 March, the SDF general secretary, administration, Dev Gurung, accused the SKM president and other office-bearers of not only disrespecting the Constitution of India with such a claim but also "intentionally and knowingly" trying to "misrepresent, mislead and misguide" the voters of Sikkim in clear violation of the Model Code of Conduct.

The letter, which includes copies of the SKM press release in

which Mr Tamang was announced as the chief ministerial candidate, his conviction order and the "convict's history ticket" detailing the prison term he served on a corruption conviction, points out that as per law, "an unelected person cannot be appointed as Chief Minister or Minister if he or she is disqualified under the law for being chosen as a Member of Parliament or a State Legislature."

Following his conviction and the one year imprisonment in a corruption case, Mr Tamang stands disqualified

from contesting elections till August 2024, it may be recalled.

"It is evident that Shri PS Golay and the party are making every effort to defeat the very object and spirit of the Indian Constitution. It is submitted that the established point of law is that those who break the law should not make the law," the letter argues.

The letter details that Mr Tamang first "misrepresented" facts by claiming that he could contest the elections and then disrespected the law of the land by claiming he can be the Chief Minister

in the event that his party wins the elections.

"Such a claim as made by him and his party is nothing but done with mala-fide intention with ulterior motive," the letter states while contending that Mr Tamang and other SKM leaders were aware of the facts all along and still misled the people.

The letter also contends that not just Mr Tamang, but even those who signed the press release in question, are guilty of making misleading claims intentionally and hence in violation of model code

of conduct norms. The release was also signed by three SKM assembly election candidates.

"The Sikkim Democratic Front Party vehemently condemn such ill-motivated act of the above named persons. In the interest of the people and for ensuring fair and just election process I would like to humbly request your good self to de-register the Sikkim Krantikari Morcha party and also to take appropriate stringent action as per the law and rules laid down by the Election Commission of India," the letter concludes.

Sneha Tamang of East Point School wins boxing Gold



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 28 MAR:

Sneha Tamang, a Class SVII student at East Point Senior Secondary School, Golitar West Pendam, East Sikkim, won a Gold Medal at the 1st East Zone Sub-Junior Boys and Girls Boxing Championships 2019

held at Golaghat, Assam.

A young and upcoming pugilist, Sneha has been honing her boxing skills under the guidance and mentorship of Coach Pritam Silal.

She won the gold medal in Group D - 3/34 kg weight category. The tournament was held from 24 to 27 Mar, 2019.

Circular on social media fake says Home Dept

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 28 MAR:

The Home Department has said that a fake advisory has been doing the rounds on social media. The fake advisory purportedly issued by the Home Department directs government employees to refrain from participating in political activities.

In a circular issued today, the Home Department has said that no such advisory has been issued by the department and the one on social media does not bear the letter head or memo number of the Department.

GNLF's Kalimpong unit lays down conditions to support BJP

SUMMIT REPORT

KALIMPONG, 28 MAR:

The Kalimpong unit of the Gorkha National Liberation Front has decided to support the BJP provided it includes the demand for 'sixth schedule' status for the Darjeeling Hills in the national Election Manifesto and promises to pass it in the first Parliamentary session. If it fails to do so, the GNLf unit here will convene another meeting and decide on what to do.

Mauris Kalikothay, a local GNLf leader, informs that GNLf supporters in Kalimpong had put pressure and questioned why GNLf should support the BJP.

It may be mentioned here that the GNLf central committee has united with Bimal faction of Gorkha Jan Mukti Morcha and decided to support the Bharatiya Janta Party in the Lok Sabha elections.

turn to pg02

Two withdraw candidature in South

NAMCHI, 28 MAR

(IPR):

Following the last day of withdrawal of nominations for 8 Assembly Constituencies under South District, it was informed by Returning Officer South, Ragul K, that two candidates from



nominations today.

Hence, the final number of contesting candidates for the upcoming General Elections from South district after final withdrawal is 38.

No withdrawals in East District



GANGTOK, 28 MAR (IPR):

The procedure of withdrawal of nominations for the 13 Assembly Constituencies (AC) including Sangha and Sikkim Parliamentary Constituency (PC) for East District ended today. District Election Officer/

RO (East), Kapil Meena informed that the East District Returning Officers did not receive any application on the last date of withdrawal of candidature.

A total of 71 candidates have filed their nomination for the 13 Assembly Constituencies including Sangha and 11 Candidates for Sikkim Parliamentary Constituency.

ID cards were also handed to the contesting candidates

turn to pg02

No withdrawal of candidatures in North Sikkim



MANGAN, 28 MAR28 (IPR):

District Election Officer (DEO), North, Raj K Yadav, informs that there have been no withdrawal of candidatures from any of the three constituencies of the district.

Accordingly, after the deadline lapsed at 3pm, a meeting was held with the only Independent candidate in the district, Phurden Tshering Lepcha of Kabi-Lungchok constituency to allot him his election symbol. He has been allotted the symbol of "Pressure Cooker".

After allotment of symbol,

list of contesting candidates (Form 7A) was prepared to print ballot papers with photographs of the candidates.

DEO/RO also informed that the ballot paper for Service Voters has also been generated through a software under Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballot System (ETPBS).

All nomination papers, Form 26 Affidavit and List of contesting candidates have been uploaded on "Suvidha" portal as per direction of Election Commission of India (ECI).

Congress candidate withdraws in West

GYPALSHING, 28 MAR

(IPR):

The Returning Officer West, Karma R Bonpo informed that Dal Bdr Karki, candidate of Gyalshing-Barnyak withdrew his candidature at 12:20 p.m which was delivered by the proposer.



POLL VAULT

Women in Sikkim's electoral politics – overlooked despite their numbers

TSHERING EDEN

GANGTOK, 27 MAR:

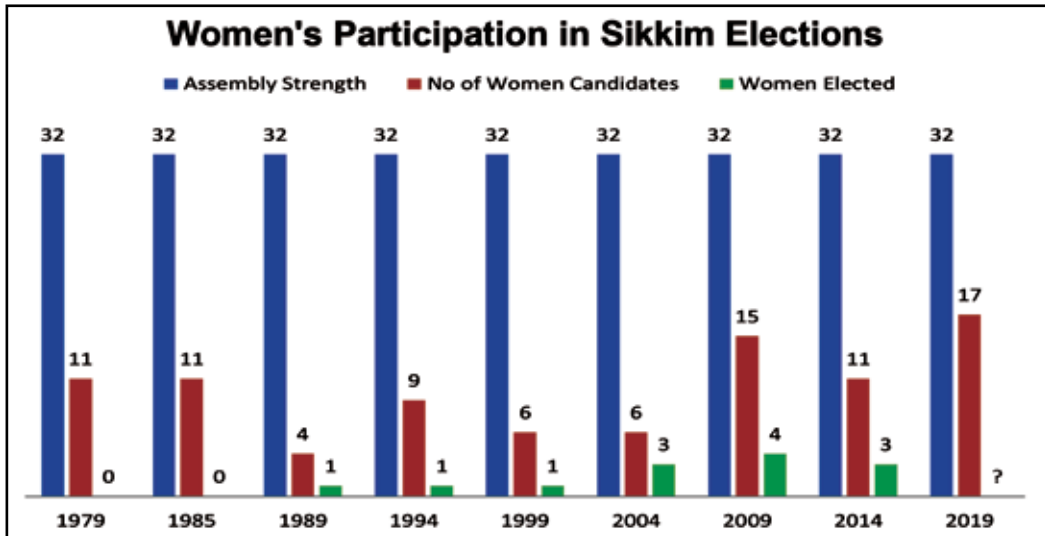
The upcoming Assembly and Lok Sabha election has the highest number of women candidates ever to participate in Sikkim elections. There are 17 women candidates, including one Lok Sabha candidate, participating in the upcoming elections. The second highest number of 15 women candidates was back in the 2009 elections. In 2014, 1985 and 1979 there were 11 women candidates.

Interestingly, this time Congress had given tickets to the most number of women [06] but unfortunately lost two in the scrutiny process. With 04 women left in the

running, Congress draws with SDF in the number of women

fielded three women candidates each.

SKM, SRP and JBMP all have two women candidates each.



candidates in the fray. In 2014 too, both SDF and Cong had

HSP ranks second with three women candidates while

BJP has only one woman candidate in the upcoming election.

While increase in participation is a big yes, performance of women candidates has not been so great.

The first woman MLA to be elected was Chewang Lhamu Bhutia [Sikkim Sangram Parishad] in 1989, 15 years after the first elections were held in Sikkim. In the 2014 elections, seven of the 11 women candidates forfeited their deposits with the best-performing among the seven securing a mere 2.73% of the votes polled in her constituency.

The only woman candidate from the Opposition who did not forfeit her deposit was Bharati Sharma, the then SKM president, from

Soreong-Chakung who lost to SDF's RB Subba.

All three winners were from SDF.

From 1979 to 2014, 73 women candidates have participated in elections and only 13 have been elected.

The highest number of women legislators the Sikkim Legislative Assembly has had is four in 2009 when Chandra Maya Subba, Neeru Sewa, Tilu Gurung and Tulshi Devi Rai, all from SDF, won the elections.

When it comes to voting, women have been consistently outperforming men in exercising their franchise; even setting a national record

turn to pg02

General Observer assess election preparedness in North Sikkim



MANGAN, 28 MAR (IPR): General Observer for North District General Election 2019, Dr Prati-bha Singh, assessed election preparedness of the various Polling Stations on 26 March.

Dr Singh visited eight polling stations under sector-8: Mangan-Singhik along with the Sector Magistrate Thinley

Gyamtso Lepcha.

During her visit, the General Observer enquired about facilities in place for Persons with Disabilities (PwD), basic minimum facilities of the Polling Station.

As informed by LO to the General Observer, the GO found all polling stations well established in a voter-friendly environment.

GNLF's Kalimpong...

The Kalimpong unit somehow seemed unconvinced and there had been whispers about their dissatisfaction, something that Mr Kalikothay has tapped into to resuscitate GNLF's demand for 6th Schedule status for the Hills.

"It is my responsibility to carry the issue of Sixth Schedule which Subash Ghising has given me. Our supporters were in confusion and wanted a clarification on why we should support the BJP. That is why we organized this session today," said Mr Kalikothay.

The CPI[M], meanwhile, also supports the 6th Schedule idea and in fact promotes something which offers even more autonomy to the region.

Saman Pathak, the CPI[M] candidate, said as much here today as he sought support for an anti-BJP, anti-TMC support.

CPI[M] would also work on issues of land rights, for linguistic minorities, and the wages of the tea garden workers, he said.

No withdrawals...

after which symbol allotment was done to the Independent candidates which was done in the presence of the General Observers. The final list of contesting candidates has been published in prescribed Form 7A with the allotted symbols.

A meeting with the contesting candidates and representatives of the political parties and the General Observers is scheduled to be held at 10am on 29 Mar, 2019 in the Conference Hall, District Administrative Centre, Sichey.

The meeting will have presence of General Observers and will brief candidates on various aspects of DOs & DONTs during Code Of Conduct period. Candidate handbooks will also be handed over during the meeting.

After ASAT...

trackable debris, as well as up to 32,000 pieces that are non-trackable.

The UNIDIR too raised concern over the space debris. "Testing anti-satellite weapons in space can create damaging debris. Guidelines on testing these systems can prevent collateral damage and the escalation of tensions in outer space," the UNIDIR tweeted with a video on the subject.

Matthias Maurer, a European Space Agency (ESA) astronaut, said shooting down a satellite and voluntarily creating space debris is not a sign of being a responsible space power.

"Shooting down a satellite to prove you're a space power only shows that you're not. No responsible space power contributes to creating voluntarily space debris! Space belongs to all mankind. Let's use it for peaceful purposes and for the benefit of the people. @esa @dlr," Maurer tweeted.

On Wednesday, Daniel Porras, Space Security Fellow, UNIDIR, said conducting the tests at an altitude of 300 km does not augur well for satellites in the Low Earth Orbit.

"It was not a good sign for LEO (low earth orbit)... which has telecommunication and earth observation satellites and also the International Space Station," which cruises at a height of 400 km, he said.

"The test was done at 300 km, so pretty low, meaning most of the debris will slowly come down. However, lots of objects near that altitude.... Not a good sign for all those LEO constellations. Also, if any debris damages other objects, India will be liable under the Liability Convention (if attribution is established)," Porras had tweeted.

The MEA, in Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) released on Wednesday, said "whatever debris that is generated will decay and fall back onto the earth within weeks".

Women in Sikkim's...

in the 2009 election with 82.77% turnout against the 81.46% male voter turnout.

In the 2014 elections, there were five constituencies which had more women voters in the rolls than men, namely Upper Tadong, Namchi-Singithang and all three constituencies of North Sikkim.

Incidentally, North Sikkim has never had a woman MLA and has seen only three woman candidates in the eight elections held in the State since 1979. This year's SKM candidate for Dzongu, Chung Kipu Lepcha will become the fourth woman ever to contest elections in the district. If successful she will script history by becoming the first woman MLA from a district where female voters outnumber the males.

The first woman candidate to contest elections in North Sikkim was Phutik Bhutia [Sikkim Prajatantra Congress] in 1979 from Lachen-Mangan.

And one is still only talking representation here; real issues of gender equality remain largely unaddressed with issues of independent identities and inheritance receiving only lip-service.

Delay Namgyal gets pen nib as election symbol

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 28 MAR:

SNPP president, Delay Namgyal Barfungpa, 52, today received 'pen nib' as his election symbol. He is contesting from Gangtok constituency.

Addressing a press conference, Mr Barfungpa shared that he has been receiving good response from the people on the campaign trail.

"People have been asking me about my election symbol and I received it today. They say the pen is mightier than the sword. Give me an opportunity, people of Gangtok, whatever promises I have made will not be fulfilled if



you do not send me to the Assembly," he pitched.

Mr Barfungpa is among the constituencies with a higher number of

candidates – 6 – and when asked about his USP, said: "I am sincere, honest and have been in opposition for 20 years. I always

spoke up for the rights of the people and never for my personal interests. I never migrated from one political party to the other."

Exposure visit for Sombaria farmers on orchid cultivation



GANGTOK, 28 MAR (PIB):

One day exposure visit of farmers from Sombaria, West Sikkim was organized at ICAR-NRC for Orchids, Pakyong on 28 Mar, 2019 under Tribal Sub-Plan project. Scientist cum Nodal Officer, Dr Tshering Lhamu Bhutia, TSP, Project welcomed all the participants as well as State Department Horticulture Officers, Ongdi Lepcha and DN Sherpa and Block Technology Manager, Dawa Tshering Sherpa.

In this exposure visit, two lectures on Orchid based farming system and Germplasm Conservation of Orchids by Principal Scientist (Horticulture), Dr LC De and Scientist (Economic Botany & PGR), Ravi Kishore Pamarthi, ICAR NRCO, Pakyong, respectively. The lecture was followed by field visit by the farmers along with JRF, Deepak Rai, ICAR NRCO, Pakyong. More than 30 farmers participated in the said programme.

General Observer visits Polling Stations in West



GYALSHING, 28 MAR

(IPR): General Observer (West), Faisal Aftab, visited the Polling Stations and inspected them thoroughly to see if the basic facilities were available at the Polling stations. He was accompanied by Dr. Anand Thapa.

The Polling stations visited by the General Observers were Girls Senior Secondary School,

Kyongsa; Yangtey Primary School; Sakyong SSS; and Gyalshing Community Hall.

Later, he also attended the uploading of Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballot System (ETPBS) at NIC in the presence of Returning Officer, Karma R. Bonpo; ADC West, Karma L. Lepcha and SDM (HQ) Tushar G. Nikhare.

Sensitization programme on TB at Sumbuk



SUMMIT REPORT

SUMBUK, 27 MAR:

Melli PHC, in collaboration with PHSC, Sumbuk, organized a sensitization programme for NGO representatives on Tuberculosis as part of Mission to Elimination of TB by 2022 under RNTCP (Revised National Tuberculosis Control Programme).

The programme was attended by president, Lungchok Kamarey GPU, Deoraj Rai, Dr Sherry Rinzing, Mikita Pradhan,

BPM, Health Councillor, Sarita Prasaily, Melli PHC, president, Kanchanjyoti Youth Club, Suyog Pradhan, Sumbuk PHSC compounder Bhakta Pradhan, ASHA members and the villagers.

Dr Rinzing explained TB through a PPT presentation and requested participants to spread the message about this communicable disease.

Mr Suyog Pradhan highlighted the issues of Sumbuk which has several people diagnosed with TB.

Training for Dispatching, Receiving and Commissioning Team concludes in West Sikkim

GYALSHING, 28 MAR

(IPR): Training for the Dispatching, Receiving and Commissioning Team was held at the Conference Hall, Zilla Panchayat Bhawan, Gyalshing.

DC-cum-DEO West, Karma R Bonpo, chaired the training along with ADC West, Karma L Lepcha; SDM (HQ), Tushar G Nikhare; Sonam G Bhutia, SE (Buildings) and Deputy CPAO, KB Subba were also present in the Training. The DC directed trainees to abide by the working norms of ECI and asked them to check materials in the polling bag against the provided checklists.

While stressing the importance of Mock Polls to the trainees, he asked them to perform it without fail.

While explaining VVPATs, Mr Bonpo asked them to handle it with extreme care keeping in

mind its delicate and fragile inner architecture. He also instructed them keep forms, seals and other important subsidiary materials of the election safe in preparation for weather complications.

Furthermore, he informed that necessary allotment of vehicles shall be made for every constituency.

ADC, West, also briefed the trainees on mandatory guidelines of ECI for commissioning of EVMS.

SDM (HQ) instructed the trainees on the importance of the filing of paper works after the polling materials are brought at the District Headquarter and also the issuance of relieving orders to the Polling Personnel.

A hands-on training was also conducted. A total of 52 trainees were present for the training.

Awareness on digital payments for Govt servants



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 28 MAR:

National Institute of Electronics & IT (NIELIT), Gangtok, the training arm of the Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY), with the support of the Digital Payments Division of MeitY, conducted a workshop on Digital

Payments Awareness for officials of various government departments at the Sidkeong Tulku Forest Conference Hall, Deorali, on 27 Mar, 2019.

The training was attended by 80 officers representing around 30 State Government organisations and departments.

GM Gurung picks up campaign pace at Khamdong-Singtam

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 28 MAR:

Sikkim Democratic Front party candidate from Khamdong-Singtam assembly constituency, GM Gurung, received a warm welcome during his car rally touring the constituency today.

Mr Gurung was accompanied by leaders, workers and supporters of SDF party. The rally started on foot from near the Government Fruit Preservation Factory and walked up to Singtam Bazaar. This was followed by a car rally covering different parts of the constituency. Along the route, people of the constituency gave a warm welcome to SDF candidate.

Speaking to media persons at Singtam, Mr Gurung stated that active politics demanded many personal sacrifice and required constant service of the society. He said he saw politics as a medium to serve the people and not as a profession.



As for his poll prospects, he said, "There is no challenge for us as SDF is a party with a strong grassroots connect which cannot be shaken by occasional politicians."

On media queries about some SDF leaders leaving the party after not getting tickets, he remarked that while every politician aspires to become the people's representative, it was not possible for the party to accommodate every aspiration and that there was some deft balancing required in the ticket dis-

Election symbols allotted in South Sikkim

NAMCHI, 28 MAR (IPR): Returning Officer (South), Ragul K, in the presence of General Observer, Shrish Chandra Verma, allotted symbols to all contesting candidates for the upcoming General Elections 2019 at DAC, Namchi today.

Symbols for recognized national and state parties were allotted alongside symbols being assigned to other candidates as per the Elections Symbols order. Additionally, various candidates from recognized and registered unrecognized parties were provided different symbols as under:

1. Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP) = **Lotus**
2. Indian National Congress (INC) = **Hand**
3. Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF) = **Umbrella**
4. Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM) = **Table Lamp**
5. Sikkim Rajya Manch Party (SRMP) = **Walking Stick**
6. Sikkim Republican Party (SRP) = **Flute**
7. Jai Maha Bharat Party (JMBH) = **Apple**
8. Hamro Sikkim Party (HSP) = **Whistle**

The RO mentioned that the symbol allotted to the candidates from Jai Maha Bharat Party is an apple as per the choice provided by the candidate.

Rangang-Yangang SDF candidate campaigning in full swing



REBYNA RANA

GANGTOK, 28 MAR:

Rangang-Yangang constituency SDF candidate, Raj Kumar Thapa has begun campaigning and sharing the party's programmes for Sikkim and the constituency.

Speaking with media, Ms Thapa said that due to lack of time left for campaigning she is holding 2-3 ward level meetings every day.

"I am focusing on the youth and interacting with them because they are important stakeholders in the society," she said.

Asked about her programmes, Ms Thapa said, if elected, she will make all efforts to complete the pending works in the constituency and

meet the requirements expressed by the people.

"I will also work to develop income generating activities for the youth and also focus on tourism development in the constituency," said Ms Thapa.

Regarding the challenge from opposition candidates, the SDF candidate said she does not see a strong challenge at all.

"By now people have come to know about the sincerity and commitment of SDF party for the people of Sikkim," she added.

Including Ms Thapa, there are six candidates in the constituency which also includes Raj Kumar Basnett of SKM and SRM president, Rup Narayan Chamling.

to book advertisements in SummitTimes, call 03592-208698 9734152541

Training on Farm Technologies in West Sikkim

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 28 MAR:

Mevedir, Service Provider Agency organized a ward level training on off farm and on farm technologies on 28 Mar, 2019. The training program was conducted at Upper Lungzik ward under Sardung Lungzik GPU and Anden ward under Upper Thambong GPU, West Sikkim, a press release informs.

The key participants of Upper Lungzik were Til Bdr Subba (Field Assistant) along with Mevedir Master Trainer, Sabita Rai and Kumar Gurung whereas in Anden ward, the key participants were Dawa Lhamu Sherpa (Ward Panchayat) along with Mevedir Master Trainer, Mangal Moti Limboo and Chuten Sherpa.

In Upper Lungzik, Sabita Rai (Mevedir Staff) demonstrated about the preparation and usage of Amrit jal by using local materials like cow dung, cow urine, jaggery (Gur), water and soil from the farmer's field. She informed that this preparation could be ready within a period of 4 to 5 days and to be utilized within a week. This highly nutrient rich liquid fertilizer would greatly enhance the fertility of the soil and provides good yield results for crops. The farmers were also informed the dosage of this liquid manure.

Similarly at Anden ward, the demonstration program on the use of Madhyam was conducted by the master trainers of Mevedir, Mangal Moti Limboo.

In both the training, farmers were informed that the preparation and usage of this on farm and off farm inputs needs to be recorded in the ICS documents like the farmers diary. Before concluding, the farmers of both areas were also informed about the Organic Input Store at Jorethang & Gyalshing where vegetable seeds, flower seeds and certified farm inputs are available.

More than 50 farmers participated in this ward level training program. The training program on both sides concluded successfully.

EC asks Mizoram govt not to notify liquor prohibition Act now

AIZAWL, MAR 28 (PTI): The Election Commission Thursday instructed the Mizoram government not to notify the Act imposing total prohibition of liquor in the state till the Lok Sabha election process is over. The Mizoram Liquor (Prohibition) Act, 2019, would bring back total prohibition of liquor in the northeastern state after four years, and the government had planned to impose it from April 1. Mizoram Additional Chief Electoral Officer Krishna Mohan Uppu forwarded the EC's letter in this regard to the Commissioner and Secretary of the state excise and narcotics department.

The letter asked the government not to notify the Act till the poll process is officially over on May 27.

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SDF thumbs down SKM manifesto as a copy-paste job with deceitful additions



SAGAR CHHETRI
GANGTOK, 28 MAR:

Sikkim Democratic Front today dismissed the Sikkim Krantikari Morcha election manifesto as a "complete photocopy" of SDF manifestoes from past elections. What is more, the party also accused SKM of adding impractical and deceitful promises in the manifesto.

Addressing a press conference here today, SDF spokesperson Bhim Dahal claimed that some announcements in the SKM manifesto and statements of SKM president PS Tamang [Golay] were contradictory. He stated that Mr Tamang's claim that Sikkim had a debt of around Rs 48,000 crores was one such lie.

Mr Dahal explained that the government takes soft loans on low interest to use for the people of Sikkim.

He added that even developed countries take loans for works of the people and alleged

that SKM has been again deceiving the people by showing false amount of loans on Sikkim.

Meanwhile, explaining the Universal Basic Income programme of the SDF, Mr Dahal stated that SKM president's claim that SDF cannot implement the UBI shows that the concept was beyond the intellectual capacity of the SKM to comprehend.

Speaking on the issue of tribal status for eleven left-out communities of Sikkim and seat reservation for Limboo and Tamang in the State Assembly as included in the SKM manifesto, he claimed that the SKM does not have the moral right to speak on these issues given the insistence of its MLAs that the seats be apportioned from the existing 32 seats, something that goes against the rights and interests of the majority community.

SDF spokesperson, KT Gyaltzen, condemned

what he sees as the continuing and intentional misleading of the Sikkimese people by Mr Tamang and his party with claims that he was eligible to become the Chief Minister even though the law clearly forbids it.

He also stated that Sikkim's pending demands with the centre, like the LT seats and tribal status for left-out communities, had already been placed with the Centre and that if a people-friendly government takes office in the Centre, these issues will be fulfilled immediately.

SDF spokesperson and Lok Sabha MP, PD Rai, also informed today that the party was confident of implementing a flawless UBI scheme and that the State was in constant touch with Basic Income Earth Network led by Guy Standing and has already held several rounds of talks with its Indian counterpart on this topic.

All efforts on to ensure free and fair elections: SP East

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 28 MAR:

Superintendent of Police [East], Hem Raj Rai today said that East District Police has been making all efforts to ensure free and fair elections in the State. He added that the police have been ensuring that every political party and candidate can go to the people with their programmes peacefully.

Addressing a press conference this evening, the SP East stated that there are 214 polling booths in 12 constituencies of East District. 11 polling booths in Kabi-Lungchok constituency in North Sikkim and 15 polling booths in Tumin-Lingee constituency in South Sikkim also fall under the jurisdiction of East District Police.

There are a total of 240 booths falling under East District Police jurisdiction. He mentioned that 55 polling booths in East District have been identified as 'critical polling booths', which need more security.

"We have received three companies of SSB and two companies of SAP which have been kept in different locations in the district. We have also deployed police personnel in flying squads in East District," the SP informed.

He added that there



are a total of 30 teams of flying squads in the district and four police personnel attached with every flying squad. There are 16 Static Surveillance Teams and 28 Magistrates and one personal security officer have been given to each SST and Magistrate.

"We are holding flag march at different locations in the districts and we held flag march at least twice in every police station jurisdiction in the district so far. We are also conducting check of vehicles by establishing 'Nakkas' [picket point] in different locations in East District," the SP said.

He added that around nine 'Nakkas' in the district have also been conducting checking in the night as well. He added that East District police has also increased vigilance at Rangpo check-post and Reshi check-post.

"We have bound down 118 persons under section 107 of CrPC who have a history of creating trouble during elections. So the people having cas-

cense holders in the district, 607 have already deposited their arms in the police station. He informed that only one case related to the election was registered otherwise the situation was totally normal for free and fair election process.

The police have been ensuring every political party and candidate gets opportunity to go to the people with their programmes and for the people to listen to them freely.

PLOT FOR SALE:

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

KUTSHE SHEGU

Our sincere gratitude and deep appreciation to all our dear friends and well wishers who have been so supportive and forthcoming during our time of bereavement, the sad demise of our beloved daughter Late, Kessang Tongden Lepcha who left for her heavenly abode on 19/02/2019. Once again in all humility we request your benign presence in offering prayer for the departed soul, the 49th day of Kutshe Shegu which falls on 07/04/2019 (Sunday) at our residence at Tongden Lee, Dikchu Bazar, East Sikkim.

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

Wangchuk Bhutia (Husband) & all family members.



ANTHYESTHI KRIYA

The Anthyesthi Kriya of our beloved mother, Late SITA MAYA TRIKHATRI (80 yrs) who left for her heavenly abode on the 23rd of March, 2019 falls on 4th April 2019.

All relatives, family, friends and well-wishers are requested to join us in offering prayers for the departed soul at Hotel Chowtaro, Deorali Bazaar, Gangtok, East Sikkim.

We also express our gratitude to all those who stood by us during our time of bereavement.



Daughters: Champa Bardewa-9434203706, Manju Trikhatri -7407181907
Sons: Pratap Trikhatri -9064836436; Lalit Trikhatri (Son)-9775956554
Daughters-in-Law: Man Maya Trikhatri -9775405439; Ashu Trikhatri -9647686222; Mamta Trikhatri -9609115039

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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:

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FAQ

EVM with VVPAT Unit

Q12. Is it possible to vote more than once by pressing the button again and again?

Ans. No. As soon as a particular button on the Balloting Unit is pressed the vote is recorded for that particular candidate and the machine gets locked. Even if one presses that button further or any other button, no further vote will be recorded. This way the EVMs ensure the principle of "one man, one vote". The next vote is enabled only when the Presiding Officer/Polling Officer in-charge of the Control Unit releases the Ballot by pressing the Ballot Button. This is a distinct advantage over the ballot paper system.

Q13. How can a voter be sure that the EVM is working and his vote has been recorded?

CALL 1950 FOR ANY ELECTION RELATED QUERIES

Contact Hours : 9:00 AM to 9:00 PM

MCC IS IN EFFECT

WHAT IS MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT?

Model Code of Conduct is a set of guidelines issued by the Election Commission of India for the conduct of political parties and candidates during elections. The Model Code of Conduct comes into force immediately with the announcement of the election schedule by the Commission for ensuring free and fair elections.

Visit the website: eci.gov.in

MISSING

Ref. Pakyong PS Case FIR No. 02/2019, dated: 28.01.2019, u/s 363 IPC, 1860 one 17 yrs old girl child is missing since 22.01.2019 from Lossing, Machong, East Sikkim. The details of Missing girl are as follows:

Name:	Divya Sharma
Age:	17 yrs
d/o:	Chandra Prasad Sharma
Height:	4' 5" (approx)
Complexion:	Fair
Wearing apparel:	Blue colour jeans paint & shirt and black & pink colour Nike shoe

All are requested to share any information about the missing child in the below given Contact No.
03592-257834, 73843-49283, 97330-23817

Informant will be suitably rewarded

HIGH COURT OF SIKKIM

GANGTOK

No. 28/HCS/MUSEUM

Dated: 27/03/2019

NOTICE

It is hereby notified for general information that the second phase of the High Court of Sikkim Museum located in the Old Chief Justice Bungalow at Forest Colony, East Sikkim is nearing completion.

In this connection, all are requested to contribute by making available such items of articles as old photographs, documents, instruments and equipment's etc. pertaining to the Judicial History of Sikkim, if any, in their custody and possession, for display/preservation in the new galleries on completion of the second phase of the Museum. All persons having in their possession such items of articles and willing to contribute may contact the office of the undersigned at the following contact number and deliver the articles at the earliest possible time.

Any person making contribution of the articles shall be paid such price for the items as may be considered reasonable taking into account the nature and condition of the artifacts at the time of delivery.

By Order,
Sd/-
REGISTRAR GENERAL/
MEMBER CONVENER
MUSEUM COMMITTEE
Contact No: 03592-202275

Isolationist Tendencies

Conversations could resolve what whispers tend to instigate

It is embarrassing how easily Sikkimese people allow themselves to be taken for a ride. Apolitical organizations with blatant political ambitions and inclinations are allowed to create issues, raise furore, fan paranoia, sometimes even sell impossible hopes and then revel in the confusion. But more than the people's susceptibility to a con game, it is their willingness to get communalised that is embarrassing. After all, how effectively can a population of barely 6 lakh be divided? Into how many sub-groups? Over how many issues? And how often?

It is pointless to deny that divisions exist within the Sikkimese society. Given that each of us belongs to some community or the other, it is an accepted fact that we are inherently communal. But, because we are also social animals living in more cosmopolitan times, this inherent communal streak seldom develops into paranoia or gets directed against other communities. This social grooming, however, collapses when the leader of the pack smells blood – the possibility of making an issue emotive and convincing enough for people to feel threatened and gather ranks. Few things move off the counter faster than a fabricated conspiracy theory. The more preposterous the fabrication, the more looming is the threat perception.

In these times of flux, there is definitely need for everyone to feel insecure, but to feel threatened enough to take leave of logic is as embarrassing as the belief that Indian culture is threatened by foreign television channels - a threat being waved often, but also preposterous to boot, or the fiction that “romeos” or beef-eaters pose a bigger threat than jingoistic imposition of nationalism. Sikkim's problems hark from its refusal to stop whispering and start talking. Since perceptions of a threat are interpreted from social signals, it would bode well for everyone if they genuinely started believing that they live in a democracy and that dialogue is possible in this system. Sikkim's communities continue to opt for the more anonymous route of pamphlets (and nowadays also social-media circles), kitchen gatherings and insular meetings to discuss their problems while presenting a mask of amity for public consumption. The mask has been ripped off many a times, but the people tend to shut their eyes when the real face is unveiled only to wake up to a new mask and new arguments later. The routine has been played out again and again and will be tried in the future too. 44 years of exposure to this charade since it adopted democracy and the centuries for which the same routine was played out under a monarchy do not seem to have wised the people.

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



China's 'Silk Road urbanism' is changing cities from London to Kampala – can locals keep control?

JONATHAN SILVER & ALAN WIIG
theconversation.com

A massive redevelopment of the old Royal Albert Dock in East London is transforming the derelict waterfront to a gleaming business district. The project, which started in June 2017, will create 325,000 square metres of prime office space – a “city within a city”, as it has been dubbed – for Asian finance and tech firms. Then, in 2018, authorities in Kampala, Uganda celebrated as a ferry on Lake Victoria was unloaded with goods from the Indian Ocean, onto a rail service into the city. This transport hub was the final part of the Central Corridor project, aimed at connecting landlocked Uganda to Dar es Salaam and the Indian Ocean.

Both of these huge projects are part of the US\$1 trillion global infrastructure investment that is China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). China's ambition to reshape the world economy has sparked massive infrastructure projects spanning all the way from Western Europe to East Africa, and beyond. The nation is engaging in what we, in our research, call “Silk Road urbanism” – reimagining the historic transcontinental trade route as a global project, to bring the cities of South Asia, East Africa, Europe and South America into the orbit of the Chinese economy.

By forging infrastructure within and between key cities, China is changing the everyday lives of millions across the world. The initiative has kicked off a new development race between the US and China, to connect the planet by financing large-scale infrastructure projects.

SILK ROAD URBANISM

Amid this geopolitical competition, Silk Road urbanism will exert significant influence over how cities develop into the 21st century. As the transcontinental trade established by the ancient Silk Road once led to the rise of cities such as Herat (in modern-day Afghanistan) and Samarkand (Uz-

bekistan), so the BRI will bring new investment, technology, infrastructure and trade relations to certain cities around the globe.

The BRI is still in its early stages – and much remains to be understood about the impact it will have on the urban landscape. What is known, however, is that the project will transform the world system of cities on a scale not witnessed since the end of the Cold War.

Silk Road urbanism is highly selective in its deployment across urban space. It prioritises the far over the near and is orientated toward global trade and the connections and circulations of finance, materials, goods and knowledge. Because of this, the BRI should not only be considered in terms of its investment in infrastructure.

It will also have significance for city dwellers – and urban authorities must recognise the challenges of the BRI and navigate the need to secure investment for infrastructure while ensuring that citizens maintain their right to the city, and their power to shape their own future.

LONDON CALLING

Developments in both London and Kampala highlight these challenges. In London, Chinese developer Advanced Business Park is rebuilding Royal Albert Dock – now named the Asian Business Port – on a site it acquired for £1 billion in 2013 in a much-criticised deal by former London mayor Boris Johnson. The development is projected to be worth £6 billion to the city's economy by completion.

But the development stands in sharp contrast with the surrounding East London communities, which still suffer poverty and deprivation. The challenge will be for authorities and developers to establish trusting relations through open dialogue with locals, in a context where large urban redevelopments such as the 2012 Olympic Park have historically brought few benefits.

The creation of a third financial district, along-

side Canary Wharf and the City of London, may benefit the economy. But it remains to be seen if this project will provide opportunities for, and investment in, the surrounding neighbourhoods.

KAMPALA'S CORRIDOR

The Ugandan capital Kampala is part of the Central Corridor project to improve transport and infrastructure links across five countries including Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda. The project is financed through the government of Tanzania via a US\$7.6 billion loan from the Chinese bank Exim.

The growth of the new transport and cargo hub at Port Bell, on the outskirts of Kampala, with standardised technologies and facilities for international trade, is the crucial underlying component for Uganda's Vision2040.

This national plan alone encompasses a further ten new cities, four international airports, national high speed rail and a multi-lane road network. But as these urban transformations unfold, residents already living precariously in Kampala have faced further uncertainty over their livelihoods, shelter and place in the city.

During fieldwork for our ongoing research into Silk Road urbanism in 2017, we witnessed the demolition of hundreds of informal homes and businesses in the popular Namuwongo district, as a zone was cleared 30 metres either side of a rehabilitated railway track for the Central Corridor required.

As Silk Road urbanism proceeds to reshape global infrastructure and city spaces, existing populations will experience displacement in ways that are likely to reinforce existing inequalities. It is vital people are given democratic involvement in shaping the outcomes.

[Jonathan Silver is Senior Research Fellow, University of Sheffield; Alan Wiig is Assistant Professor of Urban Planning and Community Development, University of Massachusetts Boston]

Why fear and anger are rational responses to climate change

QUAN NGUYEN
theconversation.com

Not everyone cheered for the school children striking against climate change. In the US, democratic senator Dianne Feinstein accused them of “my way or the highway” thinking. German Liberal Democrats leader Christian Lindner said that the protesters don't yet understand “what's technically and economically possible”, and should leave that to experts instead. The UK's prime minister, Theresa May, criticised the strikers for “wasting lesson time”.

These criticisms share a common accusation – that the striking children, while well-intentioned, are behaving counter-productively. Instead of having a rational response towards climate change, they let emotions like fear and anger cloud their judgement. In short, emotional responses to climate change are irrational and need to be tamed with reason.

The view that emotions are intrusive and obscure rational thinking dates back to Aristotle and the Stoics – ancient Greek philosophers who believed that emotions stand in the way of finding happiness through virtue. Immanuel Kant – an 18th-century German philosopher – saw acting from emotions as not really agency at all.

Today, much of political debate is moderated with the understanding that emotions must be tamed for the sake of rational discourse. While this view stands in a long tradition of

Western philosophy, it invites Jordan Peterson and Ben Shapiro to insist that “facts, reason and logic” can dismiss an emotional response to anything in debates.

However, the view that emotions aren't part of rationality is false. There's no clear way of separating emotions from rationality, and emotions can be rationally assessed just like beliefs and motivations.

EMOTIONS CAN BE RATIONAL

Imagine you're walking in the woods, and a huge bear approaches you. Would it be rational for you to feel fear?

Emotions can be rational in the sense of being an appropriate response to a situation. It can be the correct kind of response to your environment to feel an emotion, an emotion might just fit a situation. Fear from a bear coming towards you is a rational response in this sense: you recognise the bear and the potential danger it represents to you, and you react with an appropriate emotional response. It could be said to be irrational not to feel fear as the bear walks towards you, as this wouldn't be a correct emotional response to a dangerous situation.

Imagine you find out that a meteor will kill millions of people across the world, displace hundreds of millions more, and make life for the remainder of humanity much worse. The world's governments neither put a defence system in place, nor do they evacuate the people threatened. Fear from the meteor, and anger at the inaction of governments, would

be a rational response as they are an appropriate reaction to danger. And if you don't feel fear and anger, you're not appropriately responding to a dangerous situation.

As you've probably guessed, the meteor is climate change. The world's governments aren't addressing the causes of climate change or preparing to mitigate its impact. For the people of Mozambique, who are reeling from the devastation of Cyclone Idai, anger is entirely appropriate. Climate change is largely a product of economic development in richer countries, while the world's poorest are bearing the brunt of its effects.

ARE EMOTIONS COUNTER PRODUCTIVE?

Regardless of how fitting an emotional response is, it may sometimes be unhelpful for what a person wants to achieve. Theresa May makes this point about the school strike: understandable, but young people missing valuable lessons makes it harder for them to solve climate change. As others have already pointed out, climate change demands rapid action – waiting until some vague point in the future when the children are old enough to do something is relinquishing responsibility instead of meaningful action.

It is, however, hard to deny that fear and anger sometimes lead people to choices they regret. However, dismissing emotional responses on this basis is too quick. There are many examples where fear and anger have triggered the correct response and created a motivational push for

change. As Amia Srinivasan, an Oxford philosopher working on the role of anger in politics, puts it,

“Anger can be a motivating force for organisation and resistance; the fear of collective wrath, in both democratic and authoritarian societies, can also motivate those in power to change their ways.”

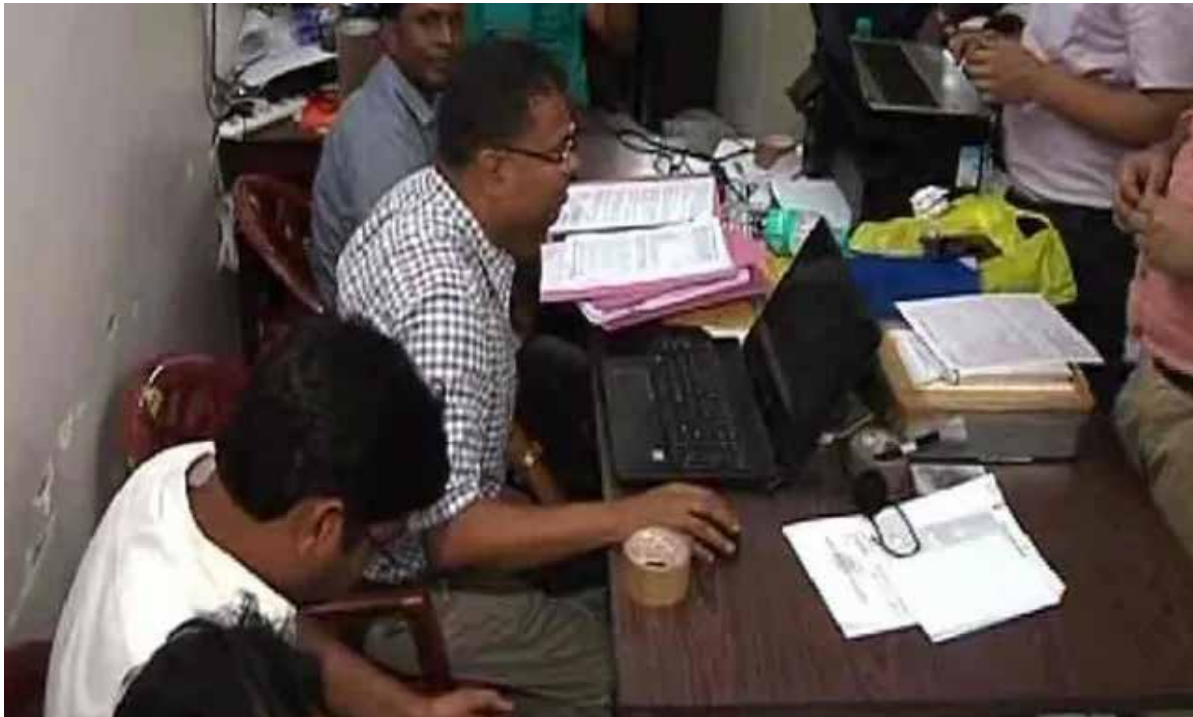
A lot of social change has happened because of anger against injustice, empowering the weak and oppressed, while causing those in power to fear they may be ousted leads to reforms and change. We do need scientific understanding of the climate crisis to solve it, but banning emotions from the debate and dismissing rational fear and anger about climate change may encourage people to do nothing.

So, not only are children, who are angry and scared about climate change, rational, they might be more so than the adults criticising them. Emotions play a bigger part in life beyond rationality – they mark values and indicate what people care about. Fear of the future and anger at inaction are ways young people can express their values. Their emotions are, in the words of feminist writer Audra Lorde, an invitation to the rest of society to speak.

Dismissing the emotions of school children not only invalidates their rational responses to a grave situation – it implicitly states that their values aren't taken seriously, and that adults don't want to reach out to them.

[the writer is PhD candidate, University of St Andrews]

EC replaces Central police observer for West Bengal



KOLKATA, MAR 28 (PTI): The Election Commission Thursday said that retired BSF director general K K Sharma had been replaced by 1981 batch IPS officer Vivek Dubey

as central police observer for West Bengal.

Additional CEO Sanjay Basu told reporters here "K K Sharma has been replaced by Vivek Dubey

as central police observer for West Bengal".

Sharma's appointment as central police observer for West Bengal had been objected to by Trinamool Congress supremo

Mamata Banerjee and CPI(M) on grounds of neutrality.

Basu said 24 police observers had been appointed for West Bengal and 47 general

observers for all the 42 Lok Sabha constituencies in the state.

The EC had also appointed 44 expenditure observers for the state, besides an awareness observer, he said.

Regarding complaints received through National Grievance Services, he said a total 798 had been received in the state out of which 281 were resolved.

On complaints received through the cVIGIL app, Basu said the EC had received 1814 so far in West Bengal, out of which action had been taken against 1151 of them.

He said total liquor seized so far was 5.05 lakh litres, while cash seizures was to the tune of Rs 10.42 crore in the state ahead of the seven-phase Lok Sabha polls.

Satisfied with WB CM's assurance, aspiring teachers withdraw stir



KOLKATA, MAR 28 (PTI): A day after getting assurance from West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, around 200 aspiring school teachers Thursday withdrew their 29-day long relay hunger strike with the hope that something positive will happen by first week of June.

They lifted the stir after holding a meeting during the day with a five-member committee appointed by state Education Minister Partha Chatterjee to resolve the impasse.

"Following the chief minister's assurance and the development of today's meeting, we are withdrawing our agitation till the first week of June. We have trust on the chief minister," the agitators said.

They were claiming that a large number of teachers' posts were lying vacant but the au-

thorities were not calling them for interview though they have the requisite qualifications.

"We will resume our agitation if the demands are not met by first week of June as assured by the chief minister," they said after the meeting.

The meeting took place a day after Banerjee dropped in at their dharna venue on Wednesday and assured them to look into their demands after the Lok Sabha poll process is over.

"I am helpless at the moment and cannot do anything right now as the election model code of conduct is in force.

We have to frame a policy to resolve the demands. Please give me time," Banerjee had told the agitating aspiring teachers.

She had said she would ask the education minister to look into their demands af-

ter the elections.

The seven-phase Lok Sabha polls in the state will begin on April 11 and results will be announced on May 23.

Around 200 aspiring school teachers were on relay hunger strike and dharna from February 28 demanding recruitment to vacant posts in state-run institutes.

Education Minister Partha Chatterjee last Friday met representatives of the aspiring teachers and formed a five-member committee to look into their demands.

The agitators were on dharna and relay fast since February 28 under the banner of the SSC Yuva-Chhatra Adhikar Manch.

The CPI(M) and the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP), the students' wing of the RSS, have backed their demands.

Six candidates in fray for lone Lok Sabha seat in Mizoram

AIZAWL, MAR 28 (PTI): Six candidates are in the fray for the lone Lok Sabha seat in Mizoram on Thursday, Election department officials said.

Election to the Mizoram Lok Sabha seat will be held on April 11 simultaneously with the by-poll to the Aizawl West - I Assembly constituency.

With no withdrawal of nomination on Thursday, the last date for withdrawal of candidature, six candidates are in the fray for the Lok Sabha seat and three for the Assembly constituency, the officials said.

The six candidate in the fray for the Lok Sabha seat are - C Lalrosanga of ruling MNF, Lalnghinglova Hmar an Independent supported by the opposition Zoram People's Movement (ZPM) and the Congress, Nirupam Chakma of BJP, T B C Lalvenchhunga of People's Right to Identity and Status of Mizoram (PRISM) and two Independents Lal Hriatrenga Chhangte and Lalthlamuani.

In all 7,84,405 electorate will exercise their franchise in the state on April 11 in 1,175 polling stations to elected the lone Lok Sabha MP of the satte. Fifteen special polling stations will be set up at Mizoram-Tripura border Kanhmun village for 12,000 Bru voters lodged in the six relief camps in North Tripura district.

Three candidates in the fray for the bypoll to the Aizawl West - I Assembly seat are Zothantluanga of the ruling MNF, Lalbuanga Sailo, an Independent supported by ZPM and the Congress and Rev Zaichhawna Hlawndo of the 'Zoram Thar' party.

Bangladesh building fire kills 5; several still trapped



DHAKA, MAR 28 (PTI): At least five people were killed while several others still feared trapped in a huge fire that broke out in a 22-storey building in Dhaka's Banani area on Thursday, in the latest blaze to hit the Bangladeshi capital.

The incident happened on Thursday afternoon in the building that houses several garment shops and internet service providers.

Four people died when they jumped off from different floors of the building while a student of the Dhaka University died due to the effects of the blaze, the Dhaka Tribune reported.

"A 35-year-old man,

identified as Abdullah Al Faruk, an MBA student at Dhaka University, was declared dead after he was rushed to the Dhaka Medical College Hospital," the paper reported.

Another person, who was yet to be identified by the authorities, was declared dead at Kurmitola General Hospital after he fell off the building while trying to escape the fire. "Similarly, three more male victims were declared dead on arrival by the doctors of United Hospital," officials were quoted as saying.

The people who lost their lives were among half a dozen people who jumped off from various floors of the high-rise

building, resulting in grave injuries, senior officials said. Apart from 21 fire tenders, Bangladesh Air Force helicopters and Navy commandos have been sent to the spot to douse the blaze.

While the actual reason behind the blaze was not known, eye witnesses and a government officer at the spot said that the fire broke out on the eight floor of the building and later spread to the other floors.

However, fire service did not comment on what caused the fire.

They, however, said that around 35 people have been rescued from the building while the operation to save oth-

ers was on. "Three units of Bangladesh Navy are working to tame the blaze. We have brought around 50 per cent of the fire under control," Siraj, a Navy officer, said.

Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) Director, Abdullah Ibn Zaid, said that three Bangladesh Air Force helicopters are aiding the search and rescue operations, along with teams from the Bangladesh Army and Navy.

Last month at least 70 people were killed and over 50 injured when a fast-moving fire swept through an apartment buildings and chemical warehouses in Dhaka's congested Chawkbazar area.

Tripura second in country in child marriage, says report

AGARTALA, MAR 28 (PTI): Tripura occupies the second position in India in terms of child marriages among girls between 15-19 years of age, an international study has found. Over 80 per cent of total child marriages in the state take place in rural areas of three districts, said the report.

"Tripura occupies the second position with respect to highest prevalence of child marriage among girls aged 15-19 years at 21.6 per cent which is significantly higher than the national average of 11.9 per cent," said Young Lives - an international study on childhood poverty, quoting data from the National Family Health Survey

(NFHS). The study is a collaborative research project coordinated by a team based at the University of Oxford.

Young Lives India Coordinator Suntala Khan said the study found four districts of Tripura in the list of top 100 districts of the country which have the highest prevalence of child marriages.

Khan addressed a workshop on "Development of multi-spectral action plan to child marriage and teenage pregnancy in Tripura" here.

The Young Lives report, prepared on NFHS-4 (2015-16) data, said Dhalai district had 24.7 per cent prevalence of child marriages, which was the highest in the

state. Other affected districts are South Tripura, North Tripura and West Tripura. The report also said 52 per cent of the surveyed girls were found to have conceived pregnancy at least once.

"Analysis of number of children born to teenage mothers reveals that 52 per cent of married teenage girls have given birth to one child, 5.5 per cent had 2 children and one per cent had more than 2 children by the tender age of 19," the report said.

Tripura Commission for Protection of Child Rights chairperson Nilima Ghosh said child marriage rate is increasing at an alarming rate in the state.

Gogoi, Ajmal have reached an understanding: Amit Shah

TEOK (ASSAM), MAR 28 (PTI): BJP President Amit Shah Thursday hit out at the Congress saying the former Assam chief minister Tarun Gogoi has reached an understanding with AIUDF chief Badruddin Ajmal to ensure his son Gaurav Gogoi's victory in the coming Lok Sabha elections in the state.

Addressing his second rally of the day in Assam here, Shah said Gogoi and Ajmal fights during the day to show

people that they are opponents "but do 'ILU-ILU' at night".

'ILU' was used as abbreviation for I love you in a song of the Bollywood blockbuster flick 'Saudagar' in the early 1990s by Bollywood director Subhash Ghai.

Continuing his tirade against Congress, Shah said "What does this mean? It means that they (Tarun Gogoi and Badruddin Ajmal) plan to fill Assam with illegal migrants for the win of

Gogoi's son Gaurav.

"That is why Gogoi has gone to Ajmal," he claimed at an election rally here.

BJP has launched a blitzkrieg against Congress in Assam alleging a secret understanding with AUIDF. Ajmal's party had announced that it would contest only three seats out of the total 14 in Assam.

Gaurav is the sitting MP from Kaliabor seat and is seeking a re-election for the

second term from the same constituency.

"If we want to develop Assam, then infiltration has to stop. Congress cannot do that. Only Narendra Modi, Sarbananda Sonowal and Himanta Biswa Sarma can do.

"If you make Modi the PM again, then forget about people, even birds will not be able to enter Assam," Shah said while campaigning for BJP's Topon Kumar Gogoi, who is contesting in Jorhat seat.

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Want to hold on to my form: Rana

KOLKATA, MAR 28 (PTI): Consecutive fifties in different batting positions ought to be a confidence-builder but Kolkata Knight Riders batsman Nitish Rana says he is occupied by the concern of maintaining his form that usually “fizzles” out early in the IPL.

As a makeshift opener in the absence of Sunil Narine, Rana struck a fine 68 in KKR’s first match against Sunrisers Hyderabad on Sunday.

Back at No.4 in their second match, Rana scored a 34-ball 63 against Kings XI Punjab on Wednesday to overtake Delhi Capitals’ Rishabh Pant (103 runs in two matches) in the early Orange Cap race.

“I haven’t thought too far ahead. But for the last couple of seasons, I start well but my form fizzles out towards the later half of the tournament,” Rana said after KKR’s 28-run win here on Wednesday night.

“So this time around, I want to work on this. I want to continue the kind of form I have started in till the end of the tournament.”

Rana did not have a good season with Delhi in the domestic circuit, managing just 147 runs from 10 matches in the Syed Mushtaq Ali T20 and 191 runs from six matches in the Ranji Trophy.

Disturbed by his poor form, the top order KKR batsman spent some time at the Mumbai-based KKR Academy speaking to Abhishek Nayar and Dinesh Karthik.

“I did not work on batting as such but I worked on the mental toughness. KKR academy was quite helpful in that sense because I got one-on-one time with Abhishek bhaiya and DK bhaiya. They helped me clear self doubts. Now, I feel, I’ve become a better player.”

Having impressed at different batting positions, Rana said, “That’s the sign of a good team. My plan was clear -- to hit a loose ball and then, let DK (Dinesh Karthik) or (Andre) Russell take over for the last four-five overs.” Four of his seven sixes came against India’s top off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin but Rana said the attack was not pre-planned.

“I was just trying to build my innings. I was taking it ball by ball at the start and then when I thought I could charge, I did that. “It doesn’t matter for me who the bowler is. My game plan was simple. I thought that was the time to attack and I did. That was the plan for the two overs -- of Ashiwn and South African pacer (Hardus Viljoen).”

Rana also hailed Andre Russell’s 17-ball 48 and said the lifeline, when the Jamaican survived owing to a no ball, gave them 20-25 runs extra. “Having 218/4 definitely worked in our favour, how Russell got a lifeline and that probably gave us those 20-25 runs extra.

“But even if we had 180 or 200, we would have fought this hard. It wasn’t very easy (to chase) because the ball started seaming in the second innings.

Chelsea snatch PSG triumph to set up semi-final showdown with Lyon

PARIS, MAR 28 (AFP): Maren Mjelde fired Chelsea into the last four of the Women’s Champions League and a clash with all-conquering Lyon after her stoppage time strike saw them squeeze past Paris Saint-Germain 3-2 on aggregate.

Norway international Mjelde met Karen Carney’s pinpoint pass seconds into added time to snatch the tie and spark wild celebrations after the Blues let their 2-0 first-leg advantage slip and risked being dumped out by a powerful PSG performance on Wednesday.

Her late strike was enough for Emma Hayes’s side to go through despite losing 2-1 on the night and being completely outplayed by PSG.

The Parisiens were all over Chelsea in a dominant second-half display, and levelled the tie through Marie-Antoinette Katoto two minutes after the break and a comical own goal from Blues keeper



Ann-Katrin Berger.

Roared on by a passionate home crowd led by a hardcore ultras group who protested treatment they received by police at the first leg in England -- when fans were caught with weapons and drugs -- the hosts looked favourites as the

tie headed towards extra time, but Mjelde nipped in to slot past Christiane Endler and book a huge tie with European champions Lyon.

“I’m so disappointed for my team, so much effort completely wiped out by a moment of carelessness. I am disap-

pointed for them because they gave everything,” said PSG coach Olivier Echouafni.

- SOMMER’S NIGHT -

Reynald Pedros’s Lyon kept up their hunt for a fourth straight Women’s Champions League after Eugenie Le Sommer’s brace won a

thrilling encounter with Wolfsburg 4-2 and knock the German side out for the fourth year in a row.

France forward Le Sommer struck in the 60th and 80th minutes to send Lyon into the last four 6-3 on aggregate after Denmark striker Pernille Harder clawed

dogged Wolfsburg back from an early 2-0 deficit with two goals in three second-half minutes.

Lyon, ahead 2-1 from the first leg in France, looked set to cruise through following a cheeky eighth-minute free-kick from Dzsennifer Marozsan and France

captain Wendy Renard’s penalty 17 minutes later.

Harder drew Wolfsburg -- who lost the 2016 and 2018 finals to Lyon -- level on the night with two quickfire strikes in the 53rd and 56th minutes to leave them needing to score twice more without reply to progress.

However Le Sommer killed any hopes of what would have been an incredible aggregate comeback when she headed Lyon back in front on the hour mark, and 20 minutes later she guided Delphine Cascarino’s cross past Al-muth Schult and ended the match as a contest.

Elsewhere, Barcelona eased into a semi-final clash with Bayern Munich thanks to Lieke Martens’ seventh-minute strike that sealed a 4-0 aggregate win for the Catalans over Lillestrom SK.

Bayern comfortably progressed after a 5-1 thumping of Slavia Prague that gave the Germans a 6-2 overall victory.

French ambassador releases Asterix comics series in Hindi

NEW DELHI, MAR 28 (PTI): The adventures and antics of fictional French heroes Asterix and Obelix will now be available in Hindi to comics lovers in the country.

The Ambassador of France to India, Alexandre Ziegler, on Wednesday released the first four albums of the Asterix comics series in Hindi at the Residence of France here.

Talking about the comics book series published by Om Books International, the ambassador said that the characters embodying the French spirit are timeless and a part of the French heritage.

“It’s an immense pleasure to release the first four Asterix albums in Hindi. Their stories are an opportunity for readers to get a glimpse of the history of the figures’ country of origin.

“Making the humour and stories accessible in another language and culture is no mean feat, so I warmly congratulate the translators for taking up this challenge,” Ziegler said.

The comics series tell

the story of a French village in 50 BC with two of the main characters -- Asterix and Obelix -- using their brain and brawn to keep the Roman Republic from taking the village.

The first four albums - ‘Asterix: Gaulwasi Asterix’; ‘Asterix: Sone ki Darati’; ‘Asterix: Asterix aur Gawthwasi’; ‘Asterix: Asterix Talwarbaz’ have been co-translated by Dipa Chaudhuri and Puneet Gupta.

“I have grown up devouring Asterix comics. In fact, I would wait with bated breath for the subsequent album to be released. And I was amazed at the amount of cultural history that these apparent comics are replete with. Every character has been so carefully crafted. Every dialogue has layers of meanings.

“I was in touch with Hachette Livre for over 7 years before they were convinced that we were the right team of professionals to tie up with for the Hindi edition. So I am really delighted that the albums in Hindi are a reality today,” Ajay Mago, Publisher, Om Books International, said.

Hesson regrets lack of alertness that saved ‘game-changer’ Russell

KOLKATA, MAR 28 (PTI): Kings XI Punjab coach Mike Hesson said “game-changer” Andre Russell completely snatched the match away from his team in the IPL clash against Kolkata Knight Riders and rued the no ball that let off the swashbuckler before he went on a rampage. Russell was on three off five balls when he was bowled by Mohammed Shami with an inch-perfect yorker on off-stump but it was declared a no ball because the side had three fielders, instead of the mandatory four, inside the circle in the 17th over.

Russell then smashed eight boundaries in a row to add 44 runs in the next 12 balls to push KKR to a record 218/4 at the Eden Gardens. “It’s a fine line when you’re bowling to Andre Russell. He’s a gamechanger,” Hesson said as Russell returned with a second man-of-the-match award in KKR’s 28-run win.

Russell was the star with a 19-ball unbeaten 49 in KKR’s six-wicket win over Sunrisers Hyderabad in their opening match here on March 24. “The game changed in the 17th over. Obviously we had a plan for Russell that we executed well, but we weren’t quite alert

enough in the field, and that’s where the game changed.” “We had that little bit of jubilation and then things turned pretty quickly (with the no ball) and we weren’t quite able to turn the last few overs for 12 or 14 runs. Instead we ended up giving away 22 or 24 runs, and it probably changed the game.”

Their 14-run win over Rajasthan Royals was overshadowed by R Ashwin’s controversial ‘Mankading’ of Jos Buttler but Hesson said the incident did not affect the skipper. “We were very focused in terms of preparing for KKR. So that’s very much been our focus.”

Skipper Ashwin’s decision to bring on their Rs 8.4 crore buy Varun Chakravarthly to bowl the second over backfired spectacularly. Sunil Narine hammered the uncapped mystery spinner for three sixes and a four in a 25-run over.

Defending the ploy, Hesson said: “It wasn’t so much Narine. Lynn was on strike at the start of that second over. That was the match-up we were looking for. And then Narine came on strike and you know he was able to take a toll.” Hesson also backed Chakravarthly and said he was nervous

like anyone else playing their first game. “The way he came back in the second and third over was excellent. And it will give him and us a lot of confidence. You know, playing your first game in front of a crowd like this is difficult.

“Narine’s obviously going to hit you from ball one. I think he will learn to settle down a bit quicker. But I’m still very pleased the way how he came back.” Chasing 219 in an away game was always difficult as they banked heavily on their opening combination of KL Rahul and Chris Gayle.

But the duo failed, both departing for 37 inside five overs as Kings XI Punjab were restricted to 190/4 in the designated 20 overs.

“The first two games, we haven’t got a huge amount of runs from the top, but we’ve got runs from the top six. Mayank Agarwal, Sarfaraz (Khan) got runs in the last game. Gayle, Mandeep has played a couple of cameos and obviously, David Miller’s come in and played a role. Asked if they were top heavy in batting, he said: “I think that statement could be true for Kings XI teams of the past, I don’t think it’s true now. I think we’ve got power and ability right through the top six and even deeper.”

Saina seems more determined playing against me and Sindhu: Ratchanok

AMIT KUMAR DAS
NEW DELHI, MAR 28 (PTI): Former World champion Ratchanok Intanon of Thailand says she needs to learn a trick or two from her gritty Indian rival Saina Nehwal, who always comes across more determined to win during their on-court duels. Ratchanok, a two-time champion at the India Open, has a dismal head-to-head record of 5-11 against Saina, who has defeated her in the last five meetings.

“I expect too much from myself when I play against Saina. I know Saina is strong and never gives up. Like in the Asian Games, I was leading 17-9 or something but I lost. So she is a good fighter and I have to learn from her. Saina has come back stronger,” Ratchanok said.

People in New Zealand still coming to terms with terror attack: Boult

NEW DELHI, MAR 28 (PTI): New Zealand pacer Trent Boult Thursday said his countrymen are still coming to terms with the terror attack on two Christchurch mosques that killed 50 people.

The attack took place on March 15 and New Zealand’s Test match against Bangladesh starting the very next day was called off.

“It was an emotional week for all of us in New Zealand. It was tragic and people are still coming to terms with the terror attack. It will take some time,” Boult said on the sidelines of a promotional event to announce his IPL team Delhi Capitals’ association with American loudspeaker manufac-



turing company JBL.

Asked if he spoke to the Bangladesh team, which escaped the attack by a whisker after being close to one of the attacked mosques, Boult said, “Unfortunately, they left for home next day itself and I didn’t get an

opportunity to speak to them. But I am glad that they were safe and returned home safely.”

On the controversy that followed Ravichandran Ashwin’s ‘Mankading’ of Jos Buttler in an IPL match, Boult chose to steer clear of the matter.

“It’s there in the rules and that’s what matters. It’s interesting though,” he said.

Boult will be an integral part of the New Zealand attack in the World Cup, starting May 30 in England, but he is not overtly bothered

about workload management given the hectic IPL schedule.

“Right now, my focus is to do well for Delhi in the IPL. I am not thinking too much about workload and focussing on the present. The team (Capitals) is in good shape and happy space,” the Black Caps pacer said.

However, Boult’s South African teammate Kagiso Rabada admitted that World Cup is there at the back of his mind.

“But I have decided to take one match at a time. I haven’t had any discussions with the (Delhi Capitals) team management but if I feel stiffness or soreness, I will definitely take precautions. It will be an individual call,” Rabada said.

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Israelis unveil ‘world’s longest salt cave’

MOUNT SODOM, MAR 28 (AFP): Israeli cave explorers said Thursday that a salt cave with striking stalactites near the Dead Sea is the world’s longest, beating the previous record-holder in Iran.

The cave named Malham, stretching over 10 kilometres, runs through Mount Sodom, Israel’s largest mountain, and spills out to the southwest corner of the adjacent Dead Sea. Pale salt stalactites hang from the ceilings, and some of the walls sparkle with salt crystals. Drops of salty water are visible at the tips of some of the stalactites. Malham became known to researchers through the work of Amos Frumkin, founder and director of the Hebrew University’s Cave Research Centre, who in the 1980s mapped around five kilometres of it.

But in 2006, researchers mapped over six kilometres of the N3 cave in southern Iran’s Qeshm island, granting it the widely recognised status of the world’s longest salt cave. Two years ago, Israeli spelunker Yoav Negev decided to complete Frumkin’s work, reaching out to Bulgarian cave explorers for reinforcements with the promise of a warm winter adventure.

Negev, founder of the Israel Cave Explorers Club, joined forces with Boaz Langford, a researcher at the university’s research centre, to organise a delegation of eight European spelunkers and another 20 locals.

They spent some 10 days mapping the cave in 2018. A second 10-day expedition this year with 80 local and interna-



tional spelunkers completed the measuring and mapping of the cave with lasers, determining its length at more than 10 kilometres. Mount Sodom is essentially a huge salt block covered by a thin but resilient layer of cap rock.

The rare desert rains find their way through cracks in the cap rock and dissolve the salt to form small caves that flow down toward the Dead Sea.

Even in the short period of time since Frumkin’s mapping, the cave’s structure has changed, and will continue to do so. Much of the cave’s interior is covered by a fine dust that blows in from the desert. Massive slabs of salt, some amber-coloured from dust

and minerals, jut out in dramatic formations. A thin slab appearing to have been sliced out is nicknamed “The Guillotine,” while twin slabs in a different hall earned the title of “The Ten Commandments.”

Reporters touring the site clambered and crawled through the narrow passages before reaching the “wedding hall,” where hundreds of white stalactites of various shapes and lengths created a festive backdrop. To Negev, Malham was in “a category of its own.” “There’s nothing like it in Israel,” he said, claiming that no other cave came even close to the 10-kilometre mark.

Negev pointed to its vast network of “caverns, passageways, piers, plateaus, one over another”. He called it “the most impressive and complex in Israel... and one of the most beautiful and fascinating ones I’ve been in”. Negev downplayed the significance of retaking the title from Iran -- Israel’s main enemy -- saying he had “excellent ties” with Iranian spelunkers through social media and professional conferences. “The political rivalry creates a desire to connect and mutual curiosity,” he said. “They’re really excellent spelunkers.” “I wish I could visit there,” he said of Iran and its caves.

Mallya appeal moves forward as Nirav Modi set for UK court hearing

BY ADITI KHANNA

LONDON, MAR 28 (PTI):

The stage is set for a busy period of Indian extradition-related activity in the UK courts as liquor baron Vijay Mallya’s High Court appeal moves forward for a judge’s verdict on paperwork and fugitive diamond merchant Nirav Modi returns to Westminster Magistrates’ Court here for a second bail hearing on Friday. “All the papers have been received and are now awaiting allocation to a single judge who will decide, on the basis of those papers, if permission is given to go to a full hearing,” said a spokesperson for the UK judiciary, in reference to Mallya’s application seeking an appeal against his extradition ordered by the magistrates’ court and then signed off by UK home secretary Sajid Javid last month.

While there is no set timescale for the judge to pronounce a decision on whether Mallya will be granted an appeal in the UK High Court, a decision is likely within the next few weeks. The 62-year-old former Kingfisher Airlines boss, wanted in India on alleged fraud and money laundering charges amounting to about Rs 9,000 crore, took to social media yet again to claim unfair treatment in the context of struggling Indian airlines Jet Airways being thrown a lifeline by public sector banks.

In her ruling at the end of his extradition trial in December last year, Chief Magistrate Emma Arbuthnot had concluded that Mallya has a case to answer in the Indian courts over substantial “misrepresentations” of his financial dealings.

“There is clear evidence of dispersal and misapplication of the loan funds and I find a prima facie case that Dr Mallya was involved in a conspiracy to launder



money,” she noted. Now, the same judge is expected to preside over the next major Indian extradition trial to come before the Westminster Magistrates’ Court, that of diamantaire Letters of Undertaking (LoUs) had been in possession of multiple passports, since revoked by the Indian authorities.

While one passport is now in possession of the Metropolitan Police, a second expired passport is lying with the UK Home Office and a third with the UK’s Driving and Vehicle Licensing Authority (DVLA) for a driver’s licence. Besides the passports, Modi also possesses multiple residency cards, some of them expired, but covering countries such as the UAE, Singapore and Hong Kong. His defence team tried to establish his very “visible” and “lawful” residence at his luxury Centre Point apartment in London’s West End, paying his local council tax and also using a National Insurance number, allocated to legal UK residents for purposes of work.

The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), arguing on behalf of the Indian authorities, had challenged all claims to counter the first bail plea and pointed out that Modi had “deliberately evaded justice” and not returned to India despite a series of criminal summons issued by Indian courts.

Modi was arrested by the Scotland Yard officers from a bank in central London as he attempted to open a new bank ac-

China protecting violent Islamic terror groups from UN sanctions: Mike Pompeo



WASHINGTON, MAR 28 (PTI): US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo Wednesday chided China’s “shameful hypocrisy” over its treatment of Muslims in the Communist nation while protecting violent Islamic terrorist groups from sanctions by the United Nations.

Pompeo was apparently referring to China blocking a proposal to designate Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammed’s chief Masood Azhar as a ‘global terrorist’ at the UN Security Council earlier this month.

“The world cannot afford China’s shameful hypocrisy toward Muslims. On one hand, China abuses more than a million Muslims at home, but on the other it protects violent Islamic terrorist groups from sanctions at the UN,” Pompeo said in a tweet, without mentioning the JeM or the outfit’s chief. France, along with Britain and France had moved a proposal in the 1267 Al Qaeda Sanctions Committee of the Security Council this month to designate Azhar a “global terrorist” following the February 14 Pulwama attack, but China, another veto wielding permanent member, blocked it.

China put a hold on the resolution arguing that it needs more time to study it. Every member of

the UN Security Council, except China, had supported the proposal. The JeM had claimed responsibility for the Pulwama attack in which 40 CRPF personnel were killed.

Pompeo’s criticism of China came on a day when it emerged that the US, supported by France and the UK, has directly moved a draft resolution in the UN Security Council to blacklist Azhar.

Pompeo made the statement soon after he met a former prisoner and relatives who recounted abuses as part of Beijing’s widespread detention of its Uighur minority in resource-rich Xinjiang. China, Pompeo alleged, has detained more than one million Uighurs, ethnic Kazakhs, and other Muslim minorities in internment camps in Xinjiang since April 2017.

“The US stands with them and their family members. China must release all those arbitrarily detained and end its repression,” he said.

On Wednesday, Pompeo met with survivors and family members of China’s “campaign of repression and mass detention” against the minority groups in Xinjiang. “I call on China to end these counterproductive policies and release all arbitrarily detained,” he said.

Shooting in north China motivated by ‘revenge’: police

BEIJING, MAR 28 (AFP):

A 44-year-old man who shot and killed five people in northern China earlier this week was motivated by revenge over “trivial matters” and targeted specific individuals, authorities said Thursday.

The suspect was the deputy director of a local water plant, said the Kailu county government from Tongliao city in the Inner Mongolia region.

Citing local police, officials said the shooter, surnamed Liang, was

driven by “conflicts created by trivial matters in work and life”, without offering more details.

Police have seized the small calibre rifle used in the crime, said authorities on their official WeChat social media account. The suspect was in police custody and an investigation was underway, they added.

Kailu county police declined to comment.

The shooting, which took place on Monday, was a rare case of gun violence in China, where

the government tightly restricts ownership of firearms. There are no official statistics on gun-related deaths.

In November 2017, three people were shot dead and six others wounded in southern Guangdong province.

In January that same year, a high-ranking city official in the southwestern province of Sichuan burst into a government meeting and shot and wounded the mayor and city party secretary before killing himself.

Trump meets Sunder Pichai, says Google committed to US military, not China

BY LALIT K JHA

WASHINGTON, MAR 28 (PTI):

President Donald Trump has said that Google is totally committed to the US military as he met the internet giant’s Indian-American CEO Sunder Pichai at the White House, days after he accused the tech company of helping China and its army.

Trump, who has been at loggerheads with several big companies, earlier this month said, “Google is helping China and their military, but not the US”.

On Wednesday, after a meeting with Pichai at the White House, the US President said: “Meeting ended very well”.

“Just met with @SunderPichai, President of @Google, who is obviously doing quite well,” he said.

Pichai “stated strongly that he is totally committed to the US military and not the Chinese military”, Trump said.

“Also discussed political fairness and various things that @Google can do for our country. Meeting ended very well!” said the President.



There was no immediate tweet from Pichai.

However, a Google spokesperson said that the company is pleased to have productive conversations with the President.

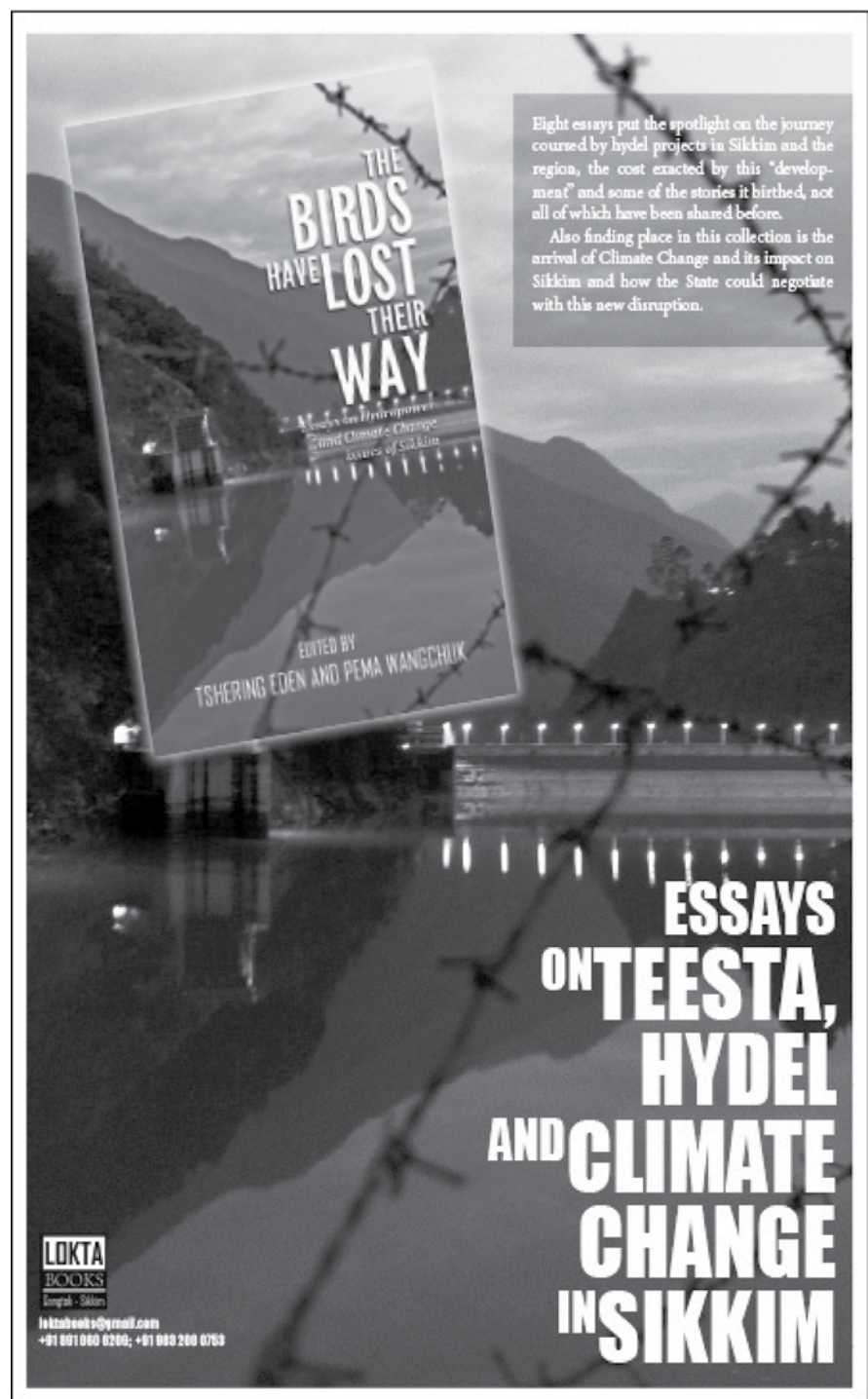
“We were pleased to have productive conversations with the President about investing in the future of the American workforce, the growth of emerging technologies and our ongoing commitment to working with the US government,” said the Google spokesperson.

Trump’s tweet criticising Google earlier last month came after Acting Defence Secretary Patrick Shanahan and General Joseph Dunford,

chairman joint chiefs of staff, said during a Congressional hearing that “Google was partnering with China... but the Internet search engine giant has shown a lack of willingness to work with the US Department of Defence”.

During his trip to Washington DC, Pichai also met India’s Ambassador to the US Harsh V Shringla.

“A thoroughly enriching experience to meet and interact with” Pichai on Google’s positive engagement in India and elsewhere in the world, privacy laws, internet governance and a host of other issues, the ambassador said in a tweet.





SUAVE! The “In My Blood” singer, Shawn Mendes is pumped up during his performance in Barcelona, Spain.

Angelina Jolie in talks to make Marvel debut in ‘The Eternals’

LOS ANGELES, MAR 28 (PTI): Angelina Jolie is in negotiations to make a foray into the Marvel Cinematic Universe with “The Eternals”.

Sources tell The Hollywood Reporter, the actor eyeing Marvel Studio’s superhero team adventure feature being directed by award-winning indie director Chloe Zhao.

Though Jolie is no stranger to fantasy films, “Maleficent” being case in point, this would be her first stint in a superhero film.

The Oscar-winning actor has chosen the project based on the Jack Kirby-created title about superpowered and near-immortal beings known as Eternals and a more monstrous offshoot known as the Deviants that were created by the cosmic beings called Celestials.

The details about the movie are being kept under wraps but one of the insiders has revealed one aspect to the story involves the love story between Ikaris, a man fuelled by cosmic energy, and Sersi, who relishes mov-

ing amongst humans.

It is unclear what character Jolie will play. Marvel had no comment.

Zhao, a name behind the critical hits “The



Rider” and “Songs My Brothers Taught Me”, will direct from a script by Matthew and Ryan Firpo.

Jolie is currently working with Marvel’s parent company Disney on two films - “Maleficent” sequel, “Maleficent: Mistress of Evil”, which will release later this year and animation/live-action hybrid project “The One and Only Ivan”, which she is also producing.

‘Game of Thrones’ prequel gets five more series regulars

LOS ANGELES, MAR 28 (PTI): “Game of Thrones” prequel pilot has added five more actors to the ensemble cast of the hit HBO series spin-off, tentatively titled “The Long Night”.

According to EW, Marquis Rodriguez, John Simm, Richard McCabe, John Heffernan, and Dixie Egerickx have joined the project, to be fronted by Naomi Watts.

Rodriguez is known to Marvel fans as Darryl from the now cancelled “Luke Cage” and “Iron Fist” Netflix series.

Simm has a variety of play and screen credits, including stints on stage adaptation of “Hamlet”, “Doctor Who” and “Collateral” in TV and “Everyday” in films.

McCabe co-starred with Simm in “Collateral”, whereas Heffernan is another actor with a long list of theatre credits, from “Hamlet” and “King Lear” to “The Seagull” and “Much Ado About Nothing”.

Egerickx recently appeared in “Patrick Melrose” with Benedict Cumberbatch and “The Little Stranger” with Dohmann Gleeson. The studio has kept

all character briefs under wraps.

According to HBO, the new show will be set thousands of years before the events of “GOT”.

It will chronicle the world’s descent from the golden Age of Heroes into its

co-executive producer George RR Martin. SJ Clarkson will direct the pilot. Goldman will also serve as showrunner.

The five new entrants join previously announced series regulars Miranda Richardson, Josh Whitehouse,



darkest hour. From the horrifying secrets of Westeros’s history to the true origin of the White Walkers, the mysteries of the East to the Starks of legend, the official logline of the show read.

The prequel pilot comes from writer Jane Goldman and “GOT” creator and

‘Sex and the City’ follow-up TV series in the works



LOS ANGELES, MAR 28 (PTI): A follow-up on “Sex and the City” television series is in development, the makers have announced.

According to Deadline, the new show will be based on Candace Bushnell’s forthcoming non-fiction book, “Is There Still Sex in the City?” that picks up where her original left off.

Again set in New York, the show will explore themes of sex, love and dating after the age of 50.

The rights have been acquired by Paramount Television and Anonymous Content to develop as a TV series. Bushnell will pen the pilot script and serve as an executive producer on the project, along with Liza Chasin from 3dot Productions and Robyn Meisinger from Anonymous Content.

It is, however, unclear whether the original cast - Sarah Jessica Parker, Cynthia Nixon, Kristin Davis and Kim Cattrall - will be part of the new project after Cattrall said she is done playing Samantha.

Set between the Upper East Side of Manhattan and a country enclave known as The Village, the book looks at love and life from all angles-marriage and children, divorce and bereavement, as well as the very real pressures on women to maintain their youth and have it all.

“At one time, fifty something meant the beginning of retirement-working less, spending more time on your hobbies, with your friends, who like you were sliding into a more leisurely lifestyle. In short, retirement age folks weren’t meant to do much of anything but get older and a bit heavier...”

“But this is exactly what the lives of a lot of fifty- and sixty something women look like today and I’m thrilled to be reflecting the rich, complexity of their reality on the page and now on the screen,” Bushnell said.

Published by Grove Press, “Is There Still Sex in the City?” will hit the bookshelves on August 6.

Happy to achieve things on my own: Jacqueline Fernandez



MUMBAI, MAR 28 (PTI): It has been ten years for Jacqueline Fernandez in Bollywood and the actor is happy with the way her career has shaped up.

Fernandez, who started her career with 2009 film “Aladin” and has been a part of big-ticket productions such as “Kick”, “Housefull” and “Race 3”, says she has always got work on the basis of merit.

“I am happy I was able to achieve things on my own. Sometimes things worked out and sometimes it did not. But there was always a fight to push myself to do better, to grow as an actor,” Jacqueline told PTI.

The actor will next be seen in Karan Johar’s home production film “Drive”, “Kick 2” opposite Salman Khan and “Kirik Party” with Kartik Aaryan. Talking on the sidelines of the launch of cosmetic brand Color Bar, Fernandez said she loves make-up but finds the idea of being photographed constantly annoying.

“No one likes to get clicked all the time. Even when you are clicking photo with your friend and you are not looking great... We can’t be in hair and make up 24x7. I don’t feel like getting photographed every time.

ARIES: Screen out the naysayers who’ve caused you to second-guess your brilliant ideas. Today, messenger Mercury concludes its three-week retrograde in your unconscious twelfth house, making it easier to ignore the peanut gallery. Even if some people call it “constructive feedback,” you really don’t need to hear ANY criticism now!

TAURUS: Digital woes begone! Today, messenger Mercury wraps up its three-week retrograde, forging ahead in your tech zone until April 17. If you want to upgrade any of your devices or digital systems, you’ve got cosmic clearance now. The quicksilver planet’s course correction could also inspire you to build your own website, develop an app or launch a YouTube series.

GEMINI: Power lunch, anyone? On March 5, expressive Mercury kicked off a three-week retrograde through your career house, making you think twice about taking any professional risks. But today, your galactic guardian corrects course, swinging open the doors of opportunity. Drop your Netflix queue way down on your priority list and

throw yourself back in the networking game.

CANCER: Trying to get a straight answer over the last three weeks has been nearly impossible, thanks to communicator Mercury’s backspin through your truth-telling ninth house. You can now breathe easy as the messenger planet turns direct and forges ahead. No more dancing around an issue—insist on the complete story. Steer clear of even slight exaggerations and aim to be fully authentic. Since the ninth house also rules travel, you’ve got a cosmic thumbs-up for a winter getaway.

LEO: Today’s cosmos shine a light on hidden realities as expressive Mercury turns direct in your covert eighth house. Over the past three weeks, while the messenger planet was retrograde, you’ve held your cards close to your vest, but guarding one secret could be taking a toll on your psyche. Mercury’s forward motion could attract a worthy confidante—which is a good start to releasing your burden.

VIRGO: Your routine-driven sign isn’t generally considered erratic, but Mercury’s

retrograde through your relationship house over the past three weeks might have made you flip-flop. Perhaps a BFF hasn’t had much time for you since finding “The One” or an ex resurfaced without an offer of commitment. Enough already! .

LIBRA: Channel-surfing or downward-dogging? If you’ve been doing more of the former over the past three weeks, you can thank Mercury, which has been retrograde (backward) in your self-care sector. But don’t throw in the towel! Today, the quicksilver planet turns direct, helping you find sustainable routines.

SCORPIO: You’re back! On March 5, expressive Mercury turned retrograde in your passionate fifth house. You may have felt like you were missing the love boat. Or perhaps you couldn’t get a clear read on a romantic interest. Get ready to shake off the confusion and insecurity today, as the communication planet powers forward and calls forth your most radiant self!

SAGITTARIUS: Baby, it might (still) be cold outside, but it wouldn’t hurt to open a

few windows and air out Chateau Sagittarius. With Mercury retrograde in your domestic fourth house since March 5, home and family matters might have felt a bit dazed and confused. Your survival instincts kicked in, causing you to retreat from the insanity. You can breathe a sigh of relief and re-engage today, as Mercury turns direct. Call a truce with your roomies, make up with your S.O., seek out a solution with your mother!

CAPRICORN: Banish that either-or thinking, Capricorn. After a confusing three-week Mercury retrograde in your communication house, the messenger planet powers forward today. While you prefer to pour your (prodigious) energy into one thing at a time, this approach may not be serving you. Don’t be afraid to dip your toe into multiple ponds, like those librarian-slash-actors or entrepreneur-slash-activists. Commuting or living in two cities is even a possibility for some earthbound Goats.

AQUARIUS: Loosen those purse strings, Aquarius. Since Mercury went retrograde on March 5, you may have had a few

budgetary breakdowns. But the messenger planet resumes forward motion today, making it safe to once again enjoy your hard-earned cash. This is a perfect time to revisit (and if necessary, revamp) your plans to strike a healthy balance between saving and spending. Invest in your greatest resource: yourself! A personal growth workshop, meditation retreat or life-coaching sessions can awaken your creativity and usher in a tsunami of entrepreneurial ideas.

PISCES: Ready for liftoff, Pisces? Messenger Mercury ends a three-week retrograde through your sign, signaling that you no longer have to play it so safe. Since March 5, the messenger planet’s backspin brought out your introspective side or left you feeling wildly misunderstood. Today, get out of your head and back into action. The quicksilver planet is in your sign until April 17, so take concrete steps to keep the momentum going. You’ve also got cosmic clearance to speak your truth, so don’t hold back.