



**SKM LEADER MELLI SONAM  
RESIGNS, SAYS CANDIDATE  
SELECTION WAS UNFAIR**

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**DONALD TRUMP: GOLAN HEIGHTS  
BOMBHELL REVERSES 40 YEARS  
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**THE LOL REASON VICKY KAUSHAL  
SPENT SHAH RUKH KHAN'S DIWALI  
PARTY 'HIDING IN A CORNER'**

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# SummitTIMES

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## 11 FAIL SCRUTINY, 162 CANDIDATES NOW IN THE FRAY

# It's only SDF-SKM in three constituencies

### SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 26 MAR:

The scrutiny of nomination papers of candidates for the 2019 Assembly and Lok Sabha elections was held today in all four districts of the State following which 11 nominations have been rejected. Nomination papers of 04 Sikkim Republican Party [SRP] candidates, 04 Congress candidates, 02 Sikkim Krantikari Morcha [SKM] dummy candidates and 01 Sikkim Rajya Manch [SRM] candidate were rejected. Nominations of all candidates for the Sangha constituency and Lok Sabha election were accepted.

From SRP, Phigum Lepcha for Yok-

sam-Tashiding, Kiran Gurung for Maneybung-Dentam, Nakul Pradhan for Soreong-Chakhung and Laxmi Prasad Chettri for Temi-Namphing were rejected.

Nomination papers of Congress candidates, Tej Bahadur Rawat in Soreong-Chakhung, Snumit Targain in Gangtok, Sandup Lepcha in Barfung and Sangkit Lepcha in Tumin-Lingi were rejected.

SKM candidates, Dewash Golay for Soreong-Chakhung and Chandra Bir Kami for Salghari-Zoom had their papers rejected. From SRM, Daniel Lepcha in Rinchenpong had his nomination re-

jected as well.

After the rejection of 11 nomination papers, there are now 162 candidates in the fray for the Assembly and Lok Sabha elections in the State.

One-on-one fight between SDF and SKM will take place in three constituencies; Lachen-Mangan, Soreong-Chakhung and Maneybung-Dentam. Interestingly, Soreong-Chakhung had the highest number of rejected nominations with SRP, Congress and SKM's dummy candidate, Dewash Golay failing the scrutiny. Also in this constituency, the candidate announced by HSP did not file the nomination papers.

In Lachen-Mangan,

SDF's Tshering Wangdi Lepcha, a sitting MLA, will be going against SKM's Sandup Lepcha. SKM president, PS Tamang's [Golay] son, Aditya Golay will be contesting against new SDF entrant, Sancha Raj Subba in Soreong-Chakhung. SKM's Purna Hang Limboo is placed against SDF sitting MLA and Minister, NK Subba in Maneybung-Dentam.

Meanwhile, Sangha, Shyari and Barfung constituencies will see three cornered fights.

While SDF and SKM have candidates in all 32 constituencies, Congress will be contesting in 23 constituencies, HSP in 22, SRP in 14, BJP in 12 and SRM in 03.

Sikkim United Front [SUF] has one candidate contesting the Assembly election and one in the Lok Sabha election.

Jai Maha Bharat Party [JMBP] has a lone candidate, Usha Gurung, in Namthang-Rateypani while All Indians Party [AIP] has Robin Rai contesting the Lok Sabha election.

There are 08 Independent candidates in the Assembly elections and 03 in the Lok Sabha.

Except SRM and JMBP, all parties have fielded candidates for the Lok Sabha election and including the 03 Independents, this time there are 11 candidates for the lone Lok Sabha seat.

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**11  
Nominations  
Rejected**

- 01 in East
- 03 in South
- 07 in West

**SDF-SKM  
One-on-One**

- Soreong-Chakhung
- Maneybung-Dentam
- Lachen-Mangan

**Three  
cornered  
fights**

- Barfung
- Shyari
- Sangha

### NORTH DISTRICT

## All candidates clear scrutiny in North

**MANGAN, MARCH 26 (IPR):** District Election Officer (DEO) cum Returning Officer (RO), North, Raj K Yadav, informs that the scrutiny of 19 nominations filed by 12 candidates of North district started at 11am today in the presence of General Observer (GO), Dr Pratibha Singh, here in the office of District Magistrate, North.

The scrutiny was carried out thoroughly constituency wise starting with Kabi-Lungchok, and moving to Dzongu and Lachen-Mangan.

In Kabi-Lungchok, all nominations were found valid except one nomination of substitute candidate of Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM), Jamyang Palmu Bhutia, which was rejected as the nomination of main candidate, Karma Loday Bhutia, had already been accepted. Rest of all the nominations of Kabi-Lungchok constituency were found valid and accepted.

In Dzongu constituency all nomination papers were found valid.



In Lachen-Mangan constituency all nomination papers were found valid except nomination paper of substitute candidate of Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM), Gyanden T Lachungpa, which was cancelled as the nomination paper of main candidate Samdup Lepcha was accepted.

Names of the candidates whose nominations were accepted by RO, North are as under: turn to pg02

### WEST DISTRICT

## 7 nominations fail scrutiny in West Sikkim

**GYALSHING, MARCH 26, 2019 (IPR):** The District Election Officer (DEO) cum Returning Officer (RO), West, Karma R. Bonpo, inform that scrutiny for candidates of all eight constituencies for West district was conducted successfully today in the presence of General Observer (GO), Shri. Faisal Aftab, IAS at the chamber of Returning Officer, West.

The scrutiny was carried out constituency wise. Out of the 39 candidates who had filed nomination papers, the nominations of seven failed the scrutiny.

The rejected candidatures are of: Phigum Lepcha (SRP) from Yoksum-Tashiding; Kiran Gurung (SRP), Maneybung Dentam; Daniel Lepcha (SRM), Rinchenpong; Nakul Pradhan (SRP), Dewash Golay (SKM), Tej Bahadur Rawat (INC) from Soreong-Chakung; Chandra Bir Kami (SKM), Zoom-Salghari.

The list of the validly nominated candidates whose nominations was accepted by Returning Of-

ficer, West are as follows:

### YOKSUM- TASHIDING (BL)

1. Dichen Wangchuk Bhutia (SDF)
2. Pema Rinzing Bhutia (INC)
3. Sangay Lepcha (SKM)
4. Phurkit Lepcha (HSP)

### YANGTHANG

1. Bhim Hang Limboo (SKM)
2. Dal Bdr Subba (SDF)
3. Mangal Subba (Limboo) (INC)
4. Binay Limboo (Tsong) (SRP)
5. Dhan Singh Limboo (HSP)

### MANEYBONG -DENTAM

1. Narendra Kumar Subba (SDF)
2. Purna Hang Subba (SKM)

### GYALSHING-BARNYAK

1. Bhanu Bhakta Dahal (BJP)
2. Dal Bahadur Karki (INC)
3. Laxuman Sharma (SDF)

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### SOUTH DISTRICT

## Three candidates fail scrutiny in South Sikkim

**NAMCHI, 26 MARCH (IPR):** The scrutiny of nominations filed by 44 candidates for the eight assembly constituencies in South District was carried out in the office of Returning Officer (South), Ragul K, in the presence of General Election Observer (South), Shrish Chandra Verma, at the DAC here today.

Nomination papers of three candidates were not accepted after scrutiny. The disqualified candidates are Indian National Congress (INC) candidate, Sandup Lepcha from Barfung; INC candidate Sangkit Lepcha from Tumin-Lingi constituency; and Sikkim Republican Party candidate, Laxmi Prasad Chettri, from Temi-Namphing.

The last day for withdrawal of candidatures is 28 March upto 3 pm. The final names of the candidate whose nominations for General Elections for Legislative Assemblies for South district have been accepted are:

### BARFUNG

1. Lobzang Bhutia, Sikkim Krantikari Morcha



### (SKM)

2. Tashi Thendup Bhutia, Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF)
3. Mingma Tshering Sherpa, Sikkim Republican Party (SRP)

### POKLOK- KAMRANG

1. Pawan Chamling, Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF)

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### EAST DISTRICT

## Only one scrutiny fail in East Sikkim

**GANGTOK, 26 MAR (IPR):** The scrutiny of nomination papers for the East district was held today in the office of the District Election Officer/RO, Kapil Meena, in the presence of General Observers Pankaj Agarwal, Mousumi Chattaraj Chaudhuri, Ameya Abhyankar and B Ram Sashtri.

The scrutiny of nominations of the 13 Assembly Constituencies, including Sangha, and the Sikkim Parliamentary Constituency started at 11am.

A total of 63 nominations for Assembly Constituencies and 11 nominations for Sikkim Parliamentary Constituency were scrutinised constituency-wise. All nomination papers were found to be valid except that of Snumit Lepcha of Indian National Congress from Gangtok which was rejected. Rest all nomination papers were accepted by the Returning Officer.

Names of the candidates whose nominations were accepted are as follows:

### KHAMDONG-SINGTAM CONSTITUENCY;



1. GM Gurung of SDF
2. Dr Mani Kumar Sharma of SKM
3. Gopal Khatiwara of SNPP
4. Neeraj Adhikari of HSP
5. Tula Ram Guragai of INC
6. Sher Bahadur Karki of BJP

### WEST PENDAM CONSTITUENCY;

1. Sonam Darjee of SRP

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## Summit Times in Nepali

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# HSP unveils plans for universal basic income scheme

### SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 26 MAR:

Hamro Sikkim Party today announced a universal basic income scheme for every Sikkim should it form the next government in the State. HSP's "Sikkimey Saman Yojna" promises a Rs 18,000 per annum entitlement to ever Sikkim resident an Rs 90,000 per annum for a family of five.

HSP is contesting from 22 of the State's 32 Assembly constituencies and the lone Lok Sabha seat.

The SSY plan was un-



veiled by HSP president, Dr Bina Basnett, at a press conference accompanied by working president Bhaic-

hung Bhutia and spokesperson Biraj Ahikari.

The scheme, Mr Bhutia announced, will be

launched within 25 days in the event that HSP forms the government and payments released into

individual bank accounts within 90 days of launch.

The party plans to make budgetary allocation for the scheme and believes this will cost around Rs 900 crore per annum which is 4.04% of the GSDP [for 2017-18] and 12.76% of the plan budget [2018-19].

Mr Bhutia further explained that specific categories like State & Central Govt upper grade staff officers, MPs, MLAs, high earning professionals etc. will be excluded from the scheme but low-earning

government permanent employees and all ad-hoc employees/ scheme workers will be included under SSY.

The HSP president Dr Basnett adds that the party's commitment to the underprivileged sections is reflected in the candidates list which included "a large number of low income working class people like drivers, mechanics, farmers and unemployed youth".

Dr Basnett further added that the finer details

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# SKM leader Melli Sonam resigns, says candidate selection was unfair

SAGAR CHETTRI  
GANGTOK, 26 MAR:

Senior leader of Sikkim Krantikari Morcha, Nuk Tshering Bhutia, popularly known as Melli Sonam, resigned from the party today. He has submitted his resignation letter to the party here at SKM head-office. A founding member of the party, Mr Bhutia worked in different capacities in the party and was currently the State coordinator of the party.

Addressing a press conference here today, Mr Bhutia said, “I don’t have faith in SKM party and leadership of PS Golay anymore. So I have decided to resign from the party.” He alleged of discrimination in the distribution of party ticket for the upcoming election.



“I was an aspiring candidate in this election from Martam-Rumtek constituency. Despite being the most deserving candidate and choice of the people of the constituency, I was denied the party ticket due to pressure of a few leaders in the high command,” he

said. He added that the party has totally ignored the voice of the people of the constituency.

Mentioning that he has always stood by the party and its president, Mr Bhutia said that there was no justification for denying him a ticket this time.

“Later I realised that the only reason for not giving me the party ticket is the case I filed in 1998 on which PS Golay got convicted and faced one year imprisonment,” he said. He clarified that the case was not filed against PS Golay but had asked for CBI enquiry in the

cow distribution scheme.

While alleging that there was no cadre system in SKM, he questioned the sensibility in giving party ticket to someone who had only joined the party recently. He accused the party president of denying tickets to deserving candidates and not taking party workers into confidence regarding ticket distribution. He also accused the party of discrimination against youth and women in ticket distribution.

Mr Bhutia further alleged that the party president does not trust other leaders and members of the party and this, he said, was the reason he chose to field his son, Aditya Golay, from Soreng-Chakhung.

“He [Golay] cannot trust others to vacate the seat whenever asked which is why he put his son there,” said Mr Bhutia.

Speaking on the recent viral audio clip of Jacob Khaling doing the round on social media, Mr Bhutia claimed that the audio clip was real and he was present when it was being recorded. On the same, he added that Mr Khaling dared to speak the truth in that telephonic conversation.

He went on to question the party president and his constant backtracking and change in decisions.

Mr Bhutia also hinted that he might join Sikkim Democratic Front along with his supporters.

## All BJP candidates pass scrutiny muster

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 26 MAR:

All 13 candidates of Bharatiya Janata Party for the upcoming assembly and parliamentary elections in the State have cleared the scrutiny process.

A BJP press release mentions that BJP filed nominations from 12 assembly constituencies and the lone Lok Sabha seat.

The Sikkim-BJP president congratulated all candidates of the party

and advised them to go to the people with the 129 people-centric programmes of the Modi government and seek the people’s support to make Sikkim a corruption-free State.

The release informs that the party will release a separate manifesto for the State covering regional issues of the State and the national level manifesto will also include important issues of Sikkim.

### Only one scrutiny...

2. Bikash Darjee of SNPP
3. Lall Bahadur Das of SKM
4. Gopal Baraily of SDF
5. Indra Kumar Suji of HSP
6. Birendra Pourali of BJP
7. Santosh Bardewa, (Independent Candidate)
8. Binod Darjee of INC

#### RHENOCK CONSTITUENCY;

1. Bishnu Kumar Khatiwara of SKM
2. Biraj Adhikari of HSP
3. Hemendra Adhikari of SDF
4. Bharat Kumar Sharma of BJP
5. Ramesh Sharma of SUF (Sikkim United Front)
6. Deo Kumar Pradhan of INC
7. Chakra Pani Sharma of SRP

#### CHUJACHEN CONSTITUENCY;

1. Rudra Khatiwara of HSP
2. Damber Kumar Pradhan of SKM
3. Gopal Chhetri of INC
4. Krishna Bahadur Rai of SDF
5. Mohan Gurung of BJP
6. Anil Kumar Rai of SRP
7. Rudra Narsing Sakya (Independent Candidate)

#### GNATHANG-MACHONG CONSTITUENCY;

1. DT Lepcha
2. Tshering Bhutia of SKM
3. Sangay Chopel Bhutia of HSP
4. Dorjee Ongden Bhutia of INC

#### NAMCHEYBONG CONSTITUENCY;

1. Em Prasad Sharma
2. Denis Rai of SKM
3. Anush Rai of HSP
4. Phip Rahang Subba of SRM
5. Kharka Bahadur Rai of SRP
6. Devi Basnett of BJP

#### SHYARI-TATHANGCHEN CONSTITUENCY;

1. Karma Ongdi Bhutia of SDF
2. Kunga Nima Lepcha of SKM
3. Chewang Dorjee Bhutia of INC

#### MARTAM-RUMTEK CONSTITUENCY;

1. DT Lepcha of SDF
2. Sonam Tshering Bhutia of INC
3. Sonam Tshering Venchungpa of SKM
4. Gyalsten Bhutia, (Independent Candidate)
5. Jigdel Chewang Bhutia of BJP

#### UPPER TADONG CONSTITUENCY;

1. GT Dhungel
2. Anand Lama of SKM
3. Punam Bhandari of SRP
4. Anita Gurung of INC

#### ARITHANG CONSTITUENCY;

1. Ashis Rai (Independent candidate)
2. Sumitra Rai of INC
3. Arun Kumar Upreti of SKM
4. Shyam Pradhan of SDF
5. DB Chettri of BJP

#### GANGTOK CONSTITUENCY;

1. Pintso Chopel Bhutia
2. Kunga Nima Lepcha of SKM
3. Phurba Sherpa (Independent candidate)
4. Yang Tshering Lepcha of BJP

#### UPPER BURTUK CONSTITUENCY;

1. DR Thapa of SDF
2. NB Gurung of SKM
3. DB Tamang of SRP
4. Aita Tamang of INC

#### SANGHA CONSTITUENCY;

1. Sonam Lama of SKM
2. Karma Tashi Bhutia of INC
3. Tshering Lama of SDF

#### SIKKIM PARLIAMENTARY CONSTITUENCY;

1. Dhiraj Rai of SRP
2. DB Katwal of SDF
3. Mahendra Thapa (Independent Candidate)
4. Biraj Adhikari of HSP
5. Bharat Basnett of INC
6. Passang Sherpa, (Independent Candidate)
7. Sun Maya Gurung, (Independent Candidate)
8. Robin Rai of All Indians Party
9. Laten Sherpa of BJP
10. Indra Hang Subba of SKM
11. Narendra Adhikari of SUF (Sikkim United Front)

The last date for withdrawal of candidatures is 28 Mar, 2019 from 11pm till 3pm and symbol allotment for Independent candidates will take place after that.

Also, second randomization of polling parties to allot them to assembly constituencies and assembly constituency segments of Parliamentary Constituency as well as to form the polling teams shall be done tomorrow by software in the presence of General Observers at the DEO’s chamber at 11am.

The second randomization of EVMs and VVPATs will be held on 30 March in the presence of candidates of political parties and the Observers at DEO’s chamber at 11am.

## Have forgiven students who forcibly entered my house, won’t approach police: JNU VC

NEW DELHI, MAR 26

(PTI): The hunger strike by JNU students entered its eighth day today even as Vice Chancellor M Jagadesh Kumar, who had on Monday alleged that some students forcibly entered his house and confined his wife, said he had “forgiven” them and would not file a complaint with the police.

“While last night’s violent behaviour by students in front of my JNU residence is condemnable, neither me nor

my wife will file a police complaint against the students. We have forgiven them. Wish them the best and hope they will reform and not repeat such acts in future,” Kumar tweeted. “JNU has marvellous people. Yesterday when students broke into my residence terrorising my wife who was alone at home, it was the wives of JNU faculty members who rescued my wife with the help of security guards and took her to hospital. Grateful to them

for their kindness,” he further said. The VC had on Monday alleged that a few hundred students forcibly broke into his residence and confined his wife inside home for several hours while he was away in a meeting.

“Few hundred students have broken into my residence at JNU and have confined my wife inside the house. She is alone at home and terrified. Very unfortunate. Is it the way to protest? Terrorising a lonely lady at home?,” he had tweeted.

The Jawaharlal Nehru University Students’ Union (JNUSU) has denied Kumar’s allegation.

“The JNUSU categor-

ically rejects the falsehood being spread by the VC, Mamidala Jagadesh Kumar. The JNUSU (on Monday) after waiting (at the VC’s residence) returned to the protest venue where an indefinite hunger strike is taking place,” it said. A student from a Left student outfit rejected the allegation and said a group of students had gone to meet the vice chancellor, but they were allegedly manhandled by the security personnel.

Eleven students are on a hunger strike on the campus in protest against the online system of entrance exam that will be implemented from this academic session.

### Three candidates fail...

2. Kharka Bahadur Rai, Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM)
3. Ishwar Prasad Rai, Indian National Congress (INC)
4. Birkha Bahadur Rai, Hamro Sikkim Party (HSP)
5. Yadhu Kumar Rai, Sikkim Republican Party (SRP)

#### NAMCHI-SINGHITHANG

1. Pawan Chamling, Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF)
2. Ganesh Rai, Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM)
3. Ratna Singh Rai, Sikkim Republican Party (SRP)
4. Kharga Bahadur Rai, Sikkim Republican Party (SRP)
5. Hukum Chandra Rai, Hamro Sikkim Party (HSP)
6. Mrs Kamala Rai, Indian National Congress (INC)
7. Nirmal Kumar Pradhan, Independent

#### MELLI

1. Farwanti Tamang, Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF)
2. Bal Bir Tamang, Sikkim Republican Party (SRP)
3. Tilak Basnett, Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM)
4. Lall Bahadur Chettri, Hamro Sikkim Party (HSP)
5. Bhola Chauhan, Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP)
6. Hari Basnett, Indian National Congress (INC)

#### NAMTHANG-RATEYPANI

1. Birjan Tamang, Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF)
2. Sanjit Kharel, Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM)
3. Ganga Ram Sharma, Sikkim Republican Party (SRP)
4. Madan Tamang, Hamro Sikkim Party (HSP)
5. Bikash Tamang, Independent
6. Usha Gurung, Jai Maha Bharat Party (JMBP)
7. Sancha Man Chettri, Indian National Congress (INC)

#### TEMI-NAMPHING

1. Garja Man Gurung, Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF)
2. Deepak Kumar Bhandari, Indian National Congress (INC)
3. Bedu Singh Panth, Sikkim Republican Party (SRP)
4. Durga Bahadur Chettri, Hamro Sikkim Party (HSP)

#### RANGANG-YANGANG

1. Raj Kumari Thapa, Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF)
2. Mohan Gurung, Sikkim Republican Party (SRP)
3. Raj Kumar Basnett, Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM)
4. Tanka Nath Adhikari, Indian National Congress (INC)
5. Kamala Rai, Hamro Sikkim Party (HSP)
6. Rup Narayan Chamling, Sikkim Rajya Manch (SRM)

#### TUMIN LINGI

1. Ugen T Gyatso Bhutia, Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF)
2. Samdup Tshering Bhutia, Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM)
3. Bhaichung Bhutia, Hamro Sikkim Party (HSP)

## Intervention on Menstrual Hygiene at Soreng

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 26 MAR:

A week-long sensitization program was organized by BAC-Soreng in association with ESS India from 20–23, Mar on the topic, “Solid Liquid Resource Management focusing on Menstrual Hygiene”.

The program was conducted at Pakkigaon Secondary School, BAC-Soreng, Tharpu Senior Secondary School and B.Ed College, Soreng respectively.

The ESS India team explained various aspects of menstrual hygiene and solid waste management which mainly included the reduction of use of sanitary pads while opting for more environment-friendly alternatives.

The objective of the program was to create awareness and to break

the various myths and taboos associated with menstruation.

Team ESS-India also provided tips to the students to avoid various health issues that can occur by the continuous usage of sanitary pads and which will also help reduce the waste so generated.

The awareness program was well received by the audience which not only included the students but also the teaching staff and the BAC staff members.

BDO Soreng, Deepak Rai, encouraged the student participants to keep the surrounding clean and green and try to reduce, reuse and recycle the waste also highlighting the importance of maintaining menstrual hygiene along with motivating them to talk about this sensitive topic thus breaking the stigma.

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ters@gmail.com

### It’s only SDF...

Congress had given the most number of party tickets i.e 06 to women candidates but following scrutiny and rejection of two candidates, the party now has 04 women candidates bringing it at par with SDF’s 04 women candidates. Altogether, there are 16 women candidates for the Assembly election and 01 for Lok Sabha.

### HSP unveils plans...

of SSY will be drafted in consultation with renowned economists of the world taking care of every aspect of its implementation.

“SSY is neither a gift nor an electoral sop or largesse - it is simply redistribution of Sikkim’s wealth for welfare of all Sikkimese. After all, the State exists for the benefit of all citizens and the State is duty bound to ensure financial security and a higher standard to living for all. With this one major step, poverty will be eradicated from Sikkim,” she said.

7. Funding: Funds for SSY shall be provided through budgetary allocation. Based on 2019 Population of Sikkim at 6,52,862 (Projected) and factoring the exclusions, this is likely to be Rs900 crores per annum, which is 4.04% of Rs22,247 crores GSDP for 2017–18 and 12.76% of Rs7051 crores Plan Budget of Sikkim for 2018–19.

3. Progressive Increase: This amount shall be progressively increased, based on cost of living index.

6. Timely Payment: Transfers shall be made on first day of every month through bank accounts.



# Arrival of General Observers in the State Capital

**GANGTOK, 26 MAR (IPR):** The District Election Officer (East), Kapil Meena, informs that General Observers arrived in the capital on 24 March to monitor the preparedness, issues, complains with regard to election process.

The names of the General Observers are:

1. Mr Naveen Arora, IPS, IG, ITBP is the Police Observer for the State of Sikkim (Mobile No. +91-8900043485).
2. Mr Pankaj Agarwal/IAS, Transport Commissioner, Harayana is the General Observer for Sikkim Parliamentary Constituency (Sr. No. 1 to 16

Assembly Constituencies) (Mobile No: +91-6294159214).

3. Ms Mousumi Chattaraj Chaudhuri/IAS, Director, Small Savings Finance Department, Government of West Bengal is the General Observer for Assembly Constituency East district. ( Mobile No: +91-8900043460), ( Assembly Constituencies 17-22).
4. Mr Ameya Abhyankar/IAS, Secretary IT is the General Observer for Sikkim Parliamentary Constituency (Sr. No. 17 to 32 Assembly Constituencies). (Mobile No: +91-

8900043261).

5. Mr B.Ram Sashtri/IAS, Agriculture Secretary APC Branch, Government of Uttar Pradesh is the General Observer for Assembly Constituency East district. (Mobile No: +91-8900043249) (Assembly Constituencies 23-28).
- They are presently staying in Circuit House and any person, political representatives willing to meet them may visit them in Circuit House between 9:30am to 10:30am and they can also be contacted in the above mentioned mobile numbers for any major MCC related issues.

## Start-up India Sikkim Yatra pit-stop at SMIT



### SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 26 MAR:**

The 'Start-up India Sikkim Yatra' organized by the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, GoI, in collaboration with the State Government reached the Sikkim Manipal Institute of Technology campus at Majhitar on 26 Mar.

A boot-camp on start-up was organized to provide a platform for budding entrepreneurs to realize their start-up dreams. The Yatra is scheduled to cover four boot camps and seven van-stops at various colleges and universities across the state, a press

release informs.

The boot-camp at SMIT was attended by Associate Director (Acad.), Prof Dr BB Pradhan in the inaugural session.

In his address, Prof Pradhan emphasized the importance of entrepreneurship and said that it was a privilege for SMIT to be selected as one of the centres in the state for the boot-camp.

80 students from different departments participated in the boot-camp of which 7 ideas were selected to pitch their ideas in the later session of the event.

The selected best ideas will get an opportunity to present the

same at New Delhi later this year.

The sessions covered nuances and challenges in entrepreneurship and the channels for obtaining government funds for a start-up idea. It would also provide support for developing start-up ecosystems in terms of legal, financial, etc.

Director, Prof. (Dr.) Ashish Sharma, SMIT conveyed his best wishes and message of motivation for enthusiastic participation.

The students commended the boot camp as very useful in providing useful insights on how to proceed with an idea and turn it into a billion-dollar business.

## Middle school teachers trained on aligning pedagogical processes and assessments with learning outcomes

**GYALSHING, 26 MAR [IPR]:** The valedictory function of the training on 'Aligning Pedagogical processes and Assessments with Learning Outcomes for teachers teaching VI to VIII' of West District was held today at DIET, Gyalshing.

The seven-day training was organised by DIET West from 18 to 26 March. 65 Graduate Teachers teaching classes VI to VIII attended the training.

Headmaster Langang Secondary School, Rajesh Thapa, attended the valedictory function as chief guest accompanied by Assistant Director, HRDD West, Raju Bhandari, as guest of honour, CL Gurung, retired teacher as special guest, Principal DIET, OP Ghatani, faculty members and other administrative staff from DIET and teacher participants.

The chief guest thanked DIET-West for organising such a pro-

gramme where teachers received deeper understanding about learning outcomes and also the ways of achieving them. He also thanked teacher participants for actively interacting and participating in the programme.

Resource Persons engaged were Kuldip Sharma, Babita Pradhan, Amber Bdr. Subba, Swarnalata Pradhan and OP Ghatani from DIET West.

Rajesh Thapa, HM, Rajen Tamang, HM, Phigu Tshering Bhutia, GT(M), RC Gurung, GT(S), Yahchen Sherpa, GT(A), Prakash Subba, PGT, Kamal Limboo, GT(A), Mani Kumar Dahal, PGT were guest resource persons from various schools of West Sikkim.

The training also included a session on Mental Health taken by Bindhya Pradhan, Psychiatric Social Worker at District Hospital Gyalshing.

## 4 from Sikkim clear BCCI Junior Video Analyst Course

### SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 26 MAR:**

Four participants from Sikkim successfully passed the Junior Video Analyst Course-cum-Examination 2019 held from 18 to 21 March at Shillong. The course was conducted by the National Academy for Umpires of the Board of Control for Cricket in India [BCCI] and held under the supervision of Video Analyst Coach of BCCI's National Academy for Umpires, Ashutosh Dandige.

A press release from Sikkim Cricket Association secretary, Sonam Palden Bhutia, informs that seven participants from Sikkim attended the course of whom four passed.

Karma Gelay Bhutia, Bivash Lamichaney, Md Rakib Alam and Daniel Lepcha successful secured passing marks and will be included in the BCCI panel of Video Analysts [Junior]. SCA has congratulated and conveyed best wishes to all participants.

### 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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**03592-208698**

## AIP Lok Sabha candidate to begin campaigning soon

### SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 26 MAR:**

Rabin Rai from Namchi, South Sikkim, is contesting the Parliamentary elections from Sikkim representing All Indians Party [AIP]. He announced that the soon to be released party manifesto will mainly include issues of the protection of Article 371F, seat reservation for Limboos and Tamangs in the State Assembly and the par-



ty's stand on the Citizen Amendment Bill among other issues of the State.

Mr Rai hails from Namchi and took volun-

tary retirement from the government service before entering politics.

Addressing a press conference here today, he informed that AIP was a new party registered on 23 July last year and has its headquarters in Vishakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.

He added that the party, led by Dr Kota Narasimha Murthy as party president, was contesting all Lok Sabha seats in the country.

## Election awareness drive continues



**GANGTOK, 26 MAR [IPR]:**

The office of the Chief Electoral Officer, Sikkim, in a move to encourage all eligible citizens to vote and make an informed decision during General Elections 2019, is conducting mock polls and Mobile Van campaign in all districts of Sikkim.

The Mobile Vans launched by the office of the CEO have facilitated proper dissemination of

information relating to General Election 2019 through videos and songs to the general public.

Mock polls were conducted at Biraspati Parsai Senior Secondary School, Ranipool and Government Secondary School at Ahopul by the officials from the office of the CEO and students participated by lining up to cast their votes and showcased much enthu-

siasm and excitement to be a part of mock polls.

The activities were designed and conducted for the public and students to mimic real elections in order to familiarize them about the election process.

Till date, such mock polls and Mobile Van Campaign have been conducted in Rumtek, Ranka, Penlong, Sang Khola, Pakyong Bazaar and Sang Martam.

## IAF pilot Abhinandan Varthaman returns to his squadron in Srinagar

**NEW DELHI, MAR 26**

**(PTI):** Wing Commander Abhinandan Varthaman, who was captured by Pakistan last month and returned to India two days later, has gone back to his squadron in Srinagar though he is on a four-week sick leave, official sources said Tuesday.

They said Varthaman preferred to stay with his squadron in Srinagar than going to his family home in Chennai while on leave.

The IAF pilot went on leave around 12 days ago after security agencies completed a nearly two-week debriefing after his return from Pakistan.

Varthaman could have gone to his family home in Chennai to spend time with his par-

ents. But he chose to go to Srinagar where his squadron is based," the sources said.

After his four-week sick leave period, a medical board will review his fitness to help the IAF top brass decide whether he can return to fighter cockpit as desired by him.

He was captured by the Pakistani Army on February 27 after his MiG-21 Bison jet was shot down in a dog-fight with Pakistani jets during an aerial combat. He downed an F-16 fighter of Pakistan before his plane was hit.

Varthaman was released on the night of March 1 by Pakistan.

After he was captured, Varthaman showed courage and grace in handling

the most difficult circumstances for which he was praised by politicians, strategic affairs experts, ex-servicemen, celebrities and people in general.

Tensions between India and Pakistan escalated after Indian fighters bombed terror group Jaish-e-Mohammed's biggest training camp near Balakot, deep inside Pakistan on February 26. Pakistan retaliated by attempting to target Indian military installations the next day. However, the IAF thwarted their plans.

The Indian strike on the JeM camp came 12 days after the terror outfit claimed responsibility for a suicide attack on a CRPF convoy in Kashmir, killing 40 soldiers.

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## 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](http://eci.gov.in)



# SummitTIMES

When Politics Feeds Intolerance

...it is time to get worried and hold up the mirror more often

In a democracy, politics, despite all its subterfuge, should have been inclusive and about blurring divisions. If the endorsement of the people is required to achieve power, then the net would naturally require to be cast wider. Unfortunately, in the present times the world over and also in our country, the initial burst of ideology was lost to the convenience of vote-bank politics which continues to be commandeered to sail into power.

The problem with vote-bank politics is that it needs to be corralled to ensure en-masse endorsements. For that, people need to be convinced to stay hemmed-in of their own volition, and that can happen only if a situation is created which requires them to join ranks and hold the line against an “enemy”. Even better if they can also be called in to “defend” something they all hold dear. A look at the graph mapping the rise of right-wing politics in the country charts how this consolidation happened, starting with a call which promoted a collective aspiration for a temple, and from thereon moved to realms of protecting their faith and flock and now, leapfrogging from hurt sentiments to extending their concepts of virtues and propriety to a wider population. Even if this imposition does not win new converts, it consolidates the base and keeps it busy doing what they believe is “right”.

But this process is fraught with dangers and we are already experiencing this macabre reality in the lives lost to marauding thugs who believe they are rakshaks (protectors) and in the shouting down of enquiry on the lungs of pride. In a country where a moment had arrived in some parts where getting caught with beef could lead to a lynching, the situation has now deteriorated to a stage where even being seen with a live cow can attract vicious violence if one belongs to a particular religion and seeking clarifications is tantamount to demoralizing the forces. We have always believed in stereotypes and have traditionally been prejudiced, but we have not always been this bloodthirsty, which is why one looks at politics - the only new ingredient to our mix of mutual suspicions - as the catalyst which has set light to the fuse.

Those scandalized by recent developments of gau rakshaks and anti-romeo squads getting a free run in the heart of the country, would do well to remember that such experiments in governance began at least a decade and a half ago, getting tested and refined in smaller states. The ghettoisation of Muslims in Gujarat and the officially-endorsed demonization of conversions in Rajasthan should have set off the warning bells, but not enough were paying attention. Take the “anti-conversion” Bill passed by the Rajasthan Legislative Assembly a little over a decade ago for instance. Even though understood as an anti-conversion Bill, this was actually named “Rajasthan Religious Freedom Act”. Even if they wanted to, the Rajasthan government could not, at least not ten years ago, ban conversions altogether because that would be against the secular Constitution of the country which allows every citizen the freedom to practice whichever religion she wants to and this includes her right to convert to another faith. Rajasthan, whether it wears BJP, RSS or Congress colours cannot deny anyone the right to abandon the faith they were born into and convert to another that appeals to them. And the Act made no such attempts either: It prohibited ‘conversion by use of force, allurement or fraudulent means’. That said, no leader explained the fine print to saffron-blinded supporters. They just went to town claiming that they had banned conversions. A signal goes out, the supporters get emboldened and practitioners of religions which convert become easy targets. The same happens when a government goes after “illegal abattoirs”. The supporters see it as an open season on all abattoirs. Mislead people into believing that cows are being slaughtered with impunity and anyone not worshipping a cow is suspected of leading it to the abattoir.

You will never catch a leader saying this, but that is the suggestion they release when they vent and fume in righteous rage, all the while consolidating a vote-bank which is now fetching powerful returns. India has probably the most well spelled-out Constitution in the world which is explicitly secular. Unfortunately, vote-bank politics by all parties has lacerated this fabric and worrying trend is developing to mono-culturalise this diverse country.

**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

## Donald Trump: Golan Heights bombshell reverses 40 years of US policy and throws Middle East into turmoil

SCOTT LUCAS  
theconversation.com

With one tweet of 35 words, Donald Trump has changed almost 40 years of US policy towards Israel and Syria:

“After 52 years it is time for the United States to fully recognize Israel’s Sovereignty over the Golan Heights, which is of critical strategic and security importance to the State of Israel and Regional Stability!”

As with other Trump impulses, such as his sudden order in December to withdraw all US troops from Syria, no administration official appeared to have been consulted. Hours earlier, the US secretary of state, Mike Pompeo, said from Jerusalem that there was no change in the US position declining to recognise Israel’s 1981 annexation of the Heights. His appearance alongside Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu was delayed for almost an hour for Pompeo to assessed the suddenly altered situation.

Of course, White House officials scrambled to gloss the announcement. One insisted that Trump had spoken with national security advisor John Bolton, son-in-law and advisor Jared Kushner, and Jason Greenblatt, the special representative for Middle East negotiations. In a curiously defensive assertion, the official said: “There’s no obvious constituency not to do this.”

Others wheeled out Trump’s vague references to “security” and “stability”. Pompeo recovered to say the declaration was “historic” and “bold”.

But make no mistake. Trump’s priority had nothing to do with a Middle East strategy. His impulse was fed by three desires: the re-election of Netanyahu on April 9, his own 2020 campaign and the need to constantly stroke his own ego.

Israel seized the Golan Heights in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War. Fourteen years later, just before its entry into Lebanon’s civil war, the government of Menachem Begin consolidated its hold with the declaration of sovereignty.

Few in the international community accepted the declaration. The Reagan administration, despite its pro-Israel rhetoric, suspended a strategic cooperation agreement with Tel Aviv. The US joined every member of the UN Security Council in Resolution 497, calling the annexation “null and void and without international legal effect”.

The Heights remained in a de facto division, with a UN observer force seeking to prevent any clashes. The Assad regime’s response to the 2011 Syrian uprising, killing 100,000 and displacing more than 11m, threatened to spill over into the area as the UN force withdrew. But the Israeli military presence deterred any regime action, and Netanyahu secured an agreement with Russia’s Vladimir Putin in September 2015 to keep Iran and Hezbollah out of the area.

### FRIENDS IN NEED

But Trump’s immediate concern is not with that interplay of Syria, Israel and external actors. As with his order to move the US Embassy to Jerusalem, his focus is on a side-by-side declaration linking his fortunes and those of Netanyahu.

The formal indictments of the Israeli prime minister for fraud, bribery, and breach of trust await a hearing. He may face a criminal graft investigation over the state purchase of naval vessels and submarines from German shipbuilder ThyssenKrupp, in one of the biggest cases in Israeli history. Polls have him neck-and-neck with the Blue and White Party of former general Benny Gantz and former



finance minister Yair Lapid.

But on Thursday, Netanyahu could be exultant: “President Trump has just made history. He did it again.”

Trump will hope that exaltation boosts his own re-election prospects in a year’s time. His approval ratings are doggedly sticking at just over 40%. They haven’t collapsed despite multiple criminal investigations, the furor over anti-immigration policies and the government shutdown — but neither have they risen amid an economy fuelled by December 2017 tax cuts.

Thus an appeal to a domestic constituency which traditionally votes Democratic — with few exceptions over the past century, Jewish voters have given more than 70% support to the Democrat candidate, including 71% for Hillary Clinton in 2016.

Trump’s calculation may be misguided. The Jewish vote is largely propelled by social issues at home, rather than Israel abroad: only 9% cited the latter as the primary cause for their vote in the last presidential election. But an “Israel first” stance could also resonate with non-Jews in America — and pro-Trump Jewish donors and lobbies could be significant in the contest for the US electorate next year.

Then there’s the far from insignificant factor of Trump’s ego. As is often the case with his orders

and proclamations, he used the announcement to try to portray his unique place in US history. Throwing in the falsehood that all of his predecessors — as opposed to none — had pushed for recognition of Israeli sovereignty over the Golan, he said: “Every president has said ‘do that’. I’m the one that gets it done.”

### RECIPE FOR DANGER

Despite the immediate headlines, Trump’s tweet has little significance for the Heights. The international community, including the UN, is not going to shift its position on their status. And, while Netanyahu may be boosted, the Israeli presence will continue to depend on the strength of arms, the

expansion of settlements and the acceptance of actors such as Russia.

But that does not mean the declaration is without effect. Trump’s “stability” is likely to make a further contribution to regional instability.

The Assad regime will seize upon the opportunity to cover up its repression and hold on power. The Syrian foreign ministry’s pledge to regain the Heights is bluff, as the regime’s military can’t even secure its

president without the lead of Russia, Iran and Hezbollah. But Bashar al-Assad and his inner circle will play the victim over the Heights for their narrative that the US and Israel are the supporters of “terrorism” and aggression.

Trump’s message also casts a dark shadow over the still to be presented Israel-Palestine “peace plan” of his son-in-law Jared Kushner. Some will rightly note that the plan, if it exists, is already a zombie proposal. However, the Golan Heights declaration on top of the relocation of the US embassy to Jerusalem confirms a Trump administration that has reduced its real objective to pleasing one Israeli — the one sitting in the prime minister’s chair.

And if one wants to take Trump’s “bigly” view of his influence, one can look beyond the Middle East. Martin Indyk, a former US ambassador to Israel, noted that: “[President Vladimir] Putin will use this as a pretext to justify Russia’s annexation of Crimea.”

That, of course, may not cause Trump — who “gets it done” — the loss of a moment’s sleep, even as some of his advisors and almost everyone across the Middle East are worried sick.

[the writer is Professor of International Politics, University of Birmingham]

## Cyclone Idai: rich countries are to blame for disasters like this – here’s how they can make amends

MICHAEL MIKULEWICZ  
& TAHSEEN JAFRY  
theconversation.com

The tropical cyclone rampaging south-eastern Africa has been described as one of the worst disasters ever to strike the southern hemisphere, with up to 2.6m people potentially affected in Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe. The death toll may not be known for months, but it is already likely to have run to hundreds and possibly thousands of people. The brunt of the disaster has been borne by the coastal city of Beira in central Mozambique, 90% of which has been reportedly destroyed.

It is inevitable that people will connect Idai and climate change. It is always tricky to establish a direct causal link, but thanks to the evidence provided by a number of reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), including this most recent one from October 2018, we know that climate change is bound to increase the intensity and frequency of storms like Idai. At the very least, this crisis is a harbinger of what is coming.

Knowing this is a luxury that we must not squander. The IPCC estimates we have 12 years to prevent the Earth’s climate from crossing the 1.5°C warming threshold, beyond which the effects are likely to become significantly worse. We should be spending this time both trying to minimise the increase in global temperatures and making people more prepared for similar events in future. The West has a duty to shoulder most of the burden here, for reasons we’ll explain in a moment. To do so, it needs to rethink its entire approach to international development.

### THE REALITY OF DISASTERS

Over the next few weeks, we may hear that Beira’s geography makes

it particularly prone to natural disasters. We may hear that the region lacks an efficient early-warning system to alert its population. We may even hear some victim-blaming rhetoric that local people refused to leave despite being warned. Arguments like these all obscure a much more important explanation for what has happened.

It is not only the intensity of environmental disasters that makes them devastating — poverty also has a huge bearing on how things play out. Houses in poorer areas will often be less stable, storm barriers may be weaker, sanitation is often a problem, emergency services will be poorly resourced — and preventing disease outbreaks may be hindered by the poor state of public health services. The list of disadvantages goes on and on.

Good example are hurricanes Katrina and Sandy in the US. Katrina struck New Orleans and the surrounding region in 2005 while Sandy hit New York and New Jersey in 2012. Sandy hit a far more densely populated area, but the death toll was at least five times lower than Katrina and it only caused about half the damage.

While Sandy was a category three storm to Katrina’s five, this was certainly not the only reason for the disparity. New Orleans, one of the poorest cities in the US, had poorly constructed levees which were easily overcome by the flood. Many people did not have cars, so couldn’t evacuate easily when the authorities told them to.

The earthquakes that struck Haiti and Japan in 2010 and 2016 respectively are another example. Both were of similar magnitude, but between 100,000 and 316,000 died in Haiti while in Japan it was just 42. One reason the Haitian disaster was so much worse was the many thousands of unstable shanty houses in Port-au-Prince.

Inequalities within countries

matter as well. The most vulnerable people are usually women, children, the poor, the elderly, ethnic minorities or indigenous people. Hurricane Katrina hit the elderly poor of New Orleans disproportionately hard, for instance, since they found it hardest to escape.

### WHERE RESPONSIBILITY LIES

In all this inequality, the world’s wealthiest countries are heavily culpable. It stems from a complex economic system that disadvantages the Global South — not to mention the centuries-long experience of colonialism, the effects of which have hampered human development until this day.

In a world where 26 billionaires own as much wealth as the bottom half of humanity, the prospect of more frequent and intense climate disasters is only bound to exacerbate those inequalities. At the same time, Mozambique, Malawi and Zimbabwe contribute only a small fraction of the emissions that are causing such disasters. The West’s responsibility — along with other big emitters such as China — is therefore also a matter of climate justice.

Part of that responsibility lies in changing the current approach to disaster aid. In major donor countries such as the US and UK, the guiding modus operandi of disaster relief has been reactive as opposed to proactive measures. The UK spent £1.2 billion in 2018/19 on emergency responses such as humanitarian interventions, while disaster prevention and preparedness has received a mere £76m. In the case of Cyclone Idai, the Department for International Development has now earmarked £18m to assist humanitarian relief efforts in Mozambique and Malawi — tripling the original pledge from a couple of days earlier.

To be clear, humanitarian re-

sponses are absolutely key, but insufficient on their own. They bandage wounds rather than fix what caused them. Instead, donor countries need to prioritise identifying the most vulnerable people both before and after a disaster, and ensure they receive the required support and are granted the agency to be actively involved in the process.

Besides the high-profile attempts to reduce global emissions, countries such as the UK should be offering support to poorer countries with everything from building flood defences to supporting social services to transferring technology. They should be forgiving national debt, redistributing wealth or at least giving them preferential trade deals to help them adapt to climate change themselves. This requires a rethinking not just of humanitarian aid but of development assistance in general.

Fortunately this is not just blue skies thinking on our parts. The House of Commons International Development Committee is currently reviewing the aid budget and considering an approach built around climate justice. This emerging discipline is gaining traction and credibility around the world and will be the subject of a World Forum taking place in Glasgow in June. Ahead of that, Tahseen Jafry — one of the co-authors of this article — will be making a keynote presentation in New York in April.

In short, it feels like momentum is steadily building. The UK caused a disproportionately large part of climate change. Now it ought to show leadership by pioneering a new approach to development that has inequality at the top of the agenda.

[Michael Mikulewicz is Research Fellow, Centre for Climate Justice, Glasgow Caledonian University; Tahseen Jafry is Professor of Climate Justice, Glasgow Caledonian University]



# Nepal inks labour pact with Japan



**SHIRISH B PRADHAN KATHMANDU, MAR 26 (PTI):** Nepal and Japan have signed a labour agreement under which migrant workers from the Himalayan kingdom will be employed in 14 sectors, including industrial, nursing, construction and sanitation.

The pact was signed

on Monday by Ram Prasad Dahal, acting Secretary in the Labour Ministry, and Masamichi Saigo, Japanese Ambassador to Nepal.

The agreement will come into effect from April 1.

As per the deal, a separate unit under the Department of Foreign Employment will be set up

in coordination with the Japan government. The new body will work on the modality of recruitment of Nepali workers by Japanese employers.

Both the governments will form a joint technical team that will finalise the number of workers to be recruited and the process of their recruitment, officials

said. The new unit will also finalise the benefits to be granted to workers. However, the cost a worker needs to bear to go to Japan is still under discussion. As per ministry officials, Nepal has requested Japan to allow Nepali workers to enter its job market at zero cost.

Under the agreement, the Japanese government

will hire Nepali migrant workers in care-giving, building cleaning management, machine parts and tooling, industrial machinery, electric, electronic, information and construction industries, officials said.

The workers will also be hired in shipbuilding and ship machinery, automobile repair and maintenance, aviation, accommodation, agriculture, fishery and aquaculture, manufacture of food and beverages and food service industries, they said.

In December last year, the Japanese government had approved a law which allowed Japanese companies to employ blue-collar workers from nine countries, including Nepal.

As per the Japanese plan, a total of 345,150 workers from Nepal, Vietnam, China, Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, Myanmar, Cambodia and Mongolia will be employed in the first five years.

# BJP fields candidate with 11 criminal cases, TMC seeks arrest



**KOLKATA, MAR 26 (PTI):** In a state where political parties have traditionally refrained from fielding bahubalis, 33-year-old BJP candidate from West Bengal's Coochbehar Lok Sabha seat, Nisith Pramanik, stands out with the dubious distinction of as many as 11 criminal cases against him.

According to a mandatory affidavit filed by Pramanik along with his nomination papers, he declared he has 11 cases pending against him, his first brush with the law being in 2009.

Pramanik, who joined the saffron party on February 28, was earlier with the Trinamool Congress before being expelled for alleged anti-party activities.

Though West Bengal has a history of poll-related violence, political parties in the state have generally kept bahubalis (musclemen) away from public glare to go along with the Bengali 'bhadralok' image of the educated middle-class.

The latest criminal case filed against the BJP candidate was on March 16 at Dinhat police station in Coochbehar district for cheating and criminal breach of trust.

A resident of Dinhat town near the Bangladesh border in North Bengal, Pramanik has a murder charge pending against him in a case registered there in April 2018.

He has also been ac-

cused of rioting on two occasions and attempt to murder.

A day before he joined the saffron party, a criminal case was filed against Pramanik on February 27, accusing him of making preparation for dacoity and possessing illegal arms.

Rabindranath Ghosh, Trinamool Congress' Coochbehar district president and a minister in the Mamata Banerjee cabinet, said, "The BJP has picked up someone who was thrown out by my party for indulging in criminal activities."

Pramanik, who faced opposition from a section of BJP workers in the constituency following his nomination on the ground that he is an outsider, however, claimed that the charges were false and "the people of Coochbehar will give the answer to the accusations against me in the EVMS".

In his affidavit, the BJP candidate also said he has been accused under the Explosives Act and even booked for outraging the modesty of a woman.

Pramanik, who has cleared the state's secondary level examination, is a businessman by profession, and said in the affidavit that he has Rs 2.25 lakh cash in hand.

He has movable and immovable assets of Rs 41.94 lakh and Rs 43 lakh, respectively.

Ghosh said he has

written to the Election Commission, seeking Pramanik's arrest on the basis of the several criminal charges against him, claiming he would be a threat to holding peaceful elections in the Coochbehar constituency. BJP's state-in-charge Kailash Vijayvargiya said the party is not worried about the allegations against Pramanik.

"TMC goes on making such accusations, neither we are perturbed by it, nor is our candidate," he said. Meanwhile, TMC candidate for Coochbehar, Paresh Chandra Adhikary, said in his affidavit that he has no criminal case pending against him.

Adhikary, a four-time MLA of the All India Forward Bloc, a constituent of the Left Front in the state, joined the Trinamool Congress in August 2018.

He won the Mekhliganj assembly seat in Coochbehar in 1991, 2001, 2006 and 2011 and was the state's food minister in the Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee cabinet from 2006 to 2011.

Adhikary, 66, who has cleared the higher secondary examination, is a pensioner having Rs 4.21 lakh cash in hand, according to the affidavit filed by him along with the nomination papers.

He has immovable assets of current market value of Rs 1.48 crore and movable assets worth Rs 1.18 crore.

## Six in fray for lone Mizoram LS seat after scrutiny

**AIZAWL, MAR 26 (PTI):** The nomination of all the six candidates for Mizoram's lone Lok Sabha seat and of three contestants for the by-election to Aizawl West -1 assembly seat were found to be in order after scrutiny on Tuesday, the Joint Chief Electoral Officer H Lianzela said.

Following the scrutiny candidate of the ruling Mizo National Front C Lalrosanga, BJP's Nirupam Chakma, independent candidate sponsored by opposition Zoram People's Movement-Congress Lalnghinglova Hmar, Peoples Rep-

resentation for Identity and Status of Mizoram's (PRISM) T B C Lalvenchunga are in the fray for the Lok Sabha seat.

The nomination papers of two other independents - Lalhriatrenga Chhangte and Lalthlamuani were also accepted, Lianzela said.

Those in the fray for the Aizawl West-I assembly by-poll were Zothantluanga of MNF, Lalbuan-ga Sailo of the ZPM-Congress combine and Rev Zaichhawna Hlawndo of Zoram Thar, he said.

As per the EC the last date of withdrawal of nominations is on Thursday.

## BJP, Cong key contenders in second phase of LS polls in Assam



**GUWAHATI, MAR 26 (PTI):** Altogether 60 candidates have filed papers for five Lok Sabha constituencies in Assam for the second phase of Lok Sabha polls in the state, with the BJP and the Congress emerging as the major contenders in at least four of the seats.

Tuesday was the last date for the filing of nomination for the second phase of election, scheduled on April 18.

Among the five seats, Karimganj (SC) registered maximum number of nominees at 19, followed by Silchar with 14 candidates, an election office spokesperson said.

The other three constituencies that will go to polls on April 18 are Autonomous District (ST), Mangaldai and Nowgong.

In Karimganj (SC) parliamentary constituency, the major players are sitting MP of the All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF), Radheshyam Biswas, BJP's Kripanath Malla and Congress candidate Swarup

Das, poll analysts said.

In Silchar, BJP's Rajdeep Roy is set to pose a tough challenge to sitting Congress MP Sushmita Dev, they said.

The candidates of the two national parties are prime contenders for Mangaldoi, Autonomous (ST) District and Nowgong seats too.

While Congress MP Bhubaneswar Kalita will lock horns with BJP's Dilip Saikia at Mangaldoi, the grand old party's minister, Pradyut Bordoloi, will put up a tough fight against Rupak Sarma of the saffron party, the analysts added.

In the Autonomous (ST) District, six candidates have filed their nominations, with the prominent ones being sitting Congress MP Biren Singh Engti and BJP nominee Horen Singh Bey.

The scrutiny of papers will be held on March 27 and the last date for withdrawal of nomination is March 29.

A total 6836,496

electorates, comprising 3521,244 males and 3315,071 females and 181 members of the third gender, will exercise their franchise in 8,992 polling stations of the state in the second phase.

For the first phase, scheduled to held on April 11, 45 candidates have filed their nomination papers for another five parliamentary constituencies Tezpur, Kalibor, Jorhat, Dibrugarh and Lakhimpur.

The filing of nominations for the remaining four constituencies of Dhubri, Barpeta, Kokrajhar (ST) and Gauhati will commence on March 28.

Elections to 14 lok sabha constituencies in Assam will be held in three phases April 11, 18 and 23.

In 2014, the BJP had won seven Lok Sabha seats in the state, followed by the Congress and the AIUDF with three seats each, and an independent candidate won one seat.

## Illegal liquor worth Rs one crore destroyed in Nagaland ahead of polls

**KOHIMA, MAR 26 (PTI):** Assam Rifles and Nagaland excise department have seized and destroyed illegal liquor worth more than Rs one crore and booked 175 people as part of the election expenditure monitoring ahead of the Lok Sabha polls, official sources said Tuesday.

Excise personnel conducted raids across the state and seized liquor between March 12 to March 25, Commissioner of Excise, Naga-

land, Tarep Imchen said. They seized 2078 litres of Indian made foreign liquor worth Rs 7,27,394 and 8033 litres of country-made liquor worth Rs 8,83,630, he said. Besides, 425 bottles of banned cough syrup were also seized during the frisking process, he said adding all the seized items were destroyed on the spot.

A total 175 people were booked and fine amount of Rs 1,87,500 was realised from the offenders, Imchen said.

The public relations officer of Inspector General Assam Rifles (North), Lt Col L Vincent Patton said that AR personnel based in Kohima raided strategic locations on March 23 and seized 2,294 cases of Indian made foreign liquor worth approximately Rs 1.06 crore.

Imchen said security measures have been tightened across the state to prevent suspected movement of illegal consignment at both intra and inter-state level.

## Mick Schumacher to test Ferrari F1 car in Bahrain



**PARIS, MAR 26 (AFP):** Mick Schumacher, son of seven-time world champion Michael, will make his Formula 1 test debut with Ferrari in Bahrain on April 2, the Italian team announced on Tuesday.

Schumacher will then take the wheel of Alfa Romeo's vehicle the next day. "I am really looking forward to what I'm sure will be a great experience," said Schumacher.

The 20-year-old will also make his Formula Two debut this weekend in Bahrain after being crowned Formula Three champion last year with Prema, an Italian team allied with the Ferrari Drivers Academy with whom he joined in January.

"I am consciously putting all thoughts of the test to one side, because I am also very much looking forward to

competing in my first F2 race," he added.

Michael Schumacher has not been seen in public since suffering head injuries during an accident on December 29, 2013 while skiing with Mick and his condition is a secret closely guarded by his family.

The 50-year-old left a huge legacy at Ferrari, winning five of his seven F1 world championships the Italian team.

His son was selected for testing alongside Briton Callum Iloft, who will also test for Alfa Romeo in Spain on May 14-15.

"Mick and Callum are drivers on the way up," Ferrari team boss Mattia Binotto said. "I believe that driving in an official setting such as the tests in Bahrain and Barcelona can be very useful at this stage of their careers."





# Of Ashwin, Buttler and the spirit of 'Mankading'

**NEW DELHI, MAR 26 (PTI):** Jos Buttler has now been 'Mankaded' twice in his senior competitive career while Ravichandran Ashwin has hit the 'Bull's Eye' in his second attempt after an aborted one seven years back.

The two protagonists in the latest episode of 'Mankading and the ensuing Spirit of Cricket debate', have been there and done that.

On February 21, 2012 during a Commonwealth Bank series game against Sri Lanka in Brisbane, Ashwin had 'Mankaded' non-striker Lahiru Thirimanne for backing up too far.

However, seniormost player Sachin Tendulkar was seen having a word with stand-in captain Virender Sehwag, who then withdrew the appeal against Thirimanne.

Ashwin was a junior player back then but believed that he was well within his rights to dismiss Thirimanne but seniors in the team thought otherwise.

That his stand has remained the same was evident on Monday night when he 'Mankaded' Buttler at a critical stage of a high-stakes IPL encounter.

As far as Buttler is concerned, he also has not deviated from his stand that a bowler should warn a non-striker batsman before running him out on delivery stride, something that is not there in current rules.

And Sachithra Senanayake, an



out-of-favour Sri Lankan off-spinner did warn Buttler on June 3, 2014 during an ODI at the Edgbaston ground before 'Mankading' him. England's then captain Alastair Cook and coach Peter Moores had criticised Sri Lanka for not adhering to the 'spirit of the game' while Angelo Mathews had backed his player.

The 'spirit of cricket' has always been a grey area when it comes to 'Mankading'. Kapil Dev

was lambasted after carrying out the act against Peter Kirsten in an ODI at Port Elizabeth on December 3, 1992.

Kapil had warned Kirsten senior (elder step brother of former India coach Gary) before whipping the bails at the non-striker's end after loading up.

A furious Kirsten left the field and it didn't go down well with then skipper Kepler Wessels.

Just after the incident, while

taking the second run, Wessels dangled his bat in such a manner that it hit Kapil on his shin bone and he looked in pain.

With no match referees in those days, Wessels went scot-free despite TV replays. Those were the days when Doordarshan used to borrow feed from the host country's broadcaster and the matter was never taken up officially.

However, one player, who might empathise with Ashwin is

former India and Railways left-arm spinner Murali Kartik, who had not once but twice 'Mankaded' batsmen in domestic matches.

Once, playing for Surrey, during the 2012 English county season, he had 'Mankaded' Somerset batsman Alex Barrow, which led to him being booed by the home spectators at the Taunton ground.

The very next year, December 2013, things turned ugly when Kartik, during a Ranji match, dis-

missed Bengal batsman Sandipan Das in a similar fashion having warned him earlier.

An irate Bengal team, led by their senior pacer Ashok Dinda, hurled the choicest of abuses at him and even refused to shake hands at the end of the game.

During the same month, Bengal and Railways met again in the quarterfinals at the Eden Gardens and Kartik was booed time and again.

But 32 years ago, during a 1987 World Cup game in Lahore, great West Indies fast bowler Courtney Walsh thrice warned No.11 batsman Saleem Jaffer, who was constantly backing up too far.

However, Walsh didn't run him out and it allowed Abdul Qadir to hit a six and win the game for Pakistan.

Walsh was then presented with a special medal by erstwhile Pakistan Zia ul Haq for showing 'sportsman spirit'.

The debate continues as some like legendary Sunil Gavaskar find it disgusting that one of India's most iconic cricketer Vinoo Mankad's is attached to this controversial dismissal. Mankad was the first to do it back in 1947 during a tour of Australia.

"It was Bill Brown who got out, so why is it called Mankading and not Browning," Gavaskar has time and again stated.

Certainly, the debate not going to end very soon.

## Glad that I don't have to bowl to Russell: Ferguson



**KOLKATA, MAR 26 (PTI):** Watching teammate Andre Russell bulldozing Sunrisers Hyderabad bowlers was a breathtaking experience for KKR pace spearhead Lockie Ferguson, who is happy that he does not have to bowl to the West Indian this IPL.

The Jamaican single-handedly won the match for Kolkata Knight Riders with his unbeaten 49 off 19 balls in their opening match.

"It's one of those I've never seen anything like that personally. That was unbelievable. I'm pretty excited he's not on my side, I don't have to bowl to him," the New Zealand quick told reporters on the eve of their match against Kings XI Punjab.

The Punjab outfit has explosive Chris Gayle in its ranks but Ferguson said they are prepared to tackle the Jamaican.

"Chris (Gayle) is in some pretty fine touch at the moment. He really batted well last night. It's nice to watch him. Perhaps there are some areas we can look at attacking him," he said of Gayle who starred with a 47-ball 79 to fashion Kings XI Punjab's 14-run win against Rajasthan Royals.

"It's important to stick to your plan and back yourself because in T20, if you keep working on your strengths then

definitely it will come off better." KKR have the reputation of being a spin-oriented attack as Ferguson said it's exciting time to be part of the bowling unit.

"To have the spin attack we have, and with PK (Prasidh Krishna) swinging the ball and being very good at the death, so by no means I think I'm leading. We all do our part. Andre Russell also got the wickets." Having added some more pace to his bowling, Ferguson is hoping to make the most of the IPL experience, ahead of the World Cup.

"It's high pressure in IPL. It's one of the biggest competitions in the world, playing in front of big crowds, against the best players in the world. Of course all these experiences you're gaining, playing in the IPL is going to help you going forward.

"Obviously there's a big World Cup in a few months but at this stage, I'm focusing on KKR and trying to assist them, get some more wins. I'm very much a game-by-game kind of focus guy. So I'm looking forward to tomorrow night."

Giving an update on Sunil Narine's finger injury, he said the Trinidad spinner looked fine at practice and hoped that he's part of the XI Wednesday.

## Ashwin's actions speak for him: RR coach Upton lashes out

**JAIPUR, MAR 26 (PTI):** A livid Rajasthan Royals coach Paddy Upton said Ravichandran Ashwin's 'Mankading' of Jos Buttler in an IPL clash here is a "representation" of the kind of person that the senior India spinner is.

In a first in 12 editions of the IPL, Kings XI Punjab captain Ashwin ran out a rampaging Buttler, who was at the non-striker's end, on his delivery stride in the 13th over, an action popularly known as 'Mankading'. TV replays showed that Ashwin had waited to let Buttler move out of the crease before removing the bails.

While Ashwin was well within his rights as per ICC's rule 41.16, according to which even a warning to the batsman is not necessary, the incident has sparked a fresh debate on 'Spirit of Cricket'.

"I think R Ashwin's action tonight speak for him and represent him when I looked up to the eyes of his teammates," a livid Upton said at the end of the match.

Incidentally, Upton was the mental conditioning coach of the World Cup-winning 2011 side of which Ashwin was also a part.

An angry Upton also had an animated interaction with Ashwin

during the customary handshake at the end of the match.

"I will leave it up to the IPL fans to decide whether that's the kind of thing they want to see and we will leave it up to the cricket world to judge R Ashwin's actions tonight.

"For us we were certainly there to play cricket, entertain the fans and be good role models for people who love the game," Upton said.

The South African said he was proud that his players maintained composure and upheld the dignity of the great sport.

"I thought players

were really focussed and were able to reset themselves after that run-out. Losing four wickets in two overs was where the game slipped away.

"I am very happy for the way the players reacted and responded to that situation, conscious decision was to hold our heads high and maintain our dignity as a team," the South African said.

When told that Ashwin was within his rights to run Buttler out as per laws of the game, Upton said that legality and spirit of the game are two separate issues for him.

"I would still like to

go and have a close look at the legality of it. But for us, the reality is Ashwin appealed and umpire gave it out, we need to deal with it.

"Legality is a separate issue and a lot of teams will like to have a close look at that issue. I would like to hope that rest of the IPL continues in the spirit that we are all here for this beautiful game, he signed off.

Despite losing the match Upton drew some positives from the game.

"Jos Buttler was amazing while he was batting and for a lot of the game we batted like we wanted and really set ourselves up for victory," he said.

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## Where history meets politics over coffee

**SALONI BHATIA**

**ALLAHABAD, MAR 26 (PTI):** This is where Jawaharlal Nehru and V P Singh dropped by, where a young Amitabh Bachchan rode up on his cycle for conversation and maybe some coffee. Six decades later, history still meets politics everyday at the Indian Coffee House where debate brews with every event on the news horizon.

With its arched facade and high ceiling, it looks more like a church than a coffee house at first glance. Inside, however, the conversation flows over endless sips of coffee with old-timers saying this is the one place in these polarised times where those with opposing views can speak freely.

If elections are the flavour of the season, then so is it in this coffee house that dates back to 1957 and still attracts scores of customers who sit for hours over endless sips of steaming coffee and debate over politics.

With election frenzy on a steady rise, the Indian Coffee House is abuzz with discussions on the Samajwadi Party-Bahujan Samaj Party alliance in Uttar Pradesh, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra's foray into active politics and speculation on who will form the next government.

Located in upscale Civil Lines, often referred to as the heart of a city that has always been fiercely political, it is a "safe place" where views can be expressed freely, say regular patrons.

The guests say their favourite haunt sets the tone for political discourse in the city.

"Yahan logon mein matbhed ho sakta hai, manbhed nahi (There can be difference of opinion but it's not something that people take to heart)," said



Ashok Yadav, who retired from the Uttar Pradesh Power Corporation.

"The coffee house has, over the years, come to define the political discourse of Allahabad, which is more politically evolved than other cities. Even a rickshaw puller here will have an opinion on the current political scenario," he added.

The Indian Coffee House retains its charm, one that stands out in the times of air-conditioned, swish cafes.

The debates may be contemporary but the place stays resolutely old world -- in terms of its pricing, its menu, its waiters' uniforms and its interiors. Tea is still off the menu. A cup of coffee with milk is priced at an affordable Rs 26, add cream and it goes up to Rs 37, a fraction of what a cappuccino costs in a regular cafe. Food is cheap too, with

vegetable sandwiches at Rs 43 and egg sandwiches at Rs 50.

According to old-timers, even former prime ministers and Allahabadis' Jawaharlal Nehru and V P Singh came to the iconic place for coffee in the era gone by.

Local lore has it that Allahabad boy Amitabh Bachchan would come on his bicycle in the days before he became a superstar, said the manager P R Panda.

This coffee house attracts people from all sections of society, from lawyers and journalists to businessmen.

Avdhesh Dwivedi has been coming to the coffee house for 45 years. A Congress worker till 1987, he left the party after he felt that it was not raising the issue of corruption.

"Earlier, you could have discussions here without getting offended by oth-

ers' views. But now people get agitated if they find that their views are being opposed," said Dwivedi, quickly adding that it has not stopped anyone from airing their views.

Visitors say the place is noisy on most day with people sitting for hours over their coffee and sandwiches.

Sometimes, the debates slip into cantankerous arguments, and maybe more.

"There are impassioned discussions and arguments among people but we have never seen them getting violent. Though there were a few instances where they came close to picking up chairs while trying to make a point," said Panda.

H S Tripathi, who retired from the Allahabad High Court, says the current focus is on the SP-BSP alliance in the state and how it could dent the BJP's vote share.

"After Priyanka Gandhi Vadra made a formal political debut, many Congress supporters here were enthused, saying it would revive the party's fortunes. BJP supporters here are also vociferous in their praise for Modi who say he has ensured that the city became cleaner and developed infrastructure," he added.

He said the Kumbh Mela, which was one of the cleanest the city has seen, is also highlighted as an achievement of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Another visitor to the place, however, seemed less enthusiastic about the political culture of the coffee house.

"This is a place for those who are aspiring to be politicians. People who are in the opposition usually come here and criticise those in power," the guest said.



# China's Xi meets top EU leaders to strengthen ties

**PARIS, MAR 26 (AFP):** The leaders of China, France, Germany and the EU were set to meet in Paris on Tuesday for "unprecedented" talks on how to improve ties, despite growing jitters over Beijing's massive investments in Europe.

It comes ahead of an EU-China summit in Brussels next month and a day after Chinese President Xi Jinping signed an array of deals with France including a huge aircraft contract.

At a glitzy state dinner on Monday evening French President Emmanuel Macron said he hoped to build a "new global governance" with China and would discuss this at the "unprecedented meeting with the German chancellor and the president of the European Commission".

"This is an important gesture that we are making now. It is testament to your deep attachment to China's cooperation with Europe... and my desire to build a strong Europe," he told Xi.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel and EU Commission chief Jean-



Claude Juncker will join Xi and Macron at the Elysee Palace to explore "points of convergence" between the two trading giants.

On Monday China and France inked a dozen deals on nuclear power, cultural exchanges and clean energy, while Beijing also committed to buy 290 Airbus A320s and 10 A350 airliners from Europe's Airbus conglomerate.

The order, originally for 184 A320s for 13 Chinese airlines, was first announced during Macron's state visit to China in January 2018.

All of the deals, including one on French exports to China of frozen chicken, amount to a total of some 40 billion.

Xi's visit poses a particular challenge for Macron, who wants to deepen EU ties with China while pushing back

against Beijing's growing global clout.

Speaking at the Elysee Palace on Monday following talks with Xi, Macron called for a "strong Europe-China partnership", adding that this must be based on "strong multilateralism" and "fair and balanced" trade.

Meanwhile Xi stressed that "a united and prosperous Europe fits in with our vision of a

multipolar world".

"China will always back European integration and its development," he added in a statement to the press.

Around 200 guests including the French actor Alain Delon, who is widely known in China, French electronic music composer Jean-Michel Jarre and Chinese actress Gong Li attended the state dinner on Monday.

## Syria force calls for international court to try IS jihadists

**AIN ISSA (SYRIA), MAR 25 (AFP):** US-backed forces in Syria Monday called for the establishment of an international court in the country to try suspected Islamic State group jihadists.

The announcement came two days after the jihadist group's "caliphate" was declared defeated. "We call on the international community to establish a special international tribunal in northeast Syria to prosecute terrorists," the Syrian Democratic Forces said in a statement.

In this way, "trials can be conducted fairly and in accordance with international law and human rights covenants and charters", it said.

Syria's Kurds have previously warned that despite the demise of the IS proto-state, the thou-

sands of foreign jihadists they have detained are a time-bomb the world urgently needs to defuse.

According to the SDF, more than 5,000 jihadists -- Syrian and foreign -- have been captured since January.

The Kurdish administration in northeastern Syria has warned it does not have capacity to detain so many people.

But the home countries of suspected IS members are reluctant to take them back, due to potential security risks and the likely public backlash.

"The Kurdish administration in northeast Syria has appealed to the international community to shoulder its responsibilities towards members of the terrorist organisation detained by Kurdish security forces,"

read Monday's statement. "But unfortunately there was no response," it said.

It called on the international community, particularly countries that have nationals detained, to support the establishment of an international tribunal, calling for legal and logistical cooperation and coordination.

In the past, two international tribunals were created by the international community: the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), which tried genocide perpetrators in the African country, and the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, which tried those accused of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes in wars that tore apart the Balkans in the 1990s.

## Golfers keeping a close eye on IPL

**GURGAON, MAR 26 (PTI):** Golfers from across the world who have gathered here for the Hero Indian Open, starting Thursday, plan to catch their favourites IPL teams in action.

Be it India's Shiv Kapur or South African Brandon Stone, the golfers are keeping a close eye on the ongoing tournament.

Although the focus is solely on winning the Hero Indian Open title, Shiv Kapur, a Delhi Capitals fan, is also keenly following the IPL matches.

"I loved a touch of cricket when we were in New Zealand and I played the event, which was a unique format with Stephen Fleming. We are playing the Pro-Am together on Wednesday," said Kapur.

Scottish Open winner Stone, a die-hard cricket follower, not just wants to watch an IPL match on Saturday in New Delhi but is also determined to turn his Austrian friend and fellow European

Tour player Bernd Wiesberger into a cricket fan.

"I've got a few mates playing here for the Delhi Capitals in Kagiso Rabada and Chris Morris who have promised me tickets for the matches against Chennai Super Kings today and Kolkata Knight Riders on Saturday," the 25-year-old from Rustenberg said.

"I'll probably take Bernd along with me for the KKR game, and hopefully by the time that's done, he will have some idea about cricket," he added.

Stone, who shot a stunning 10-under 60 enroute to his Scottish Open win last year, said there would be South African connection also in the form of Jacques Kallis.

"Also Jacques Kallis will be there as KKR coach so there's another South African connection for me," he said.

The USD 1.75m Hero Indian Open will feature 156 players from 30 at

the DLF Golf and Country Club here.

Speaking at a press meet along with Wiesberger and England's Aaron Rai, Stone said watching an IPL game in India had been on his list of things to do ever since he had watched the tournament when it was played in South Africa in 2009.

"That was a brilliant tournament and I've always wanted to see an IPL game in India ever since. I'm definitely going to be at the Saturday game, hopefully with a few birdies under my belt and sitting comfortably in the tournament."

Wiesberger, who doesn't have much idea about cricket, said while he preferred skiing, he would backing the better team to win.

"I have no idea which one that will be though," he said, but Stone added: "By the time we're done, he (Wiesberger) will hopefully have become a Delhi Capitals fan."

## UK lawmakers seize Brexit agenda in bid to break deadlock



**LONDON, MAR 26 (AP):** British lawmakers seized a measure of control over the stalled Brexit process from Prime Minister Theresa May's foundering government Monday, setting up a series of votes that could dramatically alter the course of the UK's departure from the European Union.

The move came after May conceded that Parliament would defeat her twice-rejected divorce deal with the EU again if she put it to a third vote.

With Brexit delayed and the new departure date up in the air, the House of Commons voted to give itself temporary control of the parliamentary timetable starting on Wednesday so lawmakers can vote on alternatives to May's withdrawal deal. The government usually controls the scheduling of votes in Parliament.

Lawmakers who backed Monday's motion, which passed 329-302, hope the planned "indicative votes" will narrow the options down to one

that can secure majority support. Possible options include a "soft Brexit" that maintains close economic ties with the EU or scrapping Britain's departure altogether.

Three government ministers quit their posts so they could back the motion. Richard Harrington, who resigned as a junior business minister, accused the government of "playing roulette with the lives and livelihoods of the vast majority of people in this country" by failing to resolve Britain's Brexit impasse.

The government said it was disappointed by the vote, claiming it "upends the balance between our democratic institutions and sets a dangerous, unpredictable precedent for the future." But it also conceded that the new votes might be a way to break the months-long Brexit gridlock. May said she would "engage constructively" with the results of the process, though she said she was skeptical that it would produce a decisive result.

The move raises the chances that Britain will tack toward a softer Brexit, and is likely to be welcomed by the EU. Guy Verhofstadt, the European Parliament's Brexit coordinator, tweet that it was an "opportunity to build a cross-party cooperation leading to an enhanced political declaration & a closer future relationship!" Earlier in the day, May acknowledged, "with great regret," that her deal still lacked "sufficient support" to be approved as of Monday.

She said she hoped to hold a third vote on the agreement later this week and was working to build support for the deal, which sets out the terms of withdrawing from the EU and the outline of future relations with the bloc.

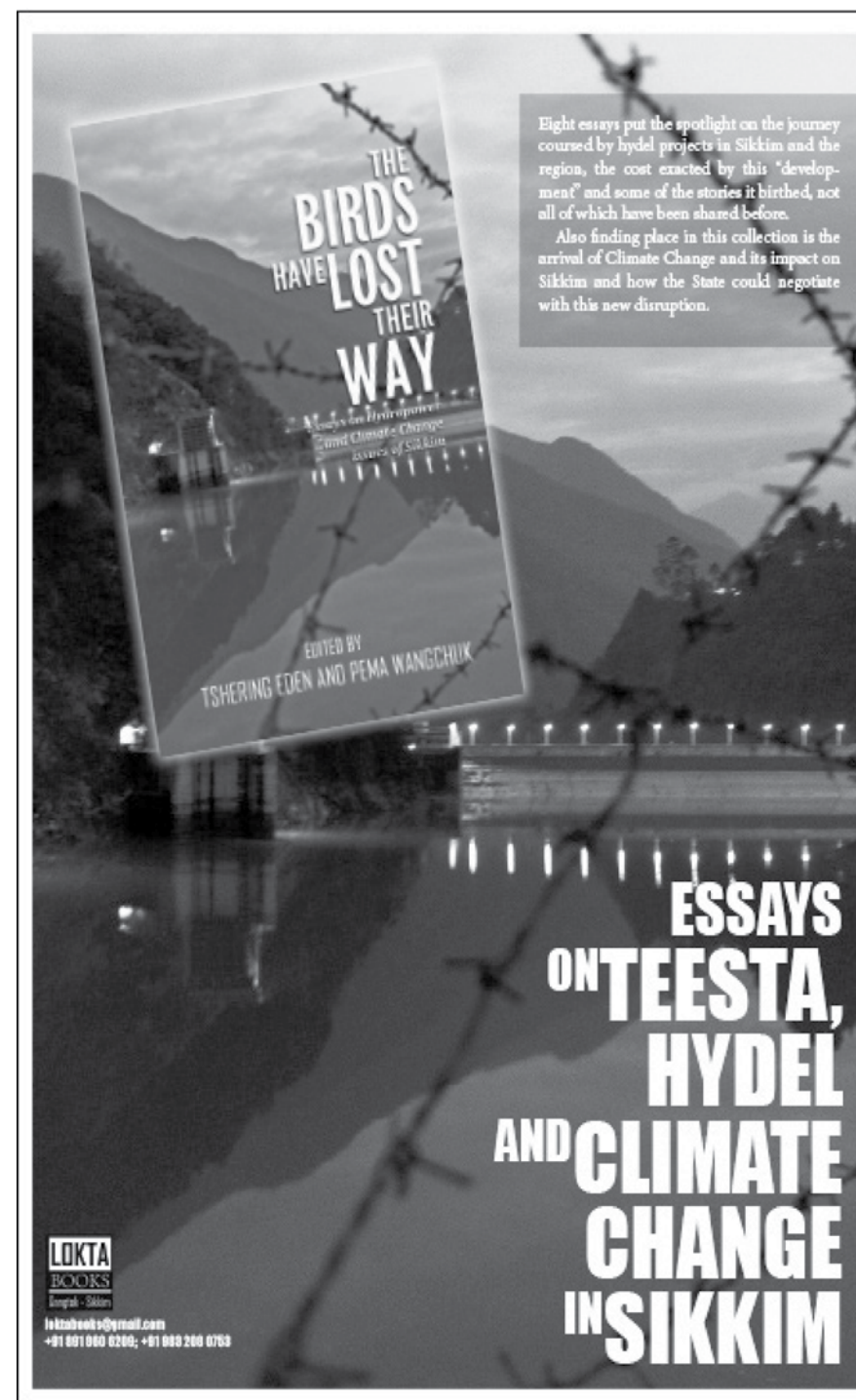
May warned opponents that continuing to reject the deal could lead to a "slow Brexit" that postpones the country's departure indefinitely.

With the March 29 Brexit day set almost

two years ago days away and the withdrawal agreement lacking Parliament's approval, European leaders agreed to a postponement last week to avoid a chaotic cliff-edge departure that would be disruptive for the world's biggest trading bloc and deeply damaging for Britain.

However, the EU granted a shorter delay than May sought. It said if Parliament approves the proposed divorce deal, the U.K. would leave the EU on May 22. If not, the government has until April 12 to tell the 27 remaining EU countries what it plans to do - leave without a deal, cancel Brexit or chart a path to a new option.

In agreeing to the postponement, European leaders hoped Britain's deadlocked politicians would find a solution to the crisis. But the EU isn't counting on it. The European Commission said Monday it had completed planning for a no-deal Brexit, calling that outcome "increasingly likely."







**QUEEN OF COLOR-BLOCKING!** The “Girls” singer, Rita Ora rocks a bright ensemble while out on a press day in NYC.

### Dev Patel gets flak for taking up Indian roles



**NEW YORK, MAR 26 (PTI):** British-Indian actor Dev Patel has revealed he is tired of being criticised for “stealing” roles from “real” Indian actors.

The 28-year-old actor, who was born in London to parents from Gujarat, India, said he is trying to understand himself better by connecting to his heritage.

“I get flak sometimes because people will say, ‘Why aren’t they giving these roles

to a real Indian?’ I wonder, What does that even mean? The only way I can converse with my grandparents is in Gujarati. Does that make me real enough? Or am I only allowed to witness the moments of prejudice and racism going through airports? Is that the only bit that I’m allowed of the culture?”

“The truth is I’m trying to understand myself better and my heritage, to figure

things out, in the movie choices I make. That’s been the greatest thing for me in going to India repeatedly,” Patel told San Francisco Chronicle.

The “Lion” star previously confessed he “reconnected” with his Indian roots when he starred in the Oscar-winning “Slumdog Millionaire”. In 2016, he later said that he could never really fit in as the locals “could smell the foreigner on me”.

## The LOL Reason Vicky Kaushal Spent Shah Rukh Khan’s Diwali Party ‘Hiding In A Corner’

Vicky Kaushal recently shared his experience of attending Shah Rukh Khan’s Diwali party for the first time in a chat show, reported India Today. Just that Vicky didn’t know it was a Diwali bash. Vicky revealed it was the first time that he was going to a party hosted by the 53-year-old megastar and that he couldn’t correctly judge Shah Rukh’s invitation: “So, Shah Rukh sir called me and said: ‘It was my birthday a few days ago. It’s just a chill dinner, so, come with your friends.’ It was my first time at Mannat and I was so happy that it was a chill get-together for his birthday.” So, he wears his denims to the party only to realise that stars the other guests arrived dressed in their traditional best.

“So, I go in my denims and T-shirt and shirt over it, just casual. I enter and see Kareena Kapoor Khan, Malaika Arora, everyone in like heavy Indian,” he added. Following this, Vicky Kausha spent the rest of the night “hanging out in one corner” and joining him on Team under-dressed were Tapsee Pannu and Rajkumar Rao. “Me, Tapsee, Rajkumar Rao... three-four of us were prepared for a birthday casual scene till we realised that we were so off. We were hanging out in one corner behind the curtain,” said Vicky and added: “I was so embarrassed because I was the first of that lot to enter.”

Meanwhile, Karan Johar, who is one of Bollywood’s biggest fashion police, spotted Vicky’s outfit for the night and had something to say: “Karan meets me and he’s like, ‘Hi, you.’ Then he just looks

at me and says, ‘We need to talk.’”

Shah Rukh Khan’s Diwali party last year was also attended by the likes of Alia Bhatt, Kajol, Katrina Kaif, Sidharth

Looks like Aamir Khan too did not get the dress code memo.

Vicky Kaushal was last seen in the hugely successful film Uri: The Surgical



Malhotra, Kiara Advani, Shraddha Kapoor, Jacqueline Fernandez and others.

Strike and recently won the Filmfare Best Supporting Actor Award for Sanju.



### Ed Sheeran was bullied for his ginger hair



**LONDON, MAR 26 (PTI):** Ed Sheeran has revealed that he was picked upon by his classmates for his “quirky” looks.

The 28-year-old singer said life in school was tough for him as he was “instantly ripped into” for being different.

“I hated primary school with a passion; I cried every day. I’m ginger so I was instantly ripped into from the day I started school - ginger, had a stutter, and wore huge glasses... just a bit odd.

“But then as I got older I kind of loved it, I’ve always kind of looked a bit quirky. I never had much luck with girls and stuff like that, it was always I kind of looked a bit weird,” Sheeran said in an interview with DJ

Nihal and rapper Dave.

The “Shape of You” hitmaker said things changed for the better when he found music in high school.

“I got to high school, started playing guitar and joined a band. Music is one of those things that can give you confidence. You’re suddenly like ‘wow, I can actually do something well’. Before I picked up a guitar I did nothing.

“I went to a primary school that was quite sporty and I couldn’t play sport. That was how you were cool - if you were good at football you were cool and I wasn’t good at football. But then when I joined high school it was such a melting pot of all different things and I started playing the guitar and suddenly started fitting in,” he said.

### Mandy Moore receives star on Hollywood Walk of Fame

Los Angeles, Mar 26 (PTI): Actor Mandy Moore was honoured with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

The 34-year-old actor received the star in the presence of her “This Is Us” castmates and her “A Walk to Remember” co-star, Shane West on Monday.

“This is Us” creator, Dan Fogelman, shared a few sweet words about Moore, following which West took to the podium and surprised her with a picture of the two of them when they wrapped their beloved 2002 film. Director Adam Shankman was also present.

Calling the film “wonderful experience”, West said the Nicholas Sparks adaptation gave him a “chance to fall for this fantastic woman”. “Mandy, you are an absolute gem, your smile is absolutely ridiculous - seriously, it’s ridiculous, and it lights up the room when you walk in - your energy is irresistible, and your heart is second to none. I couldn’t be more proud of you, I couldn’t be more happy for you. Love ya,” he said in the address.

Moore later shared some photographs with West from the ceremony on Twitter.

“Stars have always sort of been our thing. Thankful to @shanewest for his kind words on this very special day, one which I will never forget. It was a walk (of fame) to remember,” she captioned the post.

From her “This Is Us” family, Milo Ventimiglia, Sterling K Brown, Justin Hartley, Chrissy Metz and Susan Kelechi Watson were present.

THE DAY AHEAD

**ARIES:** Raindrops on roses and whiskers on kittens? How about sparkleponies and unicorns while you’re at it, Aries? Don’t laugh: Starting today, romantic Venus sails into Pisces and your quixotic twelfth house until April 20. You don’t have to believe in magic to accept that fairy tales can come true. Single Rams should double down on their dating efforts over the coming four weeks: A true love connection could materialize out of thin air.

**TAURUS:** Casual socializing with no strings attached can lead to all sorts of serendipitous meetings over the next four weeks! With your ruling star, charismatic Venus, swooping into Pisces and electrifying your collaborative zone until April 20, friendly hangouts could lead to auspicious business partnerships or, for single Bulls, love connections. But don’t wait for them to fall into your lap.

**GEMINI:** There’s more than one way to get ahead at work, Gem, and today’s arrival of magnetic Venus to your career corner for four weeks will show you a trick or two. It helps to envision what you want to accomplish

so you’ll know when you’ve arrived. You COULD burn the midnight oil and volunteer for every dull project that management offers up.

**CANCER:** Expand your reach, Cancer. The borders are open on Saturday, thanks to a cooperative angle between the moon and no-limits Neptune. Instead of targeting the same crowd, mingle in different circles both online and in real time. If you’re on a dating app, try searching a few miles further from base. Seeking work or a new home?

**LEO:** Does something just feel “off”—or so very “on”? This Saturday, your intuition gets a razor-sharp reboot from the moon and Neptune. Don’t ignore that little voice in your head, whether it’s talking to you in a whisper or a scream. You owe it to yourself to investigate further. Hey Leo, you might just waltz into the opportunity of a lifetime. Curiosity may have killed the cat, but the Lion can handle the truth.

**LIBRA:** Having trouble sticking to your routines, Libra? Perhaps they’ve become too punishing or impractical for your current

lifestyle. You don’t have to give up on your fitness goals just because you no longer have time for your favorite 90-minute class. Download an app with guided at-home yoga classes or effective 15-minute HIIT workouts. Pin some healthy recipe inspo while you’re at it.

**VIRGO:** Saturday’s alignment of the moon and enchanting Neptune blesses you with the gift of gab. Time to seal those deals, Virgo! You’ll have people eating out of the palm of your hand. While you want to present everything in the most favorable light, don’t get carried away with poetic license. Eventually people will find out if you’ve embellished the truth, and that can weaken their faith in you.

**SCORPIO:** Saturday’s moon-Neptune formation punches your glamour card. Have fun being fashion-forward, even if you’re just adding a dramatic accessory. If you’re ready to freshen things up for spring, book the salon appointments and go comb the racks. You’ll probably want to wait until Mercury turns direct on March 28 to make any lasting changes, but in the meanwhile, here’s an idea: Begin by shopping in your own closet with the aid of a

professional stylist!

**SAGITTARIUS:** Ruby slippers? Check. Saturday could find even the most peripatetic Archer longing for a sense of home. Putting down roots doesn’t mean giving up your beloved nomadic ways. As Sagittarius Joan Didion wrote, “You have to pick the places you don’t walk away from.” A stable base can be a powerful launching pad for your worldly explorations. This weekend, bring a little magic back to your nest, whether you’re sprucing up the space with sacred touches or saving potential homes on Zillow!

**CAPRICORN:** Has your mojo been in slomo—or a no-show? Get back in the game, Cap, whether that means redoubling your dating efforts or paying more attention to your beloved bae. Love planet Venus struts into sensual Pisces and your expressive third house until April 20, turning up the heat on your already impressive charisma. A little lighthearted flirting can be fun—IF it’s 100 percent innocent. (If not, you need to examine your motives here.) Single Capricorns could meet a worthy candidate through a mutual friend or at a cul-

tural event!

**AQUARIUS:** Your famous minimalist Aquarius style might get an upgrade over the next four weeks as lush and luxurious Venus cruises through your second house of money and values. It’s not like you’re going to become an online shopping addict or anything, but chances are you WILL give in to temptation—on more than one occasion! There’s nothing wrong with treating yourself, Aquarius, especially if you’ve been living with a tightened belt for a while. Just ask: Does this bring me true happiness, or am I trying to keep up with the Joneses?

**PISCES:** Today, charming Venus sets up camp in your sign until April 20, increasing the romance factor in your life AND encouraging you to stand up for yourself. The diplomatic planet helps you ask for what you need and establish healthy boundaries with overly needy people. Single? You’ll see clearly how many fish there are in the sea—yours for the catching (and releasing, if you so choose). Attached? Whatever you do together, infuse it with more affection. Your partner WILL feel the love.