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# SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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## BCCI funded cricket stadium coming up at Rangpo



**SAGAR CHETTRI**  
**GANGTOK, 04 MAY:**

Sikkim will soon have its own cricket stadium at Rangpo Mining ground in East Sikkim. The first phase of the work is already going on at Mining ground. The Board of Control for Cricket in India [BCCI] has given the work to a Lucknow-based company

after holding the tender process at Mumbai. Sikkim Cricket Association [SCA] has been providing all possible support in the construction work.

Sikkim Cricket Association general secretary, Sonam Palden Bhutia stated that the BCCI has already released the fund of Rs 1.27 crore for the first phase of the project.

He stated that the entire project of the cricket stadium will be taken up in three different phases.

Construction of seven pitches, outfield and drainage system of the ground will be taken up in the first phase at the cost of Rs 1.27 crore, said Mr Bhutia. The second phase will have fabricated pavilions and the final phase

will have a cricket academy, swimming pool and gym facilities, he added.

Mr Bhutia stated that the company working in the project has vast experience and has already been working in different parts of the country and even outside, and has assured to complete the first phase within seven months.

He informed that construction of the cricket

pitch has also been started and soil from Assam has been finalised for the pitch. He further informed that the work has been going under the supervision of BCCI East Zone curator, Ashish Bhowmick and added that the SCA is in the constant touch with the BCCI.

"Once the first phase is completed and BCCI approves the pitch then we will be able to bring at least a few cricket matches of this season in the State to further promote cricket in the State and to motivate young cricketers," Mr Bhutia said. He added that after getting the ground the association will request the BCCI to hold a few matches in Sikkim.

"We are highly committed to start cricket matches in the State to give home crowd to our players and this will help in the growth of our players and also give SCA some experience in hosting matches which will help in the growth of the association as well," he expressed.

## CS chairs SDMA meet for monsoon preparedness



**GANGTOK, 04 MAY**

**(IPR):** Chief Secretary AK Shrivastava chaired a monsoon preparedness meeting today headed by Chairperson, Sikkim State Disaster Management Authority (SSDMA), Prof VK Sharma, Special Secretary, LRD-MD, Rinzing Chewang, and Addl, Director/LRD-MD, GC Khanal.

Heads and representatives of state government departments, armed forces, paramilitary forces, Government of India agencies and NGOs were in attendance for the preparedness meeting.

The Chief Secretary in his address stated that Sikkim is placed strategically in the geographical map of the country. Being blessed with rich natural biodiversity, the state is also prone to natural hazards like heavy monsoons and also falls on a critical seismic zone, and

hence, requires alertness from all the disaster relief related departments and organizations. The Chief Secretary applauded that despite these hardships, the concerned officials have been working impressively towards dealing with disasters effectively and encouraged all to continue with their vigilance. He added that we all have to maintain and develop concrete documentation for active and correct monitoring and implementation for disaster relief plans and modules and further stated that Sikkim is working zealously towards becoming a model state in disaster reduction and solicited co-operation and participation from all towards achieving this distinction. Chairman SSDMA-Prof VK Sharma while addressing the officials reiterated the importance of meeting

ings related to monsoon preparedness and mentioned that Sikkim stands as a splendid example of mainstreaming disaster risk reduction in the country. He said that progressive efforts have put Sikkim on the road towards becoming a Model State in disaster risk reduction. Prof Sharma shared that the preparedness meeting was an enlightening one and expressed positivity that although natural adversities cannot be averted, the state is fully prepared to deal with any disaster head on.

The meeting was primarily held to discuss and deliberate upon the problems and the preparations in place to tackle possible calamities arising in the state due to the oncoming monsoons. The meeting also focused on the various actions taken on the deliberations

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## North DM declares first Saturday as Cleanliness Drive Day

**MANGAN, 04 MAY (IPR):**

In order to keep all office complexes clean, District Magistrate, North, Raj Yadav, has declared the first Saturday of every month as "Cleanliness Drive Day". Mr Yadav has asked all offices located in different parts of the district to undertake cleanliness drive on their premises.

In compliance with the direction of the DM, all employees have undertaken cleanliness drive in their respective offices by cleaning trash and, old and unwanted things from government office premises from today.

All Sub-Divisional Magistrates (SDM), Block Development Officers (BDO) and Head of Offices of the district are requested to upload photographs of cleanliness drive activities undertaken by them in their respective offices on DAC WhatsApp Group.

This initiative aims to create massive public awareness and to ensure participation for cleaning government offices, schools, hospitals, work places, streets, roads and markets.



**AM FAN, WILL PAINT:**

A T20 fan gets face-painted before he heads for the Old Guards' Ground where the BCCI has appointed a VIVO IPL Fan Park for the weekend to give IPL fans in Sikkim the stadium experience.

## Heavy rainfall submerges Mantam bridge

**WANGCHUK BHUTIA**  
**MANGAN, 04 MAY:**

Direct vehicular access from Mantam to Tingvong and Lingzya in Upper Dzongu that fall on the opposite bank of Rongyong Chu has been disrupted as the bridge over the Mantam lake was submerged last night following continuous rainfall. The pedestrian bridge, however, is still in service and vehicles stranded on the Tingvong side available to ferry passengers.

The two Gram Panchayat Units of Upper



Dzongu, Tingvong and Sakyong Pentok have been affected. However, it is informed that sufficient food stock of 600

quintal rice has already been stored at Namprik food warehouse, Upper Dzongu which shall be sufficient till Dec 2019.

## In the land of Birsa, tribals to boycott polls on May 6

**NAMITA TEWARI**

**KHUNTI (JHARKHAND), MAY 4 (PTI):** A tribal woman dances in frenzy while a man intones mantras in what seems like an age-old ritual to a pagan god, but then this is a 'Pathalgadi' area and she is leading the villagers in worshipping a stone plaque inscribed with tenets governing their everyday lives.

The high notes of electioneering don't strike a chord in Jharkhand's Maoist strongholds where a huge stone plaque, or 'Pathalgadi', declares at the village entrance itself that residents are governed by their own rules and all outsiders are banned, regardless of whether they are politicians or just casual visitors. Unlike the rest of the country,

villages, particularly under Pathalgadi, are governed by a separate set of rules where 'gram sabhas', or village panchayats, reign supreme. There are over 100 Pathalgadi villages in Khunti district, barely 50 km from the state capital Ranchi, where the tribes don't recognise any authority and don't owe allegiance to the Constitution. This is the land of legendary tribal icon Birsa Munda, who waged a fierce battle against the British in the 19th century and is worshipped as god.

Khunti, one of the 14 parliamentary constituencies in Jharkhand that is reserved, is preparing for a clash of two Mundas on May 6 BJP's former chief minister Arjun Munda and Congress' Kalicharan Munda.

But the electoral silence is almost eerie with the tribals saying they will boycott the polls, celebrated as the festival of democracy elsewhere in the country. "Our rights have been seized by (Chief Minister) Raghubar Das. No rights, no votes," proclaimed Maki Tuti, 42, after worshipping the stone plaque at the entrance of village Bhandra, a ritual the villagers follow every Thursday.

Dikus, or outsiders, are strictly forbidden but this correspondent managed to enter the villages through 'Pathalgadi' leaders to talk to the villagers.

With just two days to go before elections on May 6, none of the 11 contenders has reached the interior areas. There is no faith in the govern-

ment or the electoral system but the fact that the villages in Khunti lack even the most basic amenities widens the gulf. "We have no amenities in our village. The government has done nothing for us. We just want peaceful living with no interference," Ratan Tuti, 50, told PTI.

Those younger echo the same disillusionment. Bindi Nag, 27, said her only wish is that the government stops harassing the youth.

The story is the same in village after village. Be it Hashatu or Chami-dih, Siladone or Kumkuma, plaques warning that outsiders are banned and the tribals reject any authority of the state or the Central government are the first thing visitors encounter when they approach village.

The plaques mention Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 or PESA. Questioned on the Pathalgadi villagers' outright rejection of the polls, Khunti MLA and state minister Neelkanth Singh Munda said, "It is no subject."

"There is no question of infringing upon the rights of the villagers. There has been enough development work. The roads are better than Ranchi and that is why you could reach here," he added. He is also the brother of Congress candidate Kalicharan Munda. But the facts state otherwise, said the villagers.

At Kumkuma village, 70-year-old Sheonath Munda said, "No one has reached us." The Khunti Lok Sabha seat

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# Writershop on ODF-S and ODF-Plus

## SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 04 MAY:

A day-long Writershop deliberations on OFD-Plus and ODF-S was undertaken by the Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin) Rural Management & Development Department, Government of Sikkim, at SIRD Karfectar, as per a press release.

The program had ADC (Development) South and West Districts, Block Division Officers (BDOs) from South and West Districts and Swachhgrahis from the two districts participating in the writershop. The writershop was led by Special Secretary, RM&DD cum Mission Director, SBM (G), Anil Raj Rai who highlighted the importance of a structured writershop and reinforced the importance of participatory learning.



ity. The deliberations

successfully guided the stakeholders to present newer IEC ideas, delved into solutions to the existing IEC issues and worked out strategies to move forward in

terms of sustaining the ODF practices in the respective districts.

The program was organized by Rural Management and Development Department and the ground facilitation

done by State IEC Co-ordinator, Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin) Dewaker Basnet representing 24hours Inspired.

The writershop for North and East districts will be facilitated shortly.

## Campaigning ends for phase 5 of Lok Sabha polls



**NEW DELHI, MAY 4 (PTI):** Campaigning ended Saturday evening for elections to 51 Lok Sabha seats in six northern and eastern states besides the Bundelkhand region of Madhya Pradesh in the fifth phase on May 6 with Union ministers Rajnath Singh, Rajyavardhan Rathore, Smriti Irani, Jayant Sinha and Arjun Ram Meghwal and top Congress leaders Sonia and Rahul Gandhi and among those in the fray.

Polling will be held on Monday in 14 seats in Uttar Pradesh, 12 in Rajasthan, seven seats each in West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh, five in Bihar, four in Jharkhand and two seats in Jammu and Kashmir.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi led the BJP's campaigning, holding several rallies. BJP chief Amit Shah, Congress president Rahul Gandhi and a host of Union ministers among others also canvassed for their party candidates in the past few days, undertaking whirlwind tours of constituencies.

In West Bengal, the BJP candidate from Bongaon (SC) seat, Shantanu Thakur, was injured in a road accident. A police van lost control and hit Thakur's vehicle at the front when he was heading towards Kalyani to attend an election rally on the last day of campaigning, police said.

Thakur, his driver and two others who were in the vehicle, were injured, they said. Campaigning in the state during the past couple of days was marred by panic over Cyclone Fani, which caused large scale destruction in neighbouring Odisha, with political parties cancelling their election meetings. Seats

in which elections will be held on Monday are Bongaon(SC), Barrackpur, Howrah, Uluberia, Serampore, Hooghly and Arambagh (SC) where an electorate of 1,16,91,889 will decide the fate of 83 candidates, the Election Commission said.

In Bihar, Modi canvassed in favour of the BJP candidates as also nominees fielded by alliance partners JD(U) and LJP.

He described the ruling NDA in the state as a cohesive three-in-one entity and the opposition weak, loosely knit and helpless against menaces of black money, corruption and threats to national security.

BJP MPs Ajay Nishad and Rajiv Pratap Rudy are seeking re-election from their respective seats of Muzaffarpur and Saran respectively in Bihar.

LJP chief Ram Vilas Paswan, who has announced that he would no longer contest direct elections, has fielded his younger brother and state minister Pashupati Kumar Paras from his pocket borough of Hajipur.

A high-decibel campaign for seven Lok Sabha constituencies in the Bundelkhand region of Madhya Pradesh also ended Saturday.

Polling for Tikamgarh, Damoh, Khajuraho, Satna, Rewa, Hoshangabad and Betul seats, all held by the BJP currently, will take place Monday.

This will be the second phase of polling in Madhya Pradesh, the first phase having been held on April 29.

Union minister Virendra Kumar Khatik is the BJP candidate from Tikamgarh while former Union minister and sit-

ting MP Prahlad Patel is the party's Damoh candidate.

Modi Saturday addressing rallies in Pratnagarh and Basti in Uttar Pradesh and said the SP-BSP alliance partners will be at each other's throats when the results are out on May 23. He also accused the Samajwadi Party of going soft on the Congress, saying the two parties are playing a "big game" against Bahujan Samaj Party chief Mayawati.

The BJP had bagged 12 of the 14 seats in 2014 with Sonia Gandhi winning in Rae Bareilly and Rahul in Amethi.

The other UP seats going to the polls on May 6 are Dhaurahra, Sitapur, Mohanlalganj (SC), Lucknow, Banda, Fatehpur, Kaushambi (SC), Barabanki (SC), Faizabad, Bahraich (SC), Kaiserganj and Gonda.

Union Home Minister Singh is seeking re-election from Lucknow, while his colleague at the Centre Irani is again taking on Rahul in Amethi.

Rajasthan also saw hectic campaigning by the BJP and the Congress over the past week for the 12 seats.

Union ministers Rathore (Jaipur rural) and Meghwal (Bikaner), Congress MLA and Olympian Krishna Poonia (Jaipur rural), Bhanwar Jitendra Singh (Alwar) are some of the contestants in this last phase of polling in the state.

In Jharkhand, among those in the fray is Union minister Jayant Sinha.

In Jammu and Kashmir, Pulwama and Shopian districts are going to polls on May 6 in the third leg of polling in the Anantnag Lok Sabha constituency. Polling will also be held in Ladakh on Monday.

## 'I don't remember', says Akbar to queries from Ramani's counsel

**NEW DELHI, MAY 4 (PTI):** Former Union Minister M J Akbar, who recorded his statement before a Delhi court on Saturday in a defamation case filed by him against journalist Priya Ramani, replied that he does not remember their meeting and other details after he was cross-examined by Ramani's counsel.

Appearing before Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Samar Vishal, Akbar said that his defamation complaint against Ramani, who has accused him of sexual misconduct 20 years ago, was "correct" as his public life has been "adversely affected" and "lifetime's good reputation" damaged by her "offensive words".

Akbar, who was cross examined by senior advocate Rebecca John on several details regarding his meeting with Ramani for a job in Asian Age among others, responded by saying that he does not remember.

John asked him if Ramani had met him in his office in December, 1993, while she was looking for a job in Asian Age, Mumbai and whether he had asked her to meet him at the Oberoi Hotel at Nariman Point.

To both the questions, Akbar answered: "I do not remember".

There were heated exchanges between Akbar and Ramani's counsel during the proceedings in the courtroom where several prominent journalists were present.

Senior advocate Geeta Luthra, appearing

for Akbar, interrupted Ramani's counsel several times demanding the cross examination be conducted in a question-answer format, but was finally asked by the judge to stop.

"This is a defamation case. If she is convicted, she will be going to jail for two years. Let her defend herself properly," the judge said to Luthra.

Akbar, in his statement, said that the allegations made by Ramani had "affected" his reputation "very negatively" and that her "attacks" were "unwarranted, defamatory and malafide".

"In this context I chose to resign from my position as Minister of State since the allegations had been made in my personal capacity," he said.

Describing the calls that he received from his family and friends after Ramani's allegations, he said that they were "profoundly hurt" and "extremely upset" and it was only after hearing his version that they "began to understand the nature of this assault" on his reputation.

"They had questions and I also received calls because these attacks were unwarranted defamatory and malafide. This also obviously affected my public life. Yes indeed it affected my reputation very negatively," Akbar said.

He said that the original article penned by Ramani did not contain his name, and it was because she realised it was defamatory. How-

ever, John, appearing for Ramani, objected saying that it was the "opinion of the witness".

"There was a curious anomaly, the original article in Vogue did not contain my name. I can infer that this was because the inclusion of my name would have been defamatory," he said.

"The tweet however refers superficially to me. This tweet was by Priya Ramani. The used language was deeply maligning, malafide in bad faith and a web spun out of lies. This adversely affected my public reputation," Akbar further said.

He also said that Ramani's allegations has cost him a lifetime's good reputation and has lowered his prestige in the eyes of right thinking members of the public.

"This amounts to damaging a lifetime's good reputation of more than 50 years of professional ability. The per se affect was defamation and lowering of prestige in the eyes of right thinking members of the public," Akbar said.

Akbar, who resigned as Union minister on October 17 last year, had filed a private criminal defamation complaint against Ramani after his name cropped up on social media as the #MeToo campaign raged on in India.

Ramani has accused Akbar of sexual misconduct around 20 years ago when he was a journalist. Akbar has denied the accusations.

The court has posted the matter for May 20.

## Muzaffarpur home case: RJD demands Nitish govt dismissal

**PATNA, MAY 4 (PTI):** The RJD on Saturday demanded resignation of Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar in view of the CBI's revelation in the Supreme Court that 11 minor girls were allegedly murdered in the Muzaffarpur shelter home where a sex scandal has broken out in 2018.

If Kumar does not quit on his own, the RJD said, Governor Lalji Tandon should dismiss his government for its inability to protect the lives of 11 inmates of the state aided shelter home.

The party of Lalu Prasad stepped up its offensive against the Bihar government a day after the CBI, in an affidavit, told the apex court that 11 girls were murdered at the shelter home, the chief minister has no moral right to continue in the post," he said.

"We demand that Nitish Kumar resign taking up moral responsibility in the matter. If he does not resign, the governor should sack his government," Jha said.

Asked whether the RJD will approach the governor to press for the demand, Jha said the party will wait till May 6, when the matter will be heard again in the apex court.

home at Muzaffarpur?"

The leader of opposition in Bihar assembly also asked, why an FIR was not lodged initially against Thakur, and when it was lodged, why he was not booked under the POCSO act.

RJD national spokesman Manoj Jha, who held a press conference here on the issue, said Kumar should resign on his own and if he does not resign, the governor should sack him.

"After the CBI's confirmation that 11 out of 42 minor girls were murdered at the shelter home, the chief minister has no moral right to continue in the post," he said.

"We demand that Nitish Kumar resign taking up moral responsibility in the matter. If he does not resign, the governor should sack his government," Jha said.

Asked whether the RJD will approach the governor to press for the demand, Jha said the party will wait till May 6, when the matter will be heard again in the apex court.

Tejashwi, through his tweets, also wanted to know whether the 11 missing girls of the shelter home were buried after being killed as it appeared that they were not cremated following Hindu traditions.

Several girls were allegedly raped and sexually abused at an NGO-run shelter home at Muzaf-

farpur in Bihar and the issue had come to light following a report by the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS).

The probe into the case was transferred to CBI and the agency has chargesheeted 21 people, including Brajesh Thakur who, as the head of an NGO, used to run the home.

Tejashwi claimed that Prime Minister Narendra Modi will not utter a single word on this issue as Kumar and several BJP ministers in Bihar government are involved in it.

The PM addressed an election meeting in Valmikinagar Lok Sabha constituency in Bihar on Saturday.

Meanwhile, the RJD spokesman Jha defended fielding Vibha Devi, the wife of former RJD MLA Raj Ballabh Yadav who was convicted for raping a minor, from Nawada seat.

"Raj Ballabh Yadav was convicted in the rape case but his wife was not. If someone is convicted, you cannot hold the entire family guilty," he said.

To another query whether or not Tej Pratap Yadav's comment that his father-in-law and the party's Saran Lok Sabha candidate Chandrika Rai is an "impersonator" amounts to indiscipline, Jha replied in the negative saying statements sometimes flow in the heat of electioneering.

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### CS chairs SDMA...

of the last monsoon preparedness meeting held in May of 2018. The Heads and representatives of the departments, agencies and organizations presented their respective reports on the action taken on the outcome of the last meeting to the Chief Secretary and core issues that greatly affect the state during the monsoons were also placed forward for discussions. The meeting also highlighted the need for a Hospital Safety Plan and a School Safety plan to be devised and implemented duly. The need of a Safety Audit for schools and hospitals was also taken up positively by those in attendance at the meeting.

### In the land...

covers the districts of Khunti and Simdega and portions of the Ranchi and Seraike Kharsawan districts. The constituency has six assembly segments, Kharsawan, Tamar, Topa, Khunti, Kolebira and Simdega.

It is one of most backward regions of the eastern state and is also hit by Maoist violence.

The constituency has become one of Jharkhand's high profile parliamentary constituencies after the BJP fielded Arjun Munda by dropping its eight-term MP Kariya Munda.

Asked about Kariya Munda, villagers in some Pathalgadi areas used expletives, saying he had done nothing for the development of the constituency.

Some villagers said they have sent a list of demands to all higher ups, including to President Ram Nath Kovind. The demands include withdrawal of all law enforcing machinery, earmarking of funds under tribal sub plans to the gram sabhas.

They also want that tribals should not be branded extremists and sent to jail.

Wearying of fighting the system, some of the villagers said nobody understands them and all they want is a peaceful life with full control over their "jal, jungle and jameen (water, forest and land)".

Said one villager in Kumkuma who did not want to be identified, "We do not want to vote as the outside world is alien to us."

"Which Bharat sarkar? Our sarkar is the gram panchayat," added an elderly man. "We cannot allow our water, forest and land to be snatched away. It is our birthright." To Birsa Munda goes the credit for the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act (CNT) in 1908 which prohibits transfer of tribal land to non-tribals. In 1949, the Santhal Parganas Tenancy Act (SPT) maintained the same position.

The attempts to make amendments in both the laws by the BJP government in the state, headed by Chief Minister Raghubar Das, has met with vociferous protests. Khunti was in the headlines last June when Pathalgudi supporters barged into MP Kariya Munda's home at Anigada-Chandidih and abducted three policemen. In another incident, five women from an NGO were allegedly abducted and gangraped by armed men associated with Pathalgadi while staging street plays at a school.

Among its multiple problems is the one of tribal women being lured by touts into becoming domestic workers and bonded labourers.

The narrative of migration and bonded labour is repeated in village after village. The list is long, the characters different and the story same.



## Farmers' debt doubled in last five years: Chidambaram

Jaipur, May 4 (PTI): Not farmers' income but their debt doubled in the last five years of the Modi government, former finance minister P Chidambaram alleged Saturday.



The Congress leader also expressed confidence that his party and its alliance partners will maintain lead over the BJP at the end of the fifth phase of polling on Monday. "Farmers' income will be doubled (if the Congress comes to power). In the last five years, farmers' income has not doubled but their debt has doubled," Chidambaram told reporters here. Jobs is the number one issue in the country and 4 lakh vacant posts in the government will be filled when the Congress comes to power, he said.

Chidambaram said another issue is farmers' distress.

"I cannot find a single farmer in the country today who can say that his life is better today than the life in 2014," the Congress leader said.

He alleged that the government had written off huge amounts of industrialists, but has no money for farm loan waiver. On the prospects of his party in the general elections, Chidambaram said the Congress and its alliance partners are ahead of the BJP in the country.

"Congress and its alliances are ahead of the BJP. At the end of the fifth phase of election, we are confident that our alliance will maintain a lead over the BJP's alliances," he said. The BJP won all the seats in Rajasthan

and Gujarat, and nearly all seats in Madhya Pradesh in the last elections, but Prime Minister Narendra Modi did not fulfil any of the promises he had made to the people of these states, the former Union minister alleged. Claiming that Modi had promised Rs 15 lakh in bank accounts of every citizen and two crore jobs, he said these along with other promises remain unfulfilled.

Highlighting the Congress's election manifesto, he said it was prepared after discussion with people. "Our manifesto is the voice of the people. This is not written by a person sitting in a room," Chidambaram said. People are not discussing the BJP's manifesto, they are discussing the Congress's, he said.

On his party's proposed minimum income guarantee NYAY scheme, Chidambaram said it will revolutionise India's economy and states like Rajasthan, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh will be among the top beneficiaries of the scheme.

The Congress has always given new ideas and has implemented them. Some of these are Right to Education, Right to Information and Food Security, he said.



## Fans lap up IPL park experience

**SUMMIT REPORT**  
**GANGTOK, 04 MAY:**

The first day of the VIVO IPL Fan Park here at old Guards Ground attracted a good number of cricket lovers on Saturday evening.

Gangtok is among the eight new cities included in the list of IPL Fan Parks by the Board of Control for Cricket in India [BCCI] for Indian Premier League 2019.

Fans of the game from in and

around Gangtok witnessed two IPL matches - between Delhi Capital and Rajasthan Royals and Royal Challengers Bangalore and Sunrisers Hyderabad - live on a giant screen at IPL Fan Park today.

VIVO IPL Fan Park is an endeavour of the BCCI initiated in the year 2015 to take the IPL fervour to all parts of the country and to provide a stadium-like environment for cricket fans.

## Nepal teen dances for continuous 126-hour to set new world record

**KATHMANDU, MAY 4 (PTI):**

A Nepali teenager danced continuously for 126 hours to set a Guinness World Records on 'Longest Dancing Marathon by an Individual', a feat previously hold by an Indian.

At a function held

in his official residence here on Saturday, Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli honoured the 18-year-old girl, Bandana Nepal, for achieving the feat.

Talking to PTI, Bandana, a resident of Dhankuta district in eastern Nepal, said

she received the official confirmation from the Guinness Records on Friday.

Bandana beat the record set by Kalamandalam Hemlatha, who danced continuously for 123 hours and 15 minutes in 2011.



### SIKKIM STATE LEGAL SERVICES AUTHORITY

Development Area, Gangtok: Sikkim  
Phone: 03592-207753, Fax: 03592-207753

#### EMPLOYMENT NOTICE

Applications are invited from eligible local candidates for filling up the following posts on purely temporary basis in the establishment of Sikkim State Legal Services Authority, Districts Legal Services Authorities (East, North, West and South) and ADR Centre, East in the following Pay Matrix.

##### SLSA

Sl. No.	Name of Post	No. of Post	Pay in the Pay Matrix	Qualification	Syllabus
1.	Peon	02	Rs.18,000/- Cell 1 Level 4	Class VIII passed from a recognized school/Board	<b>Viva Voce</b> only.

##### DLSA

Sl. No.	Name of Post	No. of Post	Pay in the Pay Matrix	Qualification	Syllabus
1.	Peon	04 (4 DLSAs for all the 4 Districts)	Rs.18,000/- Cell 1 Level 4	Class VIII passed from a recognized school/Board	<b>Viva Voce</b> only.

##### ADR Centre, East at Gangtok

Sl. No.	Name of Post	No. of Post	Pay in the Pay Matrix	Qualification	Syllabus
1.	Sweep-cum-Chowkidar	01	Rs.18,000/- Cell 1 Level 4	Class IV passed	<b>Viva Voce</b> only.

##### Conditions of eligibility

- Should have attained the age of 18 years & should not have exceeded 40 years in terms of **Notification No: M(3)/(55)/GEN/DOP/Pt-III DT: 03/07/2017.**
- Candidates fulfilling the above criteria may apply for the post along with the self attested supporting documents and address proof and 3 (three) recent passport size photographs. Application received without supporting documents will be summarily rejected. Candidates are also required to mention their proper address and mobile/ contact numbers in their applications.
- Other Requisites:-**
  - Candidates must be in possession of either Sikkim Subject Certificate or Certificate of Identification issued by the Competent Authority.
  - Candidate already in Government Service or in Public Sector Undertaking or similar Organizations, whether in permanent or temporary capacity or as Work-Charge employee shall submit their application along with **"No Objection Certificate"** from their present employer.
  - Candidate must possess valid employment card issued by D.O.P.A.R.T., Government of Sikkim.
  - SC/ST/OBC/MBC Certificate as the case may be.
  - Class VIII passed Mark-Sheet from recognized Board/School for the post of Peon.
  - Class IV passed for the post of Sweeper-cum-Chowkidar from a recognized Primary School.
- The application along with self attested copies of the documents mentioned above should reach the Office of the Member Secretary, Sikkim State Legal Services Authority, Development Area, Gangtok on or before **30.05.2019 (Tuesday) between 10.00 am to 4.00 pm.**
- Application received after the last date i.e. **30.05.2019** shall not be entertained on any ground.
- The list of names of candidates found eligible to appear for visa-voce for the post of Peon and Sweeper-cum-Chowkidar will be displayed on the Notice Board of the Sikkim State Legal Services Authority on 7<sup>th</sup> June, 2019 (Friday).**
- Candidates found eligible on preliminary scrutiny of the applications shall be issued admit cards on **7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> June, 2019.**
- Candidates issued with admit card for the posts above shall be interviewed on 11<sup>th</sup> of June, 2019 (Tuesday) in the office of SLSA, Development Area from 10:00 a.m. onwards.**
- The State Legal Services Authority reserves the right to accept or reject any application, with or without any reason.
- No separate calling letter will be issued to eligible candidates for the practical/ written examination.
- Eligible candidates should appear with the original documents at the time of interview.
- No TA/DA shall be paid for appearing in the selection test.

Sd/-

**MEMBER SECRETARY**

Sikkim State Legal Authority  
Development Area, Gangtok.

**R.O. No. 17/IPR/Pub/Classi./19-20**  
**Date: 03.05.2019.**

## Governor congratulates Class XII pass outs

**SUMMIT REPORT**

**GANGTOK, 04 MAY:**

Governor, Ganga Prasad has conveyed his greetings and felicitations to all students of Sikkim who have successfully passed Class XII CBSE Examination 2019, a press communiqué from Raj Bhavan informs.

In his congratulatory note the Governor has said: "I am immensely pleased to learn about the commendable per-

formance shown by the students who had appeared in the CBSE Class XII Examinations 2019 in the State. It is indeed heartening to note that Sikkimese students have come out with exemplary results from schools within the state and outside the State which reflects immense potential and talent that Sikkimese students possess.

My greetings and felicitations to the achiev-

ers, their proud parents and the teachers for their role in the accomplishment of each one of the students. Let this be the stepping stone and an important milestone for all my dear students towards the bright future ahead. My good wishes and blessings are with you all.

I look forward to meet the achievers and interact with you all in a special function at Raj Bhavan in near future."

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### GOVERNOR'S SECRETARIAT

#### RAJ BHAVAN

#### GANGTOK – SIKKIM

No 8GS/27/2019

Dated: 03/05/2019

### INVITING EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Expression of interests are solicited from experts and resource persons fulfilling eligibility conditions detailed below desirous of contributing as Governor's nominee in the Governing Council/Boards of Universities in Sikkim as provided for in the statutes of Universities.

2. Interested persons are required to submit one page summary providing details of the manner in which they would like to contribute by serving in such capacity in the Councils, Boards of the Universities.

3. If selected as a Governor's nominee, apart from discharging responsibilities as provided for in statutes of the Universities, they would be required to take briefing from Hon'ble Governor/Governor's Secretariat on proposals they will need to place in the respective Council and Management Committee of the University concerned. They would be required to furnish quarterly report to the Hon'ble Governor appraising him of the functioning of the University and the contributions that are being made to Sikkim society and communities at large.

4. Eligibility :- Minimum Masters Degree from a recognized University (PhD would be preferable) with at least 10 years experience as practitioners in a specific sector/domain. Must have the capacity to articulate and communicate ideas, proposals and innovative approaches for advancing education, research in Universities, as also suggest strategies, models and interventions, aimed that presenting Sikkim as a knowledge hub in the North Easter Region.

5. Expression of interest clearly indicating the name, designation details of organization in which they are presently serving, residential address and contact details along with the brief as mentioned above to reach office of Additional Chief Secretary to Hon'ble Governor on or before 31st May, 2019.

Sd/-

**(Dr. K. Jayakumar) IAS**

Additional Chief Secretary to Hon'ble Governor.

**R.O No. 21/IPR/Pub/Classi/19-20,**

**Dated: 04.05.19**

## OPPORTUNITY FOR GIRLS TO SERVE INDIAN ARMY

Indian Army offers an opportunity for Girls to join this most respected forces under women Military Police. Large numbers of vacancies have been released by the Army headquarters. Those who have appeared /passed class XII may apply online. Online Registration and submission of application is mandatory. The online Registration process has already opened since 25 April 19 and will remain so till 12 June 19. The online Registration through website: **www.joinindianarmy.nic.in** Start your online Registration immediately.

Now is the time that every eligible girl students must give a try instead of repenting later.

##### Eligibility

- |            |   |
|------------|---|
| (a) Age    | - Born between 01 Oct 1998 to 01st Apr 2002 |
| (b) Height | - 142 cms                                   |
| (c) Weight | - proportionately to height                 |

For any further information& assistance, please visit our Sainik Board Office at Gangtok at any time for online registration.

**Contact Numbers – 8170005757 / 8145837898 / 9593268469**

You must have following documents ready during online submission of application:-

- |   |
|---|
| (a) Class X mark sheet and Certificate (with 45% Aggregate marks) |
| (b) Date of Birth Certificate                                     |
| (c) Aadhar Card   |
| (d) Passport size photograph                                      |
| (e) E-mail ID (your own email ID)                                 |
| (f) Your mobile number (for OTP)                                  |

Sd/

Col D N Bhutia  
Secretary

### ~ SummitTIMES ~ CLASSIFIEDS

#### Required for Summit Times

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

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

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#### PLOT FOR SALE:

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

#### INTERESTED TO BECOME

##### A YOGA TEACHER?

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

**Interested candidates may contact**

**: Deepa Yoga Centre at**

**Mob: +91 7432043719/ +91 8170953919.**

#### LAND FOR SALE

A vacant plot measuring 0.38 Ha. (16552.80 sq – ft) is for sale at Amdo Golai (above the main road), Gangtok. For more information please contact – 9717191985/9474651223.



## From Delinquency to Antisocial Futures

*Social engagement awaited to help reform juveniles in conflict with the law*

News of juvenile crime is always disturbing. These are after all kids in age-groups when the most unruly of their excesses should be some experimentation that is the temptation of their age or some harmless pranks played on peers or elders.

There has to be something inherently very wrong with the priorities of a society where innocence is lost so young that under-18 year olds are found in gangs of car accessory burglars, or prescription drugs pushers or moving in bands which loot public property by pilfering fibre-optic cables (this last form of theft on the wane now, though). All of these are frequently reported instances, and then there is the ever present nuisance of clothes and branded shoes being lifted from homes and rented accommodations, not to mention the string of unsolved daytime burglaries.

While there is no condoning a society that drives people to commit crimes so young, one could still accept these as the curses of modernity if instances of juvenile crime were aberrations and not the norm. In Sikkim, however, instances of juveniles figuring in criminal misconduct are becoming disconcertingly frequent. What must also be borne in mind is that what ends up getting reported in newspapers are instances that get recorded by the cops; there are many instances where “cases” are settled before they are officially entered into the crime data and several more which either never get reported at police stations or never get solved. The police have a job to do and there are adequate laws and regulations in place to ensure that juveniles, even when picked up for cognizable offences, have a less traumatic run-in with the law. But the more important concern than how the police crackdown on juvenile crime, is how the society at large responds to it. It is not enough to just get shocked if the shock does not lead to worry and worry does not initiate deliberations and then societal engagement to understand the reasons behind increasing juvenile crimes and then doing something about correcting the situation. What every person needs to bear in mind is that thefts and burglaries are the gateway crimes from which the delinquents could graduate to more serious felonies if not course-corrected in time. The sequence of crime and punishment does not resolve the situation and societal disinterest makes the situation worse - a society which refuses to be moved into involvement by the shock of juvenile crime ends up creating misanthropes out of delinquents.

Even though Rakesh Rai, the notorious “Spiderman” of Sikkim, is an extreme example, he illustrates this process to some extent – he started off as a small-time burglar in his early teens; before he crossed 19, he had committed a double-murder and has been behind bars ever since. Too many of our youngsters are getting caught committing small misdemeanours or with substances of abuse. If the society does not get involved now, it will soon lose all moral authority to have a say in anything in the affairs of the young in the future. It will not be pleasant to realize later that the increasing hostile resentment in the young could have been avoided and assuaged.

### 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](mailto:news@summittimes.com)

# Why is peace failing in the Philippines?

LESLEY ANN DANIELS  
*theconversation.com*

With the defeat of the Islamic State in Syria, ISIS fighters are exporting their combat to other parts of the world. One of the places they’re eyeing with interest is the Mindanao region in the southern part of the Philippines.

This area is fertile soil for radicalisation. Different clans and extremist militants struggle for control of the shadow economy of drugs, extortion, kidnapping and other sources of illicit income.

In 2017, extremist groups linked to Islamic State and previously Al-Qaeda fought a six-month battle with the Philippines government over Marawi, a city of 200,000 people, leaving it in ruins and killing more than 1,000 people.

In my research, I study countries that have emerged from civil conflicts where the inspiration to fight came from a sense of grievance and discrimination arising from identity. I examine how identity matters in the transition to the post-conflict period.

The majority of modern peace agreements fail within five years. What is causing these negotiated peace settlements to collapse?

### TWO NATIONS IN ONE COUNTRY

There are approximately 5 million Muslims in the Philippines, now concentrated into a corner of the Mindanao island, plus an archipelago of smaller islands, measuring only 13,000 square kilometres. They call themselves the Moro people and believe themselves to be a nation, the Bangsamoro, that is separate from the rest of the Philippines.

Originally, the Moros spread over all of Mindanao, the second-largest island in the Philippines. When the Philippines were colonised first by Spain from 1565 and then by the United States in 1898, the Moros retained their culture and languages while the rest of the country adopted Spanish and Christianity.

However, the United States began a policy of encouraging Christian settlers from the rest of the Philippines to move into Mindanao and dispossess the local people of their land. This policy was continued by the central government after independence from the United States.

By 1982, the Moros owned only 18% of the land on which they lived. Today, their region is the poorest and least-developed area in the Philippines. According to the Philippine Statistics Authority, GDP per capita is approximately US\$650, about 20% of the average for the Philippines, and most people are subsistence farmers.

Since the 1970s, armed groups in the Bangsamoro area of Mindanao island have been fighting for independence, with an estimated 120,000 deaths from the conflict. Despite peace agreements with successive groups, parts of the area are still lawless and racked with violence.

### IDENTITY CLAIMS OVER UNSATISFIED GRIEVANCES

Using identity markers as fuel for mobilisation and conflict onset is a well-known mechanism. A failure to deal with identity claims in peace settlements will often lead to failure. In the Philippines, the government has repeated failed to accommodate the Moros and accept that the Philippines is a multinational state where all groups have equal rights. The Moro are still a second-class minority within their own country, without their own government and without investment.

Dealing with identity claims is important. On the one hand, granting rights and autonomy to minority groups makes peace stronger because it reduces their grievances. On the other, granting autonomy helps to unite the minority group and reinforce its identity.

My research has shown that in the Philippines the grievances have not been satisfied through the peace agreements. In 1996, the government first signed a peace agreement with the Mindanao rebels. However, the expected autonomy did not take place, in part because Muslims felt that they had been subsumed into the Philippine culture.

For example, the former rebel leader ran for election but as a member of the party of the Philippine president. The region did not get the control it hoped for over its budgets, but rather was dependent on unpredictable handouts from the central government. Nor were the Moros given political representation in the central government, where political appointments were optional. Furthermore, the former rebels have been accused of using their political position only for widespread personal enrichment, while the situation of the Mindanao people was not significantly affected by the changes.

### A RICH BREEDING GROUND FOR ISIS

This peace agreement failed because it did not reduce the grievances of the Moros, but neither did it serve to unite them and bring real political representation.

Other Islamic groups have continued fighting. A peace agreement was made with one of the groups in 2014, though it was only ratified in the Philippine Congress in 2018. It remains to be seen whether the concessions in the peace agreement can create a sense of Moro unity, can reduce their sense of grievances and can improve their governance.

In the meantime, hard-line Islamist groups and rival clans fester; a rich breeding ground for ISIS fighters looking for recruits.

However, this does not need to be the outcome of an identity conflict. To understand better the processes at work, I also look at a similar situation with a very different outcome.

### A BETTER OUTCOME IN INDONESIA

The westernmost tip of Indonesia is Aceh. The region is the most Islamic area of Indonesia and was the site of a long-running low-level fight for independence, which claimed up to 15,000 lives.

As in Mindanao, this is largely an identity conflict for an area that has a proud and independent history but that had become one of the poorest and most exploited areas of Indonesia. This sense of resentment was a powerful mobilising force for both fighters but also for supporters of the armed movement within the civilian population.

When peace was agreed between the government of Indonesia and the armed fighters (GAM) in 2005, the agreement granted significant autonomy to Aceh including control over revenue, local political representation, and recognition of the distinctive religious, language and cultural environment. Aceh was given powers that no other area in Indonesia has and controls itself as a self-governing and distinct entity. Since the agreement, the area has been peaceful with large-scale reconstruction and investment.

So why has the peace agreement been successful in Aceh?

My research indicates that granting identity rights augments the sense of coherence of a sub-national state. Aceh controls its own budget, can determine its own development policy, can invest in its own education system, has its own legal system, and has its own symbolic head of state. These rights, powers and institutions work together to create a sense of unity within Aceh.

### RECOGNITION CAN HELP UNIFYING GROUPS OF DIFFERENT PEOPLE

The area is not without its disputes. Rival political factions attempt to win support by appealing to a narrow and hard-line view of Islamic law in order to mobilise people. Yet these disputes are contained within the political system, rather than preventing the creation of a political system, as in Mindanao. A return to violence seems inconceivable.

The peace agreement in Aceh worked because, on the one hand, it reduced the sense of grievance, reduced economic resentments and granted political power. On the other, it created a separate and unified Aceh identity. By giving wide-ranging recognition to Aceh, the government of Indonesia defused the resentment against the central government.

Identity is widely used as a way to mobilise fighters. Concessions over identity can also work to create peace, by tackling grievances, but also by creating a more coherent sense of identity. Governments are often scared to recognise minority groups, believing that giving them rights will create a desire for more autonomy.

However, recognition can also unify groups, creating a confident and coherent nation that can demand better internal governance, better political representation, and ultimately, a more durable peace.

*[The writer is Post-Doctoral Research Fellow AXA Research Fund, Institut Barcelona Estudis Internacionals]*



# Ethical questions around returning Dadaab refugees “home”

MOLLIE GERVER  
*theconversation.com*

The Kenyan government has ordered the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) to close the Dadaab refugee camp. It has not stated its reasons for this, but in the past it ordered similar closures on security grounds, claiming Dadaab could host terrorists from the Somali militant group Al-Shabaab.

The camp, established almost 30 years ago, hosts about half of Kenya’s refugees – 230,000 of almost 500,000. The majority are Somali refugees who fled their country’s civil war in the 1990s, or came during the famine in 2011. Other refugees come from South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi.

On announcing the closure of the camp, the government said that the refugees would be relocated. For most this means being moved to other camps, but for some this means repatriation: being sent back to their countries of origin.

The government made a similar announcement in 2015 which led to over 80,000 refugees repatriating in three years. But violence and hunger led to 30,000 fleeing back to Kenya.

The 2015 repatriation plan was later declared unconstitutional by the Kenyan High Court on the grounds that the targeting of Somali refugees is an act of group persecution, illegal and discriminatory. But the government hopes to implement the new plan regardless.

Those being repatriated rely on the UNHCR which, using money from wealthy donor states, facilitates their transport. The UNHCR says that it only helps with voluntary returns. It also claims that repatriation is desirable when conditions in home countries

have significantly improved, or returning is much safer than staying in the country of asylum.

But some human rights organisations have criticised the UNHCR for not giving refugees enough information and not living up to its commitments to ensure a truly voluntary return.

Because the Kenyan government is ultimately responsible for whether Dadaab closes or not, the UNHCR’s options are limited to the following:

- Help with repatriation regardless of whether refugees’ choices are voluntary;
- Only repatriate those who seem to be returning voluntarily; and
- Refuse to help with repatriation at all. But if the UNHCR was to refuse to help with repatriation at all, then all refugees would be denied access to repatriation.

None of these policies are ideal. The question is which policy is best. My research into the ethics and practice of refugee repatriation suggests that, to determine what the UNHCR ought to do ethically, we need to consider whether refugees are truly voluntarily leaving, and what impact UNCHR repatriation has on government policy.

I focus on the UNHCR because they have a central mandate to protect refugees’ rights and should adopt policies that protect them.

### ARE REFUGEES GOING “HOME” BY CHOICE?

The UNHCR acknowledges that repatriation is often unsafe, but claims to be holding interviews with refugees considering return and repatriating only those whose choices seem voluntary. If choices are voluntary, perhaps the UNHCR’s repatriation assistance is ethical.

But if refugees are being forced out of Dadaab, their repatriation isn’t vol-

untary. Being forced out doesn’t necessarily mean being physically forced out of the country. It could mean that conditions are so challenging in the camp – and in Kenya in general – that choices to return are still involuntary.

For instance, refugees living in most camps in Kenya cannot legally leave or work and, because wealthy states do not provide enough aid, they don’t get enough food.

In 2018, I interviewed 22 South Sudanese refugees living in the Dadaab and Kakuma refugee camps and in Nairobi. I learned that they relied on food from relatives or friends. But even this wasn’t enough to ensure their health. They also faced persecution outside of camps. Police would often stop and detain them if they failed to pay bribes. Those choosing to repatriate to South Sudan felt they had little choice.

Similar testimonies are widespread among Somali refugees, who describe repatriation using the Somali proverb “laba kala daran mid dooro” – choosing the best of two bad situations.

Even if refugees are moved to other camps, they may suffer from even greater overcrowding and malnutrition. If refugees are choosing between malnutrition in a camp or war in home countries, it does not seem that their choices to return are voluntary.

### RESTRICTIVE POLICIES

The UNHCR might still justify providing repatriation on the grounds that it gives refugees more choices. But, because of restrictive government policies that often accompany repatriation announcements, evidence suggests it might actually restrict refugees’ choices, at least for those remaining in Kenya.

For example, in 2012 the Kenyan government announced that refugees

would be required to live in camps – not cities or anywhere else.

In 2014 the government further constrained the rights of refugees, carrying out arrests of those living in urban centres. It claimed these arrests were in response to a terrorist attack, but simultaneously instituted these policies alongside new repatriation programmes.

These policies force refugees to repatriate. This can be seen from those that choose to repatriate when policies change. In 2018 when the Kenyan high court declared the closure of refugee camps unconstitutional only 7,543 repatriated. This was a huge drop from when the government announced the closure of camps in 2016 when over 33,000 refugees returned and 2017 when 35,409 did.

The Kenyan government may struggle to legally close Dadaab now, but even the possibility of closure may be enough to encourage more refugees to repatriate.

If the UNHCR refused to help with repatriation, the government may still close the camp. This would force refugees into other camps and they could still be denied the right to work in urban centres.

Nonetheless, the UNHCR must consider the impact of its assistance on government policy. If the government’s goal in closing the camp is to encourage repatriation, and only the UNHCR can help with repatriation, then perhaps it should not help.

If it does not help with repatriation, the UNHCR can continue to use its budget to provide aid to refugees in Kenya. And if the government still closes the camp, despite the UNHCR refusing to help with repatriation, it still has the option of re-instituting repatriation in the future.

*[The writer is Assistant Professor in Political Theory, University of Essex]*



## Cyclone Fani kills 14, injures 63 in Bangladesh: report

**DHAKA, MAY 4 (PTI):**

At least 14 people were killed and 63 others injured as severe cyclone Fani barrelled into Bangladesh on Saturday, a day after leaving a trail of destruction in neighbouring India, media reports said on Saturday.

Bangladesh authorities said that more than 1.6 million people have been shifted to safer places as about 36 villages were flooded after the storm surge breached embankments in country's coastal areas.

The deaths were reported from eight districts, including Noakhali, Bhola and Lakshmipur that were among the places worst-hit by the cyclone, the Dhaka Tribune reported.

The dead also included a 2-year-old boy and four women.

"In Noakhali district, a minor has been killed and several others of the family injured when the house collapsed on them during storm. Moreover, 30 villagers were also injured as the storm destroyed over hundred houses in the two unions," the paper reported.

Similarly, in Lakshmipur district a 70-year-old woman, Anwara Begum, was killed in house collapse due to the storm.

The cyclonic storm battered the coastal districts of the country and destroyed hundreds of houses.

Sky in several parts of Bangladesh continue to remain overcast and rain and thunder showers with gusty winds is continuing across the country since Friday, the Daily Star reported.

Disruption of electricity and internet connection have been reported from many areas of the country after the storm started.

The rough weather conditions also compelled the authorities to cancel 12 flights so far and delay several others, the paper reported.

The severe Cyclone Fani also caused destruction in India.

The cyclonic storm, which made landfall at India's eastern state of Odisha on Friday, unleashed copious rain and windstorm that gusted up to 200 kmph, blowing away thatched roofs of houses, swamped towns and villages.

The death toll due to the calamity, which stood at eight on Friday, mounted to 12 with four fresh casualties reported from Odisha's Mayurbhanj district, Indian officials said, adding, detailed information from many areas was still awaited.

# Campaigning ends for fifth phase of LS polls in Bengal

**KOLKATA, MAY 4 (PTI):**

The high-pitched campaigning by different political parties for seven Lok Sabha constituencies going to the polls in the fifth phase on May 6 came to an end Saturday evening. The campaigning during the last couple of days was marred by the panic over Cyclone Fani, which caused large scale destruction in neighbouring Odisha.

The fear over the calamity led all political parties to cancel their election meetings.

On the last day of campaigning the BJP candidate of Bongaon(SC) seat, Shantanu Thakur was injured in a road accident.

Seats in which elections will be held on Monday are Bongaon(SC), Barrackpur, Howrah, Uluberia, Serampore, Hooghly and Arambagh (SC) where an electorate of 1,16,91,889 will decide the fate of 83 candidates, the Election Commission said.

The EC will deploy a total 578 companies of central forces, which will cover almost 100 per cent polling booths in the seven constituencies to ensure free and fair polling, officials in the poll body said.

All the seven seats, which are spread across



North 24 Parganas, Howrah and Hooghly districts and parts of Nadia district, will see a four-cornered contest between Trinamool Congress, BJP, Congress and the Left Front major CPI(M).

The campaign saw poll meetings by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, BJP president Amit Shah and West Bengal Chief Minister and Trinamool Congress supremo Mamata Banerjee.

Banerjee also participated in a number of roadshows. In Bonga-

on(SC) seat, which is on the Indo-Bangla border and has a large number of voters from the Matua community, TMC has fielded Mamata Thakur against the BJP candidate Shantanu Thakur. The Left Front constituent CPI(M) has nominated Alakesh Das, while the Congress has nominated Sourav Prosad.

The Matuas (Namasudras) are a closely-knit scheduled caste group with presence in five parliamentary seats in North and South 24 Parganas

districts of West Bengal, making them one of the biggest vote banks in the state. Shantanu Thakur is the grandson of the late Matua matriarch Binapani Devi, while Mamata Bala Thakur is her daughter-in-law.

In Barrackpore, the TMC has fielded its sitting MP Dinesh Trivedi against BJP's Arjun Singh, who had defected from Mamata Banerjee's party ahead of the poll. The Congress has nominated Md Alam and CPI(M) Gargi Chatterjee. Howrah

Lok Sabha seat will see TMC's Prasun Banerjee, a footballer-turned politician locking horns with BJP's Rantidev Sengupta. Congress has nominated Suvra Ghosh and the CPI(M) Sumitro Adhikary.

In Uluberia seat TMC's Sajda Ahmed will contest against Joy Banerjee of BJP. The Congress has fielded Shoma Ranisree Roy and CPI(M) Maksuda Khatun.

Kalyan Banerjee is the TMC candidate from Sreerampur seat against

BJP's Debjit Sarkar. The Congress has nominated Debabrata Biswas and CPI(M) has fielded Tirthankar Ray for the seat.

In Hooghly seat Ratna De Nag of TMC will contest against BJP's celebrity candidate Locket Chatterjee. The CPI(M) has nominated Pradip Saha and the Congress Pratul Chandra Saha for the seat. In Arambagh(SC) seat, TMC's Aparupa Poddar will contest against Tapan Kumar Ray of BJP. The CPI(M) has fielded Sakti Mohan Malik and

Congress Jyoti Kumari Das. Braving inclement weather due to Cyclone Fani, the polling personnel have already left for the 13,290 booths in the seven constituencies.

Besides general election observers and expenditure observers, the poll panel has for the first time deployed a special police observer and a special observer.

In another first, VVPAT will be used in all polling booths along with the EVMs, EC sources said.

## Bongaon BJP candidate injured in accident



**KOLKATA, MAY 4 (PTI):**

With less than 48 hours to go for polling in West Bengal's Bongaon(SC) Lok Sabha seat in the fifth phase, its BJP candidate Shantanu Thakur Saturday met with an accident at Hanskhali in Nadia district, police said.

Shantanu Thakur, who is the grandson of the Matua community matriarch late Binapani Devi, his driver and two others who were in the vehicle, were injured, the police said.

He suffered an injury in his head and was rushed to the Bongaon sub-divisional hospital.

The accident happened at around 12.15 p m when a police van lost control and hit Thakur's vehicle at the front when he was heading towards

Kalyani to attend an election rally on the last day of campaigning, the police said.

BJP Kailash Vijayvargiya was scheduled to speak at the rally. None was arrested in connection with the accident and the police vehicle was allegedly damaged by BJP workers.

A West Bengal Police officer said "We are trying to find out what actually happened and whose fault it was. We are talking to drivers of both the vehicles. So far nobody has been arrested".

When contacted the BJP candidate's mother Chabirani Thakur alleged that the accident was the result of a "conspiracy" hatched by Trinamool Congress. "My son's vehicle was standing on the side of the road and

suddenly from nowhere this police van came and hit it. We want a thorough investigation into the matter," she told PTI. Seven parliamentary constituencies of Bongaon, Barrackpore both in North 24 Parganas district, Howrah, Uluberia, Sreerampur, Hooghly, Arambagh are scheduled to go to the polls in the fifth phase.

BJP has pitted Shantanu Thakur of the Matua community against sitting TMC MP Mamatabala Thakur, the daughter-in-law of the late Matua matriarch. The family is witnessing a feud over control on the community, which has an estimated 30 lakh population in the state and can influence results in at least five parliamentary constituencies of North and South 24 Parganas districts.

## Average prices of BLF in West Bengal rise in April

**KOLKATA, MAY 04 (PTI):**

Average prices of tea manufactured by bought leaf factories (BLF) during April increased over March with Jalpaiguri district registering the highest rise. In March 2019, the average prices of BLF in Darjeeling (plains), Coochbehar and Jalpaiguri were Rs 102, Rs 105.61 and Rs 105.58 per kilogram, which increased to Rs 119.56, Rs 118.12 and Rs 123.41 per kilogram re-

spectively in April. In Andhra Pradesh, average prices of BLF in all its districts stood at Rs 203.94 kilogram last month as compared to 73 per kilogram in March.

In Assam's Jorhat, the average prices of BLF in April fell to Rs 150.02 per kilogram from Rs 158.47 per kilogram in the previous month of March. However, in the state's Cachar district, prices registered a rise of BLF prices. It was

Rs 130.64 per kilogram in April as against Rs 121.73 per kilogram in March 2019, a Tea Board statement uploaded on its website said.

Kerala's Idduki and Wayanad districts registered a rise in prices to Rs 99.28 per kilogram and Rs 96.03 per kilogram in April from Rs 97.65 per kilogram and Rs 95.44 per kilogram respectively in March, according to the statement.

### FIELDWORK REFLECTIONS

## Sungrongmung-The mythical female beast

**MONGFING LEPCHA**

Recently, news regarding the Yeti footprints found by the Indian army in the snowfields of Mt Makalu was circulated all over. The finding not only kicked up new

speculations regarding the existence of this mythical beast but also came up with a lot of criticism. The existence of the Yeti has been the topic of debate and was always challenged as no one has ever encountered one except for vague sightings which cannot be regarded as strong evidence that can seal doubts about its existence.

Yeti, also known as the Bigfoot or abominable snowman, has been the topic of debate ever since word of its sighting from different areas by different people mostly from the snow-bound mountains started circulating. Much research has gone into validating its existence. Narrowing the space of its existence, the story of Yeti is not an unfamiliar one in our communities. In fact, when I was a kid, one of the school books in the primary section had a chapter on the Yeti. At the time I did not know what it actually was and mistook it for a story of a ghost which slowly got rectified as I grew up. Similar to the stories of the Yeti, there are many stories about other mythical beasts which have lived with us for ages. One such story is about a female mythical beast famously known as Lyam Lyammey. Although every community familiar with its existence has folklores on it based on their own perception of the beast, these stories are similar to one another when it comes to physical description.

Well, I don't know much about how other communities perceive the idea of Lyam Lyammey, but during my recent fieldwork at one of the Lepcha villages in North Sikkim, Gor, I came across the stories of Lyam Lyammey. I am not sure if the word "beast" is appropriate to

use in this context as many contradictions could arise which again may be linked to the different notions regarding Lyam Lyammey. Meanwhile, the Lepchas regard it as a phantom or Mung that dwells



mostly in streams and rivers. It is known as Sungrongmung or Somung by the Lepchas. Although, the people there did not know the etymology of the name but the word meaning of the name is phantom that waits for the soul as the word Sung or Asung means Soul, Rong means to wait and Mung means Ghost or Phantom.

The physical description of the Sungrongmung as described by one of the elders of the village was; it has short stature, long hair, feet turned backwards and very long breasts because of which it is considered a female. The Sungrongmung usually feeds on frogs and fish of the streams. Since, the phantom dwells in the streams looking for food, people who go to

catch the frogs which are used for medicinal purposes are likely to encounter one. The reason fewer encounters are reported, people believe, is that the phantom leaves behind signs so that people know

of its presence and can avoid her. The sign is usually three dead frogs kept in three places. The frogs are cut open with the intestines splayed. If people come across these signs, they immediately turn back. May be this is the reason why the phantom is named as Sungrongmung as it waits for souls who dare trespass despite these warning signs or those who are unaware of the signs. It is also said that if the phantom is provoked, it grows bigger in size, feeds on the souls and in some cases also takes away small kids. However, so far no such case had occurred in Gor except the one incident in which a person from the village is believed to have come across the Sungrongmung and fallen severely ill. Thankfully, he recovered from the illness after performing several rituals and taking necessary precautions.

I do not know whether such phantoms or beasts actually exist or whether they

are just figments of the imagination which have haunted people since ages. That said, just because many things cannot be validated with evidence does not mean that they do not exist. It may not exist in a physical form or even if it does, it has not been caught sight of yet, it lives in the minds, in the stories and in the day to day lives of people until the stories fade away or until a proof of its existence is found. The concept of such beings is there in every other community for valid reasons, reasons which may not be easy to stamp with a scientific validation but which cannot be disregarded or ignored as it relies on belief, the same belief which lets us believe in God.

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# CSK will look to maintain pole position, KXIP to play for pride

**SANJAY GANJOO**

**MOHALI, MAY 4 (PTI):** Already assured of a playoff berth, table toppers Chennai Super Kings will aim to maintain their pole position with a victory over a struggling Kings XI Punjab in their last IPL group league encounter here Sunday. After a defeat against Mumbai Indians in an earlier match, Mahendra Singh Dhoni-led CSK bounced back with a massive 80-run win over Delhi Capitals in their last game, to once again capture the No.1 spot.

Heavy loss against Mumbai Indians saw their net run-rate falling and now with just a game left in the league stage, the defending champions need a win to maintain their dominance and cement their position at the top.

With 18 points from 13 games, a win will give them 20 points, which is unlikely to be achieved by any other team.

In their previous match against Delhi Capitals, skipper Dhoni and Suresh Raina guided the team to a challenging 179/4 and then re-

stricted the opponent to just 99.

Imran Tahir and Ravindra Jadeja shared seven scalps between them as they wrecked havoc.

Dhoni, Raina, Ambati Rayudu, Shane Watson and Faf du Plessis will look to score big runs in Mohali, while Tahir and Harbhajan will aim to flummox the Kings XI batsmen with their spin magic.

In contrast, Kings XI Punjab, who are already out of the play-offs race, would be playing only for pride. With 10 points from 13 games, they are at seventh spot, a rung above bottom-placed Royal Challengers Bangalore.

Inconsistent KXIP's hopes of making it to the playoffs were dashed in a seven-wicket loss to Kolkata Knight Riders in their last match here.

Not being in the reckoning for playoffs will be a disappointment for the home crowd in Sunday's match but they will hope that KXIP finish on a high.

In the previous game against KKR, despite posting a challenging 183/6, visitors' openers



Shubman Gill (65 not out) and Chris Lynn (46) took the match away from the KXIP.

After the match, KXIP skipper Ravichandran Ashwin admitted that powerplay has been one of his team's "massive problems".

"Powerplay has been one of

our massive problems. Most games that we won is because through the middle overs or sometimes in the death overs where you had some incredible performances by (Mohammed) Shami or Sam (Curran), something like that," said Ashwin.

Ashwin summed up his team's

campaign this season as not up to the mark.

Their in-form openers Chris Gayle and K L Rahul, who have been among runs, would be keen to come good against CSK.

The likes of Sam Curran, Mayank Agarwal and Nicholas

Pooran will have to shoulder more responsibility in the middle-order.

Their bowling largely depends on skipper Ashwin and Shami.

Teams (from):

Chennai Super Kings: MS Dhoni (captain & WK), Suresh Raina, Ambati Rayudu, Shane Watson, Faf du Plessis, Murali Vijay, Kedar Jadhav, Ravindra Jadeja, Dhruv Shorey, Chaitanya Bishnoi, Rituraj Gaikwad, Dwayne Bravo, Karn Sharma, Imran Tahir, Harbhajan Singh, Mitchell Santner, Shardul Thakur, Mohit Sharma, K M Asif, Deepak Chahar, N Jagadeesan (wk), Scott Kuggeleijn.

Kings XI Punjab: Ravichandran Ashwin (captain), K L Rahul, Chris Gayle, Mayank Agarwal, Sarfaraz Khan, David Miller, Mandeep Singh, Sam Curran, Andrew Tye, Murugan Ashwin, Mohammed Shami, Mujeeb Ur Rehman, Karun Nair, Moises Henriques, Varun Chakravarthi, Harpreet Brar, Simran Singh, Nicholas Pooran, Hardus Viljoen, Ankit Rajpoot, Arshdeep Singh, Darshan Nalkande, Agnivesh Ayachi.

Match starts at 4 pm.

## India coach's job: Korean World Cupper Lee, Roca among four shortlisted

**ABHISHEK HORE**

**NEW DELHI, MAY 4**

**(PTI):** The All India Football Federation's (AIFF) technical committee has short-listed four candidates, including two-time South Korean World Cupper Lee Min-sung and the familiar Albert Roca, for the job of the chief coach of the men's national team.

Besides Lee Min-sung and Roca, who tasted immense success at Bengaluru FC, the other two aspirants in the fray are ex-Croatia national team manager Igor Stimac and former Sweden coach Hakan Ericson.

The technical committee, headed by former India international Shyam Thapa, will held another round of discussion with the short-listed candidates next week, tentatively on May 8 or May 9.

"It will again be in the form of interviews on skype and then the most suitable name will be forwarded to the federation's executive committee with recommendations. The executive committee will take then take the final call," Thapa told PTI.

He added:"We will hold discussions before sitting for the skype interviews. We will also discuss with the AIFF"

The Indian team is scheduled to play matches in the Kings Cup on June 5 and June 8, and a preparatory national camp will be held under the new coach in the third week of May. The Kings Cup will be the new coach's first assignment.

Owing to the Indian team's spirited showing in the AFC Asian Cup and a run of 13-match unbeaten streak prior to that, more than 250 candidates, including some top names from Europe, have applied for the job since Stephen Constantine resigned.

The list included the likes of France's World Cup winning coach Raymond Domenech, former England managers Sven-Goran Eriksson and Sam Allardyce.

These are pro-licence holders with national team experience in major global events like the World Cup, and their salary was a major issue of deliberation in the first meeting of the technical committee, when it scrutinised around 40 candidates for the vacant post.

The 58-year-old Ericson, who briefly managed Sweden's national team in 2016 besides being at the helm of their U-21 set-up for more than six years, likes his teams to be configured in the 4-3-1-2 formation.

Ericson, during his playing career, turned out for Swedish sides Aby IF, FK Kick and IK Sleipner.

Spain's Roca took Bengaluru FC to the AFC Cup final in 2016 in his first few months in charge, before helping the club win the Federation Cup and Super Cup, in addition to finishing runner-up in the club's first ISL season in 2018.

The 56-year-old Roca has previous experience as an assistant to Frank Rijkaard at Barcelona, and also worked in the support staff of both Galatasaray and the Saudi Arabian national team.

Lee Min Sung is a former defender and who has played for Busan I'cons, Pohang Steelers and FC Seoul and also represented South Korea national team at international level, including the World Cups in 1998 in France and the very successful 2002 campaign at home when the team reached semi-finals.

As a coach, Stimac was in charge of the Croatian national team from 2012 to 2013.

In club football, the former centre back has had brief spells in charge of Hajduk Split, Cibalia, NK Zagreb and Zadar, Iranian club Sepahan and Qatari club Al-Shahania.

Factors like cost, the applicant's familiarity with Asian football, as well as their ability to contribute to grassroots development will be taken into consideration while appointing the coach.

## 'Do-or-die' game for KKR, MI gunning for top-two finish

**NIKHIL BAPAT**

**MUMBAI, MAY 4 (PTI):**

Their play-off chances hung, Kolkata Knight Riders will keep no stone unturned as they take on Mumbai Indians with a prayer on their lips in a must-win Indian Premier League game on Sunday.

KKR defeated Kings XI Punjab to keep their play-off hopes alive till the last league game but if Sunrisers Hyderabad manage to sneak past RCB on Saturday, it might take a Herculean effort in terms of improving the net run-rate.

Placed fourth, SRH have a net run-rate of +0.653, which is comparatively better than fifth placed KKR's +0.173. In case, SRH lose to RCB, it will be like a quarter-final for KKR as a win will do the job.

However MI would like to carry on the winning momentum as 18 points and a better net run-rate than both first placed Chennai Super Kings and third placed Delhi Capitals will give them two shots at qualifying for the final.

With Chris Lynn and Shubman Gill coming good and the marauding Andre Russell to follow at No 4, skipper Dinesh Karthik would fancy his chances at the batting-friendly Wankhede.

Gill's confidence would have boosted after his back-to-back half-centuries against Mumbai Indians (at home) and Kings Xi Punjab.

His unbeaten 65 off 49 balls steered KKR to



a seven-wicket victory against KXIP in Mohali on Friday.

If the likes of seasoned Lasith Malinga, Jasprit Bumrah, Krunal Pandya and leggie Rahul Chahar have to be taken to task, then KKR batsman will have to put up a special show.

Russell, who has been consistently delivering for his team, will have to showcase his prowess and mettle once again.

For KKR, their bowling has been the biggest concern as their bowlers have been ripped apart by their opponents both in the Powerplay as well as at the death.

Pacers Harry Gurney, Sandeep Warrier, Narine and Piyush Chawla will have to bowl a tight line and length to restrict the famed Mumbai batters.

With the Wankhede track aiding slow bowlers, KKR may also be tempted to play chinaman Kuldeep Yadav, who has been dumped because of poor form.

Meanwhile, Mumbai

Indians, who have already qualified for the playoffs will eye revenge after KKR after they had suffered a 34-run defeat in Kolkata in a high-scoring thriller despite Hardik Pandya's breath-taking 91 off 34 balls.

Also the result of the match which finalize on which position Mumbai finish and who will be their opponent in the play-off.

For the hosts, apart from Hardik (380 runs from 13 matches), South African Quinton De Kock (462 from 13) has been among the runs. But others including Rohit Sharma (331 runs from 12), Suryakumar Yadav (292 runs from 13), Krunal Pandya (176 runs from 13) and Kieron Pollard (240 runs from 13) need to shoulder responsibility.

However an area of concern for head-coach Mahela Jayawardene would be the frequent middle-order collapse and he would like to strengthen before the

knockouts.

Teams (From):

Mumbai Indians: Rohit Sharma (captain), Quinton de Kock (wk), Suryakumar Yadav, Yuvraj Singh, Kieron Pollard, Hardik Pandya, Krunal Pandya, Mitchell McClenaghan, Mayank Markande, Rahul Chahar, Jasprit Bumrah, Anmolpreet Singh, Siddhesh Lad, Ankul Roy, Evin Lewis, Pankaj Jaiswal, Ben Cutting, Ishan Kishan, Aditya Tare, Rasikh Salam, Barinder Sran, Jayant Yadav, Beuran Hendricks and Lasith Malinga.

Kolkata Knight Riders: Dinesh Karthik (C), Robin Uthappa, Chris Lynn, Shubman Gill, Andre Russell, Carlos Brathwaite, Sunil Narine, Piyush Chawla, Kuldeep Yadav, Nikhil Naik, Joe Denly, Shrikant Mundhe, Nitish Rana, Sandeep Warrier, Prasidh Krishna, Lockie Ferguson, Harry Gurney, Matt Kelly, KC Cariappa and Yarra Prithviraj.

Match starts at 8 PM.

## Powerplay has been our massive problems: Ashwin on Gayle-Rahul performance

**MOHALI, MAY 4 (PTI):**

They have been their team's premier performers but KL Rahul and Chris Gayle's batting in the Powerplay overs had been one of the "massive problems", KXIP captain Ravichandran Ashwin said after team's ouster from IPL. Rahul has scored 522 runs in 13 games with a strike-rate of shade under 130 and six scores of above 50 (one century and five 50s). Gayle has scored 462 runs in 12 game with a strike-rate of 152 plus and top score of 99.

"We have to address the areas that we are lagging. One of such area is the Powerplay both with the ball and the bat. Last year, we had a great batting Powerplay with Chris (Gayle) and KL (Rahul) but this year we couldn't get off to great starts, obviously because the pressure was on them and they had to like, do a job," Ashwin said after losing by seven wickets to Kolkata Knight Riders.

"We have to address this going into the next year because we have lost most games on Powerplay battles. It has been a massive problem," said Ashwin.

Some of the injuries to key players was also a problem, said the Test specialist.

"We had a few challenges going into this year from the last year. We had a few options we picked up a few people and they got injured. That's not ideally how we like to look at it. We definitely put our best team

that we could, we have tried our best and there has been a lot of positives that have come out this season," Ashwin tried to put up a brave front.

He praised all-rounder Sam Curran, who hit a 24-ball unbeaten 55 runs, but admitted that Powerplay was the problem area for his team.

"Sam Curran did a great job for us, he was pretty good," he said.

Asked if Andrew Tye's ineffectiveness affected the team, Ashwin replied, "when you have your overseas seamers and bowlers, you definitely bank on them, but like I said Powerplay has been one of our massive problems. Most games that we won is because through the middle overs or sometimes in the death overs where you had some incredible performances by (Mohd) Shami or Sam (Curran), something like that."

Defending Tye, he said, "if you have to look at the hindsight, bowlers go through such phases. AJ (Tye) had a fantastic IPL last year, but I think it is also about batsman coming out with different methods.

"He (Tye) has definitely tried hard, it is not (because of) lack of efforts that he has not been very good this year. I am sure that he will get better, he is quite a smart cricketer. He tries to give his best on the field, these sort of phases are quite common for a cricketer in his career, but I am sure he will learn from this," concluded Ashwin.

## Lahiri shoots one-under, but misses cut; Dufner leads

**CHARLOTTE (USA), MAY 4**

**(PTI):** Anirban Lahiri's disappointing run continued as he missed the cut at the Wells Fargo Championship here.

He followed up his first round 79 with a 71 to be eight-over for 36 holes and missed action for another weekend.

This is Lahiri's sixth missed cut in 14 starts and he has only one Top-10, at the Mayakoba Championships. He will now need some quick results to ensure that he keeps his record of making the FedExCup playoffs each year since 2015.

Lahiri hit 13 of 18 greens in regulation during his sec-



ond round at the Wells Fargo Championship, though it was better than the first day. Yet the first day's 79 did not help his cause as the cut fell at one-over. Lahiri had four

birdies and three bogeys in his one-under 71, but it was little too late to keep him for final two rounds.

Jason Dufner, who has struggled since 2017 moved into the

lead at 11-under following a 63 in the second round. It is the first time he has a 36-hole lead since the 2017 Memorial. Lying in second place is Joel Dahmen at 10 under, and Rory McIlroy is in 3rd at seven-under.

Dufner has changed everything from his swing coach to his equipment, to his caddie but things did not get better till this round. It matched his career-low score on the PGA Tour and giving him a one-shot lead going into the weekend at Quail Hollow.

McIlroy, playing on the other end of the course, was with Dufner until he dropped three shots over the last two holes. McIlroy made double bogey at No. 8, and then went over the green on No. 9 for a bogey and a 70. He is five behind and in the mix for a third title at Quail Hollow.

Dufner fell from world No. 41 to No. 124 and missed the cut 11 times.

Then he changed numerous caddies, actually four. He is also on fourth or fifth putter. It was the first time he shot 63 since Oak Hill in 2013, the year he won the PGA Championship.

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# King Maha Vajiralongkorn crowned Rama X of Thailand

**BANGKOK, MAY 4 (AFP):** King Maha Vajiralongkorn, Rama X of Thailand, was crowned Saturday in a dazzling show of pageantry, laced with Hindu and Buddhist ritual, vowing to reign "with righteousness" on behalf of the Thai people.

Starting at the auspicious time of 10:09 am (0309 GMT), the public was granted a rare window into the cloistered halls of Thai power as the key rituals of the three-day coronation began.

King Vajiralongkorn is the tenth monarch of the Chakri dynasty, which has reigned since 1782. He ascended the throne over two years ago following his the death of his beloved father, but waited until after a long mourning period before setting his coronation date.

Saturday's sombre ceremony opened with the white-gowned king -- the folds of his robe leaving one shoulder bared -- receiving sacred water from across Thailand and dabbing it gently across his face at a shrine inside the Grand Palace complex.

A cannon salute marked the moment as pipes played and Buddhist monks chanted.

Several grey-haired Hindu Brahmins were also in attendance at the syncretic ceremony, which symbolises Rama X's transformation from a human to divine figure.

He later took his seat under the umbrella of state and was handed the Great Crown of Victory, a tiered gold 7.3-kilogram (16-pound) headpiece topped by a diamond



from India. Uttering his first, brief royal command he vowed to reign "with righteousness" for the benefit of the Thai people.

His fourth wife, Suthida -- married in a surprise ceremony days before the coronation -- was invested as Queen, kneeling in respect in front of her husband who sat on a throne.

For most Thais, it is the first time they have witnessed the pomp and grandeur of a coronation -- the last was in 1950 for the king's beloved father Bhumibol Adulyadej.

"I'm excited to have a chance to be a part of this... I'm here to capture people's emotions," said Jakarin Kerdchok, 16, a volunteer student taking photos near the palace.

Hundreds of state officials in immaculate white uniforms lined the streets around the Grand Palace. But only a modest number of civilians

braved the hot sun for the royal convoy.

Bhumibol was seen as a figure of unity in the politically chaotic kingdom until his death in October 2016.

His son Vajiralongkorn, 66, is less well-known to the Thai public, preferring to spend much of his time overseas and rarely addressing his subjects.

Fiercely private and four times married, he has inherited one of the world's richest monarchies and a kingdom submerged by political crisis.

Thailand has been run by an arch-royalist junta since 2014.

Rama X is widely seen as an adroit player of Thailand's treacherous politics, intervening several times -- including in the March 24 election -- during his short reign.

Those elections are yet to yield a new government, with the king-

dom split between pro and anti-junta blocs, the latter crying foul over the vote count so far.

Full results are due to be announced next week with the ruling junta tipped to return as the civilian government.

"The coronation distracts from the popular indignation regarding election irregularities," said Thai politics expert Paul Chambers of Naresuan University.

The Thai monarchy takes primacy in the country's power pyramid, but it is buttressed by the army. Junta leaders past and present were prominent in Saturday's ceremonies.

Earlier, the king arrived at the Grand Palace in a cream Rolls-Royce, his hand raised in a wave but his face characteristically inscrutable.

On Friday, the king warmly greeted family members, a rare glimpse of royal family intima-

cy broadcast on Thai television, including his 14-year-old son from his third marriage -- Prince Dipangkorn -- and his elder sister Ubolratana.

She stunned Thailand in February when her name was forwarded as a candidate for premier by an anti-junta party -- a move swiftly shot down by her brother in a rare royal command.

Harsh lese-majeste laws mean unguarded discussion about the monarchy inside Thailand is virtually impossible. Thailand's normally hyperactive social media has been subdued in the days leading up to the coronation.

Born on July 28, 1952, the British-schooled Vajiralongkorn is known for his love of cycling and piloting jets, but he spends much of his time overseas -- mainly in Germany -- and remains something of a mystery to many Thais.

## Taliban say gap narrowing in talks with US

**ISLAMABAD, MAY 4 (AP):** The Taliban say the gap is narrowing in talks with Washington's special peace envoy over a timetable for the withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan.

The two sides are continuing to meet in Qatar, where the insurgent movement maintains a

political office. In a voice message sent Saturday to The Associated Press, the Taliban spokesman in Doha says both sides have offered new proposals for drawing down US and NATO forces.

This would be a significant initial step toward a deal to end nearly 18 years of war and

America's longest military engagement.

US peace envoy Zalmay Khalilzad, however, continued to press for a cease fire, tweeting Friday: "It is time to put down arms."

The Taliban have rejected any cease-fire until US and NATO troops withdraw.

## Delhi Capitals finish home campaign with win, crush RR's play-off hopes

**SAUMOJYOTI S CHOUDHURY**

**NEW DELHI, MAY 4 (PTI):** Delhi Capitals crushed Rajasthan Royals' play-off hopes with a convincing five-wicket victory to finish off the league campaign in the ongoing IPL on a high note here Saturday.

Already through to the play-offs, Delhi Capitals first rode on veterans Ishant Sharma and Amit Mishra's superb efforts with the bowl to restrict Rajasthan Royals to 115 for nine and then chased down the target in 16.1 overs, with Rishabh Pant remaining unbeaten on a 38-ball 53.

The win lifted Delhi to the second spot in the standings with 18 points from 14 games but to finish as second best side, the Capitals would need Mumbai Indians to lose against Kolkata Knight Riders on Sunday.

A win for Mumbai would automatically drop Delhi to the third spot as they have an inferior net run-rate.

Rajasthan are out of the tournament, finishing with just 11 points from 14 games.

Chasing a modest target, Delhi made a quick start through Shikhar Dhawan (16) and Prithvi Shaw (8) before Ish Sodhi (3/26) removed both the openers in consecutive balls to give himself a hat-trick chance.

Sodhi first got rid off Dhawan, in the second

ball of the fourth over, holed out by Riyan Parag and then Shaw played on the next delivery.

Skipper Shreyas Iyer (15 off 9) and Rishabh then added 33 runs off 25 balls for the third wicket before the former was holed out by Liam Livingstone off Shreyas Gopal. While Delhi lost two more wickets in the form of Colin Ingram (12) and Sherfane Rutherdorf (11), Rishabh carried on his bat and finished off the chase by hitting Sodhi for a big six over long-leg off and in the process also notched up his fifty.

Rishabh's unbeaten knock was studded with two fours and five hits over the fence.

Earlier, Ishant (3/38) did the early damage before leg-spinner Mishra (3/17) came to the party to rock Rajasthan's innings.

Young Parag (50 off 49, 4x4s, 2x6s) was the lone bright spot for Rajasthan as he held on to one fort and notched up his maiden IPL fifty to take the visitors close to the 120-run mark.

Rajasthan had a disastrous start to their innings after opting to bat as they were reduced to 30 for four at the end of the first six overs of powerplay with Ishant doing the bulk of the damage.

Ishant struck in the second over, removing Rajasthan skipper Ajinkya Rahane (2) and

then came back an over later to clean up Livingstone (14).

To make matters worse for the visitors, inform Sanju Samson (5) fell victim to an unnecessary mix up with Mahipal Lomror in the next over.

Lomror (8) didn't help his cause either as he handed Ishant his third wicket of the day, nicking one to Rishabh behind the stumps.

Parag and Gopal tried to stabilise the innings with a 27-run fifth-wicket stand before Mishra scalped two wickets in consecutive deliveries in the 12th over to disturb Rajasthan's resistance.

Mishra first foxed Gopal (12) to be stumped by Rishabh and then induced a faint edge from new man Stuart Binny, which again Rishabh obliged. This gave Mishra a chance for registering a hat-trick. The leg-spinner was well on course of scalping a hat-trick but Trent Boult dropped a sitter at long-off to hand Krishnappa Gowtham life. However, Mishra got his man an over later as Gowtham gave a straight forward catch to Ishant at long-off and Rajasthan slumped to 65 for seven.

Parag opened up late and smacked Ishant for two fours to pick up 18 runs off the 17th over and then smashed Boult for two sixes in the final over before perishing in the last ball of the innings.

## Discussing three-way nuclear deal that includes Russia, China: Trump



**BY LALIT K JHA**

**WASHINGTON, MAY 4 (PTI):** US President Donald Trump has said that he and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin were discussing a potential three-way nuclear deal that includes China.

During his interaction with reporters following almost a hour-long conversation with Putin on Friday on various matters, majorly Venezuela, Trump said the talks would first start between the US and Russia and China would join later.

"We're talking about a nuclear agreement where we make less and they make less and maybe even where we get rid of some of the tremendous firepower that we have right now. ... And China is frankly also -- we discussed the possibility of a three-way deal instead of a two-way

deal," the CNN reported Trump as saying. Trump said that he has already spoken to China.

"And China, I've already spoken to them. They very much would like to be a part of that deal. In fact, during the trade talks, we started talking about that," Trump said.

The US President stated that the talks would first start between the US and Russia and would be later joined by China.

We're going to probably start up something very shortly between Russia and ourselves, maybe to start off. And I think China will be added down the road. We'll be talking about nonproliferation. We'll be talking about a nuclear deal of some kind. And I think it will be a very comprehensive one, he said.

## Pakistani among 4 arrested without visas in Sri Lanka

**COLOMBO, MAY 4 (PTI):** Four foreign nationals including one from Pakistan who violated immigration and emigration regulations were arrested by the police in Sri Lanka during search operations.

The arrested persons include two Nigerians and one each from Pakistan and Bangladesh, News 1st reported.

The 25-year-old Pakistani and the 24-year-old Bangladeshi nationals were arrested in Grandpass for residing in the country without a valid visa.

The Nigerians, aged 26 and 31, who were residing without a valid visa, were arrested in Ukwatte, Avissawella.

The foreigners will be produced before courts.

The country suspend-



ed its plans to grant visas on arrival to citizens of 39 countries after the devastating Easter suicide bombings.

Authorities are on a high-alert in the country after nine suicide bombers carried out a series of devastating blasts that tore through three churches and three luxury hotels on the Easter Sunday on April 21, killing 253 people and injuring over 500 people.

The Islamic State terrorist group claimed the attacks, but the government has blamed local Islamist extremist group National Thowheeth Jamaath (NTJ) for the attacks.

Both the Taliban and IS are active in eastern Afghanistan, especially in Kunar and neighbouring Nangarhar provinces, which border Pakistan.

## Afghan official: Taliban storm checkpoints, kill 7 policemen

**KABUL (AFGHANISTAN), MAY 4 (AP):** An Afghan official says at least seven Afghan policemen were killed overnight when the Taliban stormed security checkpoints in western Badghis province.

Mohammad Naser Nazari, a provincial councilman, said Saturday that three other security forces

were wounded during the attack in Qadis district. The Taliban did not comment on the attack.

The Afghan defence ministry said Saturday that two separate airstrikes conducted Friday night by coalition forces in coordination with Afghan forces killed at least 43 militants from the Islamic State group in

eastern Kunar province. The statement said the airstrikes targeted IS in Chapara district and killed several Pakistani and Uzbek nationals.

Both the Taliban and IS are active in eastern Afghanistan, especially in Kunar and neighbouring Nangarhar provinces, which border Pakistan.







**ORANGE YOU GORGEOUS!** The model, Rosie Huntington-Whiteley simply stuns in a monochromatic pantsuit during a visit in NYC.

## Social media messes with your head: Perrie Edwards



London, May 4 (PTI): Little Mix singer Perrie Edwards says even though social media platforms give celebrities an opportunity to connect with their fans, it can “mess up” with one’s mind.

The 25-year-old singer, who has been vocal about her battle with anxiety, said she finds it hard to differentiate between real and fake posts on social media.

“Social media can be so crap because on the one hand, it’s the best thing ever. We can go online every day, talk to our fans, be really close, have this connection with them... On the other hand, you go on Instagram and see people living these ideal lifestyles and people looking perfect 24/7 and you look at it and

think, ‘why don’t I look like that?’ Edwards told Glamour magazine.

“...It starts to really mess with your head, and you start to feel like you’re not good enough. It’s about trying to differentiate what’s real and what’s not and a lot of the time, social media is not real,” she added.

Edwards said the negativity on social media platforms make her uncomfortable.

“I don’t know how to look at it. I think if you don’t have anything nice to say, shut the f\*\*\* up. Why bring your negativity onto other people? If you’re going through something and you want to speak to someone, speak to someone, don’t go out and be aggressive towards other people on social media.

## Evan Rachel Wood to star in ‘One Thousand Paper Cranes’

LOS ANGELES, MAY 4 (PTI): “Westworld” star Evan Rachel Wood will be headlining the Hiroshima bombing survivor drama “One Thousand Paper Cranes”.

According to Variety, Richard Raymond will direct the project from a script by Ben Bolea.

Wood, 31, will be joined by actors Jim Sturgess and Shinobu Terajima in the cast.

The film is based on the story of Hiroshima survivor Sadako Sasaki and author Eleanor Coerr, who wrote the bestselling children’s book “Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes”.

Sasaki was a two-year-old when the atomic bomb was dropped in Hiroshima in 1945. She was later diagnosed with leukemia caused by exposure to radiation from the blast. She, however, drew strength from a Japanese legend that, if she folded 1,000 paper cranes, she would be granted a wish, which in her case was to live.

Coerr, an aspiring journalist and young mother, learns of the girl and becomes determined to share her story with the world.

Raymond will also produce the film Ian Bryce and Irene Yeung.

## I suffered anxiety: Goldie Hawn on growing up during Cold War



LONDON, MAY 4 (PTI): Veteran Hollywood star Goldie Hawn has revealed that she lived with anxiety while growing up as she was scared that the Russians were going to bomb America as part of the Cold War.

The actor was born in 1945 in Washington DC months after the World War II ended and the Cold War began.

It was a rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union which lasted for decades and resulted in anti-communist suspicions and international incidents that led the two superpowers to the brink of nuclear disaster.

“I lived with anxiety as a little girl. I thought the Russians were going to bomb us. I thought I could die without ever kissing a boy. I suffered anxiety every time I heard a siren,” Hawn said at the Child Mind Institute’s fifth Annual Change Maker awards.

According to Contactmusic, the 73-year-old actor said her anxiety followed her into her television career and she started getting panic attacks’.

“The next thing I know I’m doing a TV show and I was having nonspecific anxiety attacks, I didn’t know why I was feeling anxious or what was wrong with me, when I would go into public and feel-

ing like I could vomit. I didn’t know why I wanted to sit on a couch while I was supposedly becoming something that everyone was so excited for me.’

Hawn said meditation helped her overcome the disorder.

“I went for meditations because it was the thing to do, and when I did, it was like I can’t ever explain to you - it was the most joyful experience I’ve ever had. I felt like I returned back to my deepest part, to my heart, to my joy. It just hit this seed of joy that I always had as a young girl. Because all I ever wanted to be was happy. That was my goal,” she said.

## Saif Ali Khan’s film with Aanand L Rai to release in September

MUMBAI, MAY 4 (PTI): Saif Ali Khan’s upcoming film backed by Aanand L Rai’s Colour Yellow Productions is set for a September release.

According to a statement

issued by the makers, the team will soon announce the title of the film. The project was earlier named “Hunter”.

As per reports, the film which is set in 1780, shows

Saif as a failed sadhu (Hindu ascetic).

The movie, directed by Navdeep Singh, also features “Mukkabaaz” actor Zoya Hussain and Manav Vij.

## I have no clue: Charlize Theron on ‘Fast and Furious’ return



LOS ANGELES, MAY 4 (PTI): Hollywood star Charlize Theron has said she is not sure if she will be appearing in the upcoming ninth installment of “The Fast and the Furious” series.

The 43-year-old actor essayed the role of cyber-terrorist Cipher in 2017’s “The Fate of the Furious”, the eighth instalment of the street racing action franchise.

“I have no f\*\*\*ing clue. Nobody’s called me, so I have a feeling I might not be in it,”

Theron said during an appearance on “Watch What Happens Live with Andy Cohen”.

The upcoming film will see Vin Diesel return as Dominic Toretto, while Michelle Rodriguez (Letty) and Chris ‘Ludacris’ Bridges (Tej) will also reprise their roles.

“Fast and the Furious 9” was originally scheduled to release in April this year, but the currently untitled sequel was pushed back and will now hit the theatres on May 22, 2020.

**ARIES:** As the moon rounds out her monthly orbit through your sign, today is all about taking care of yourself first. Pay little (or zero) attention to what the so-called influencers are doing. Design a day that will satisfy your needs and let you go with your own flow. Linger over lunch with your work wife or sneak out in the afternoon to try on shoes. !

**TAURUS:** Drown out the noise and focus on tying up loose ends, Taurus. With the moon in your sleepy twelfth house for the first part of the day, there’s no sense trying to initiate anything major in the final hours of the workweek. Plus, you may have overtaxed yourself, and even the strongest caffeinated beverage won’t combat the urge to curl up under your desk for a catnap.

**GEMINI:** Game face: on! It’s going to be a demanding day, Gemini, with plenty of fires to put out and people to please before quitting time. This afternoon, when la luna shifts into your restful twelfth house, you can plot a top-secret mission to break out of the office early. Don’t overextend yourself. A chill

evening at home with your favorite human (or animal companion, or Netflix binge) will help you ease into weekend-warrior mode.

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

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

**VIRGO:** Your routine-driven sign isn’t generally considered erratic, but Mercury’s retrograde through your relationship house over the past three weeks might have made you flip-flop. Perhaps a BFF hasn’t had much time for you since finding “The One” or an ex resurfaced without an offer of commitment. Enough already! .

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

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

**SAGITTARIUS:** Baby, it might (still) be cold outside, but it wouldn’t hurt to open a few windows and air out Chateau Sagittarius. With Mercury retrograde in your domestic fourth house since March 5, home and family matters might have felt a bit dazed and confused. Your survival instincts kicked in, causing you to retreat from the insanity. You can breathe a sigh of relief and re-engage today, as Mercury turns direct. Call a truce with your roomies, make up with your S.O., seek out a solution with your mother!

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

**AQUARIUS:** Loosen those purse strings, Aquarius. Since Mercury went retrograde

on March 5, you may have had a few budgetary breakdowns. But the messenger planet resumes forward motion today, making it safe to once again enjoy your hard-earned cash. This is a perfect time to revisit (and if necessary, revamp) your plans to strike a healthy balance between saving and spending. Invest in your greatest resource: yourself! A personal growth workshop, meditation retreat or life-coaching sessions can awaken your creativity and usher in a tsunami of entrepreneurial ideas.

**PISCES:** With the moon chilling in your peaceful second house, start the day with a moment of reflection. Close your eyes and meditate, journal, then nourish yourself with a healthy breakfast like an acai bowl. By charging your batteries early on, you’ll have the power to complete your task list and NOT drag any work into the weekend. Are a fierce pair of boots haunting your retail dreams? When the moon dances into Taurus and your social third house for the rest of the weekend, you may be able to justify them as part of your “entertainment budget.” .