

Sikkim to go to polls on 11 Apr, results on 23 May

SAGAR CHHETRI

GANGTOK, 10 MAR:

Sikkim will be holding simultaneous Assembly and Parliamentary elections in the first phase of general election 2019 on 11 April.

In exactly a month's time, the fate of the 32 assembly seats and the lone parliamentary seat will be decided by the electorate.

With the announcement of dates by the Election Commission of India, the model code of conduct has also come into effect.

ECI declared the dates late Sunday evening, announcing a seven phase Lok Sabha elections and Assembly elections in three states starting 11 April through till 19 May followed by counting of all votes on 23 May.

The gazette notification for the elections will be issued on 18 March and the last date for filing of nominations has been fixed for 25 March with scrutiny of nominations scheduled for 26 March.

The last date of withdrawal of nomination papers is 28 March with polling on 11 April.

Addressing a press conference here this evening, Chief Electoral Officer of Sikkim, R Telang, informed that with the declaration by the ECI, the model code of conduct has come into force.

He added that the Chief Electoral Office has made all preparations to implement the MCC in the State. He informed that 24X7 control rooms in all districts shall now be operational and various teams have been constituted.

Expenditure monitoring teams, static surveillance teams and flying squads have been put in place as well.

He mentioned that there were three flying squads for every constituency so there will be around 90 flying squads across the State to monitor any violation of ECI guidelines for the polls.

Mr Telang informed that video surveillance teams will record meetings of political parties and added that there will be district and state level MCMC teams.



He mentioned that all instruments have already been put into place.

It is informed that there were total 567 polling booths, including 51 booth for Sangha, for the 4,23,167 voters in the State.

He further mentioned that in his address, the SKM party president, PS Tamang [Golay], stressed that 2019 would be a decisive war for "parivartan" [change] and to save Sikkim.

He alleged that despite 25 years in office, SDF was in panic mode due to SKM's growing popularity and has hence been luring and deceiving the people.

He further alleged that the SDF government has destroyed Sikkim and urged the people of Rhenock constituency to save democracy by supporting SKM in the elections.

The release adds that Mr Tamang stressed that SKM does not have any fight with any individual and was more motivated by its principle to bring transformation in the State.

He stated that SKM was the party of women's empowerment and the youth and accused the Chief Minister of indulging in communal politics and dividing the communities of Sikkim.

He also lashed out against the State government on the Limboo seat reservation issue and alleged that it was against the Limboo and Tamangs.

The release also mentioned that Nari Morcha secretary, Pabitra Khatri, also addressed a meeting and lashed out against the ruling government, accusing it of doing injustice on a woman employee of Alembic pharmaceutical. She said that the State government has failed to do the people of Sikkim.

Cong ready for Sikkim polls: Basnet

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 10 MAR:

Sikkim Pradesh Congress Committee president, Bharat Basnet, today announced that the Congress party was ready to contest all 32 Assembly seats and the lone Lok Sabha seat from Sikkim.

He asserted that only the Congress can save the identity and existence of Sikkim and Article 371F of the Constitution. These, he said, would be the issues on which the party will base its election campaign here.

Addressing a press conference, Mr Basnet mentioned that the party would go to the people with issues related to identity and the very existence of Sikkim and the safeguard of the Article 371F.

He claimed that it was the Congress which had given the provisions of the Article 371F to Sikkim and that the party has been committed to safeguarding it ever since.

While reiterating that the party was ready to contest the elections on its own, he added that Congress was also open to allying with any party which prioritized peace, security and development of Sikkim.

Responding to media queries on the proposed alliance between SKM and BJP, Mr Basnet said



that the Congress was not disheartened with this alliance and that it welcomed it instead.

He added that the Congress practices politics of policy and principles and does not believe in doing business like BJP.

He informed that SPCC has already sent a list of 25 prospective candidates to the Central committee and kept some room in case of any alliances.

On the occasion, Nationalist Sikkim United Organisation president Deo Kumar Pradhan, a Gorkha party candidate in last election, PC Lepcha, and Tej Bahadur Tamang from SDF joined the Congress.

He mentioned that more people from different parties will be joining the Congress in the next few days.

Brains behind Pulwama terror attack identified -- 23-year-old electrician: Officials

SUMIR KAUL

SRINAGAR, MAR 10

(PTI): Lesser-known Jaish-e-Mohammed terrorist Mudasar Ahmed Khan, alias 'Mohd Bhai', has been identified as the brains behind the audacious terror strike in Pulwama that left 40 CRPF personnel dead on February 14, officials said on Sunday.

Piecing together evidence gathered so far, security officials said that 23-year-old Khan, killed in December 2017, was later found in a JeM fold by Noor Mohamed Tantray, alias 'Trali', who believed he had helped in the terror of the Kashmir Valley.

After Tantray was killed in December, Khan disappeared from his home on January 14, 2018 and has been active since then.

A resident of Mir Mohalla of Tral, Khan joined the Jaish-e-Mohammed graduate degree hailing from Pulwama district, arranged the vehicle and explosives used in the terror strike.

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SKM begins Parivartan Sankalp Yatra in East Sikkim



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 10 MAR:

Sikkim Krantikari Morcha started its Parivartan Sankalp Yatra for East Sikkim from Kit Golai under Rhenock constituency on Sunday.

On the occasion, 127 families aligned to the SDF, and SRP vice-president Kamal Giri and former general secretary of Congress, Gyalpo Tamang, joined SKM, an SKM press release informs.

The release further mentions that in his address, the SKM party president, PS Tamang [Golay], stressed that 2019 would be a decisive war for "parivartan" [change] and to save Sikkim.

He alleged that despite 25 years in office, SDF was in panic mode due to SKM's growing popularity and has hence been luring and deceiving the people.

He further alleged that the SDF government has destroyed Sikkim and urged the people of Rhenock constituency to save democracy by supporting SKM in the elections.

The release adds that Mr Tamang stressed that SKM does not have any fight with any individual and was more motivated by its principle to bring transformation in the State.

He stated that SKM was the party of women's empowerment and the youth and accused the Chief Minister of indulging in communal politics and dividing the communities of Sikkim.

He also lashed out against the State government on the Limboo seat reservation issue and alleged that it was against the Limboo and Tamangs.

The release also mentioned that Nari Morcha secretary, Pabitra Khatri, also addressed a meeting and lashed out against the ruling government, accusing it of doing injustice on a woman employee of Alembic pharmaceutical. She said that the State government has failed to do the people of Sikkim.

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Prime Minister Narendra Modi has "surrendered" before "Pakistani" militants and separatists, National Conference (NC) leader Omar Abdullah said on Sunday, after the Election Commission's no to simultaneous assembly polls in Jammu and Kashmir.

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Uj: PAAS leader Hardik Patel to join Congress on Mar 12

DABAD, MAR 10 Padidar quota agitation leader Hardik Patel said he would join Congress on March 12 in the presence of its chief.

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hurriyat. Well done Modi Sahib. 56 inch chest failed. #slowclap, Omar, the NC vice-president, wrote on Twitter.

The first phase will be held on April 11, second on April 18, third on April 23 and fourth on April 29, fifth on May 6, sixth on May 12 and seventh phase on May 19. Counting of votes for all seven

phases would be done on May 23.

Omar said Modi's "abject surrender" to anti-India forces is "a crying shame".

"Balakote & Uri are not symbols of PM Modi's handling of national security, J&K is and look at the mess he has made there. The abject surrender to anti-India forces is a crying shame, he said.

The former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister said it was for the first time since 1996 that Assembly elections in the state were not being held on time.

Remember this the next time you are praising PM Modi for his strong leadership, he said.

Omar said in 2014, J-K had Lok Sabha elec-

tion. The second annual general meeting of Namthang Organic Farmers Producers Organisation Cooperative Society (NOF-PPCS) was held here at Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Namthang in South Sikkim today.

The programme was funded by NABARD and 100 members of the society were provided with marketing subsidies and ploy pipes. DDM (S/W) NABARD, Tempa C Bhutia, was present as chief guest for the programme which was also attended by Joint Registrar Cooperative Department, DR Sharma,

He assured to tend technical support from KVK to help increase production requested all progressive farmers to use themselves by attending training workshops.

Mr Bhutia, address, commended that working under society has many fits for farmers as marked that when work together, the assured better production the long run.

President NOF Bikash Tamang, placed a brief report the society and the NABARD and the government for supporting farmers.

He informed that organic certification had made marketing easier, so much so that growers were being unable to meet the demand.

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BIKAS CHETTRI

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Programme Coordinator KVK, IP Shivakoti, Auditor Cooperative Department Deptt, Hari Bhatrai and other officers from the department and ward and Zilla Panchayat members.

During the programme Auditor, Hari Bhatrai presented a brief report on the society.

PC KVK-Namthang, Mr Shivakoti, in his address, encouraged the farmers to focus on increasing produce from their farms.

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Modi seeks people's 'blessings' Cong says he will be defeated

NEW DELHI, MAR 10 (PTI): Prime Minister Narendra Modi sought Sunday people's "blessings" for the NDA in the Lok Sabha polls, saying his government has made possible what was earlier deemed impossible, but opposition parties said voters will throw it out of power for "wasting" its historic mandate and practising "all talk no work".

As the Election Commission declared a seven-phase general election starting April 11, political parties welcomed the much-awaited announcement with the ruling alliance making a pitch for its re-election while its rival expressing confidence of unseating it.

Seeking people's support for the BJP, its president Amit Shah said the Modi government has taken bold decisions for their welfare in its first term and will ensure India's giant leap to make everyone "happy and prosperous" in its second.

The BJP-led National Democratic Alliance government has achieved "phenomenal results" in various spheres of governance during this term, he said, citing a number of its welfare initiatives.

The Congress, however, hit out at the government saying it will be best remembered for "wasting" its historic mandate and that all its promises

remained "unfulfilled".

At a press conference after the announcement of the poll schedule, Congress leader K C Venugopal said people will change the Modi government that believes in all talk and no work.

All its promises have remained unfulfilled, he said asserting that it will be defeated when votes are counted on May 23.

Senior Congress leader Ahmed Patel claimed the upcoming elections will herald a new era ending five years of "chaotic, despotic and destructive" dispensation and the country will return to the path of "sobriety, integrity and inclusivity".

BSP supremo Mayawati termed the government as "anti-poor and pro-capitalist" and which disturbed peace, caused unrest & anger among masses.

Modi in his tweets drew a comparison of his government's performance with the preceding Congress-led UPA government, asserting that the last five years have shown what was earlier deemed impossible has now become possible.

The 2019 polls are about a spirit of confidence and positivity with which India is fulfilling the aspirations of its people, he said.

In 2014 people comprehensively rejected the UPA as there was unprecedented anger over

its "corruption, nepotism and policy paralysis", said, adding that self-confidence was all-time low and wanted to rid the of such "decay and misrule".

"Guided by Saath, Sabka Vikas seeks your blessings again. We spent five years fulfilling necessities that were unfulfilled for 70 years. Now, time come to build on the create a strong, prosperous & secure India said.

CPI(M) general secretary Sitaram Yechuri said the announcement of polls will end the use of official resources by the Modi government as the model code of conduct has come into effect.

BJP ally and Lok shakti Party president Ram Vilas Paswan pressed confidence in the NDA will win 350 of the 543 Lok seats.

The choice of people is whether to have a strong government or a helpless government, said, expressing confidence that Modi will be prime minister for another term.

NDA will sweep the Bihar, which sends 40 the Lok Sabha, he added.

Samajwadi president Akhilesh predicted a loss for NDA, saying the announcement is a change" in inter people and the country.

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Just before MCC kicks in, UP govt effects appointments in various commissions

LUCKNOW, MAR 10 (PTI): Hours ahead of the model code of conduct for the 2019 Lok Sabha polls coming into force, the Uttar Pradesh government Sunday hurriedly announced the names of top office bearers in various commissions, councils and corporations.

A UP government spokesperson said that names of 72 persons have been cleared for various posts of 22 commissions, councils and corporations in the state.

Arvind Rajbhar has been made the chairman of UP Small Industries Corporation Limited. He is the son of UP Cabinet minister Om Prakash Rajbhar, whose party Suheldev

Bharatiya Samaj Party (BSP) is an ally of the NDA.

Rana Ajit Pratap Singh, another office-bearer of the BSP, has been made the chairman of UP Beej Vikas Nigam (UP Seeds Development Corporation).

Comedian Raju Srivastava has been appointed as the chairman of Film Development Council, while Shyam Nandan Singh has been made the chairperson of UP Gau Seva Aayog.

Jayendra Pratap Singh Rathore has been made the part-time chairman of UP Pollution Control Board while Surendra Nath Valmiki has been made the chairman of Rajya Safai Karamchari Aayog.

Cong calls EC's scheduled announcement of poll dates "Modi's vidai parv"

NEW DELHI, MAR 10 (PTI): The Congress on Sunday took a dig at Prime Minister Narendra Modi, hours before the EC's scheduled announcement of dates for the Lok Sabha polls, saying it was the first day of his "vidai parv" (farewell festival).

"It's first day of Vidai Parv of Modi ji. Voters are ready," said AICC spokesperson Pawan Khera.

The Election Commission (EC) is set to announce schedule for the high-voltage Lok Sabha elections, which is likely to be spread over seven to eight phases in April-May.

"The farmers, unemployed youth, small traders, they all were waiting for this day. Don't know why Modi ji delayed this, (may be) to cut the ribbons for projects that started in Congress regime," Khera said.

The poll panel is

ence scheduled this evening at Vigyan Bhavan here.

The term of the present Lok Sabha ends on June 3.

Khera said a new government will take over to rectify the "mistakes" made by Modi's government.

Elections are not an end for the Congress, these are means for the party for good governance, he said.

"Modi in the past five years, has only been in campaign mode. Congress party is in campaign mode during elections, and in governance mode after elections," said the Congress spokesperson.

In reply to a question if there was any rethinking within the Congress over alliance with Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), Khera said the party's stand was very clear.

"It is the AAP which

As far as Congress is concerned, I think its very clear.

"Delhi Congress president Sheila Dikshit has clearly said it. Why so much doubts then?" he said in a press conference.

Dikshit after a meeting with Congress president Rahul Gandhi, on last Tuesday, said there was unanimity in the party against alliance with the AAP in Delhi.

Gandhi recently said Delhi unit of Congress was against alliance with AAP.

However, there are speculations that the final word on the issue is yet to come out.

With announcement of elections, in which Prime Minister Narendra Modi will make his bid to return to power amid hectic parleys by several political parties to put a united fight against the ruling BJP, the mod-

A photograph showing the national flags of India and Pakistan flying side-by-side on tall poles. The Indian flag, with its saffron, white, and green horizontal stripes and the Ashoka Chakra, is on the left. The Pakistani flag, with its green field, white crescent and star, and a white vertical stripe, is on the right. The background shows a clear sky and some greenery.

Pakistani Indus Commissioner Syed Mohammad Mehar Ali Shah and Indian Commissioner PK Saxena along with

The delegation also visited the under-operation Baglihar hydro elec-

five years, a general tour of inspection of the rivers for ascertaining the facts

The treaty specifies that the waters of three eastern rivers namely Ravi, Beas and Sutlej, have been reserved for India while that of western rivers, namely Indus, Chenab and Jhelum, are for Pakistan.

"Nalanda 2.0, a non-profit policy think tank with a mission to make India's higher education system world class, is the knowledge

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia said

"Over the last few years, Delhi can be known all over the world for the institutions in its government schools - be it the pinepin curriculum, infrastructure over teacher training, alternatives or more recent entrepreneurship curriculum. We also will make Delhi a knowledge and innovation centre where some of the best talent in the world would want to study, and work. Faculty members, students and professionals," dia said.

the nomination pro-
cess for Padma awards
has been initiated.

Please I

The gang would then use this detail along with photoshopped documents to get credit cards issued from banks and had partnered with some vendors

They have been charged under India Penal Code sections 420 (fraud), 467 (forgery of will, security), 468 (forgery for cheating), 471 (using as genuine a forged document) and sent behind bars, he added.



The three-day long Intensified Pulse Polio Immunisation started all over India on Sunday, 10 March. Pulse Polio booths were opened all over the State for children below five years of age and on 11 and 12 March, health workers will be going door to door in a follow-up drive to take stock of children immunized.

Please like, Share, Comment and let us know how we can improve.

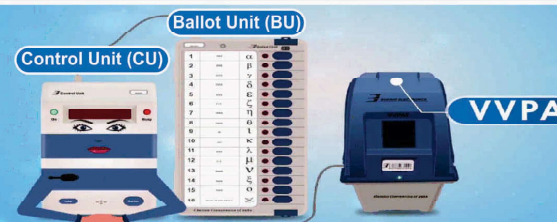


Sl.	Name of Post	No of Posts
1.	General Manager (Credit/Recovery)	1 (one)
2.	General Manager (Operation & Inspection)	1 (one).

General Manager
State Bank of Sikkim

FAQ

EVM with VVPAT Unit



Ans. Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) is an electronic device used for recording votes. An Electronic Voting Machine consists of two Units- a Control Unit and a Balloting Unit -joined by a 100 meter cable. The Control Unit is placed with the Presiding Officer or a Polling Officer and the Balloting Unit is placed inside the voting compartment. Instead of issuing a ballot paper, the Polling Officer in-charge of the Control Unit will release a ballot by pressing the Ballot Button on the Control Unit. This will enable the voter to cast his vote by pressing the blue button.

Of late, there has been so much written about substance abuse in the State that the equally pervasive problem of alcoholism remains ignored. One lacks of media reportage here. And when the media overlooks the problem of alcoholism, it is, in a way, reflecting the societal acceptance of this problem which is no longer even looked at as a real problem. It is something that families suffer in private, not realizing that so many of them are grappling with the problem that it should really have become a priority intervention undertaking by now. And no, the Supreme Court banning pushing liquor shops away from the highways will not solve the problem or even make the highways any safer because this problem has not been created by easy access, and has set in because its progress was ignored. With an election on us, there is going to be even more booze being around.

Even without the indulgence of campaign excesses, alcoholism is a worry. Look around, few people are disturbed in Sikkim by conspicuous drinking. Few people are worried enough to interfere even when they notice a colleague reporting utter reeking of alcohol and only the rare family member will attempt counseling for someone who is obviously in need of it. Where empathy is required, Sikkim has served up ridicule. The response that an alcoholic evokes nowadays is a snide remark and jokes behind her/his back. There is no real concern, or so it appears. Sikkim's indifference towards this problem weighs heavy on its collective conscience. Many justify alcoholism with the argument that the person is earning enough to indulge himself. Substance abuse, because it starts at a much younger age is more scandalous because of the many crimes that the addicts invariably resort to to finance their addictions. While there is no denying the fact that drug abuse is a matter of serious concern, alcoholism, because no one seems to be taking it seriously is even more debilitating. Even if one were to keep the emotions aside for a moment, the impact alcoholism has on the economy is debilitating enough to demand action. Most people turn alcoholics in what should be the most productive years of their lives. Enslaved to the bottle, their faculties are compromised and their work suffers as a result. Those who suggest that alcohol helps their creativity or energises them to work are just peddling excuses to cover up for a weakness and we find refuge in these excuses to put up for our vacuity towards the problem. We are much at risk with this indifference because alcoholism does not only affect the individual, but affects the entire family. While a younger drug addict makes the elders of the family suffer guilt by neglect, an alcoholic ends up abusing all members of the family. While the elder ones can just ignore the ranting of an alcoholic, the younger ones are affected forever by their experience. This is a social problem and requires the community to step forward and get proactive in its battle against the problem. Anytime now will be a good time to begin...

DR ANNIE WAQAR
theconversation.com

Of the numerous areas of global tension, arguably the most perilous is that between India and Pakistan. And recent events in Kashmir have made the situation even more dangerous. The reason is straightforward: India and Pakistan are in a long-running and incendiary dispute, they are both nuclear powers, and crossing a confrontational threshold could ignite a nuclear war between them. Indeed, arms control investigators have long identified the subcontinent as one of the world's likeliest nuclear flashpoints.

India and Pakistan share a long and complicated history, and they have been in conflict over the disputed territory of Kashmir since 1947. The Himalayan region is one of the most militarised regions on Earth – former US president Bill Clinton has called Kashmir “the most dangerous place in the world”.

Under the partition plan provided by the Indian Independence Act of 1947, Kashmir with its Muslim majority was free to accede to either India or Pakistan. But the local ruler, Hari Singh, decided against giving the population a choice, leaving the region in a geopolitical limbo and with a disputed border. A two-year war erupted between India and Pakistan in 1947 and another broke out in 1965. In 1999, the Kargil crisis, when the two countries again came to blows, may have been the closest the world has come to nuclear war since the end of World War II.

Diplomatic interventions have previously helped to defuse the military tensions, but an enduring peace has remained elusive. Both sides have dug in along the disputed border and military skirmishes are commonplace.

THE NUCLEAR QUESTION

It has long been argued in international security circles that having nuclear weapons deters countries from using them in warfare. Indeed, in the post-World War II era, no state has used them – despite there still being around 15,000 nuclear weapons in the world. But horizontal nuclear proliferation has made the world a dangerous place; the more countries that have them, the more likely they are to be used at some stage.

Street level flashpoints can quickly escalate in Kashmir. Shutterstock

And while the presence of nuclear weapons may forestall a nuclear exchange, they don't discourage nuclear states from using conventional military power against one another. And, as conventional conflicts can quickly escalate, the possibility of a nuclear exchange remains a real, if remote, possibility.

So what are the chances of India and Pakistan (which both have between 130 and 150 warheads) engaging in a nuclear war?

The most recent escalation is just another example of the ongoing tensions between these nuclear neighbours. It was triggered by a Kashmiri militant suicide bombing of an Indian paramilitary convoy in mid February. In that attack, more than 40 people were killed, mostly Indian military personnel – and Jaish-e-Mohammed, an Islamist terrorist group situated in Pakistan, claimed responsibility for the attack.

Indian prime minister Narendra Modi, currently caught up in election fever, warned of a “crushing response”, and launched air strikes on targets in the Pakistan-controlled Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.



It was not long before both sides were exchanging artillery fire across the line of control and the conflict quickly escalated.

Meanwhile, in a national televised speech, Pakistan's prime minister, Imran Khan, stated that any further escalation between the nations would be beyond the leaders' control, warning:

“With the weapons you have and the weapons we have, can we afford miscalculation? Shouldn't we think that if this escalates, what will it lead to?”

The ball is now in India's court. Modi has the choice of escalating the conflict by deploying more jets into Pakistani territory, which could lead to a flurry of “tit-for-tat” retaliations. So what could be next?

Since 1974, when India stunned the world with its unexpected atomic trial of the “Smiling Buddha” weapon, South Asia has been viewed as a global nuclear problem. Nevertheless, to date, India, like China, has maintained a “No First Use” doctrine. This advocates that India will only use its nuclear weapons in response to a nuclear attack. The policy was proclaimed in 1999, a year after Pakistan effectively exploded five of its own nuclear weapons. But Pakistan has so far refused to issue any clear doctrine governing its own use of nuclear weapons.

THE STAKES ARE HIGH

The combined arsenals of Pakistan and India are small compared to those of the US, Russia or China. Nevertheless, they are more powerful than those dropped on Japan in 1945 and could unleash staggering destruction if deployed on civilian targets. Indeed, even a constrained exchange of warheads between the two nations would, in a split second, be among the most calamitous ever, notwithstanding the risk of the radioactive aftermath and the long-term impact on the environment.

India's nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine, INS Arihant, became operational in 2018, giving the country a “nuclear triad” – the ability to launch nuclear strikes by land, air and sea. Its other ground-based ballistic missile, the Agni III, has a range of approximately 3,000km.

While Pakistan has a slightly larger nuclear arsenal – estimated to be 140-150 warheads in 2017

– it is less capable of delivering them to targets. Although Pakistan is developing new ballistic missiles, its current ballistic missile range is 2,000km, and the country has no nuclear-armed submarine. Either way, it currently would take less than 15 minutes for a nuclear missile launched from Pakistan to reach India, and vice versa.

The worst case scenario is that, either through mishap or error, what began with a terrorist attack grows into a nuclear exchange aimed at one another's civilian populations. Technological advances might also exacerbate the already incendiary situation. India's arsenal now includes the Brahmos cruise missile developed jointly with Russia, which can be fired from land, sea or air and used as a counterforce weapon. Counterforce doctrine, in military strategy, means the targeting of an opponent's infrastructure with a nuclear strike.

Discontent in the Kashmir valley could also intensify and lead to further crises. No Indian government has thus far shown the political will to resolve the Kashmir crisis, to demilitarise it, or to apply diplomatic deftness needed to negotiate a settlement with Pakistan. Nor has Modi been able to prevent hardline Hindus from forming vigilante squads in the region and threatening and attacking those they think are defiling their religious traditions. And so, on a day-to-day basis, ordinary people continue to suffer.

In the past, during episodes of global tension, the US has taken the lead in crisis management. But it seems unlikely that Islamabad or New Delhi would now turn to the Trump administration for assistance in deescalating the conflict. Leaders from both countries must also consider the reaction of Asia's third nuclear power, China, which has always been the primary focus of India's foreign policy.

For now, India and Pakistan are showing a vital restraint. But they must also work towards a long-term fix. The last thing either government or the world, needs is a mushroom cloud.

[the writer is Lecturer, Department of Politics and International Relations, University of Westminster]

Higher, further, faster: Marvel's first female cinematic superhero

BY MACKENDRICK
theconversation.com

Having a woman in a male-dominated industry sort of sucks, but it doesn't suck more than being a woman in the industry. My advice? Be terrifying.” — Kelly DeConnick, Captain Marvel comic book writer.

When the Captain Marvel movie opens on March 8, coinciding with International Women's Day, it will be Marvel Studios's first female-led film and many will be lined up to see this much-anticipated flick and to enjoy one of Captain Marvel's trademark specialties: fight-act-fic evil.

More than just fighting aliens, Captain Marvel represents a strong female superhero with an intricate and complicated life struggles with anger issues as a sense of purpose. She's also a re-fisted smartass.

In the last decade, Captain Marvel has become a prominent character in Marvel Comics. She's a member of the Avengers, the face of one side of the second superhero Civil War, and is a mentor to Ms. Marvel, Kamala Khan. In the



Almost a decade later, she gained her powers through an accident and turned into Ms. Marvel. But the Captain Marvel we'll be seeing on the screen is highly indebted to comic book writer Kelly Sue DeConnick's narrative. There are even rumours that DeConnick has a cameo in the film.

DeConnick's reboot was also accompanied by a new look — leaving behind thigh-high boots, a swim suit and a mask for shorter hair, a Chuck Yeager jumpsuit and sensible footwear.

DeConnick's comic book narrative begins with a touching tribute to Carol Dan-

Carol Danvers also winds up being present at the moment of her superhero origin. Instead of following the 1977 narrative, where she was the victim in an explosion that would give her powers, DeConnick re-writes the narrative as a choice.

preventing cosmic threats (they transform the planet-eating Galactus into a fertility god), and became the “Guardian of space,” taking up residence on the Canadian supergroup Alpha Flight, the Alpha Flight Space Station. Captain Marvel also joined the Guardians of the Galaxy and was part of A-Fon, all-female Avengers.

DeConnick's run was poignant, hilarious and if the movie can keep audiences will be in for a treat. We also see something special from Goose. (In the comics, Goose is a Chewie — Captain Marvel is a Star Wars fan.) In the movie, Goose likely steal a scene or two.

As the trailers for the film have shown, Captain Marvel will be punching and blowing stuff up and we'll definitely see why she has the moniker “Earth's mightiest hero.” The movie is set in 1995, borrowing elements from Roy Thomas's comic, “Kree-Skrull War” (originally published as Avengers #89-97 in 1971), and follows Danvers as she becomes Captain Marvel.

Captain Marvel is Marvel's

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of Bidhanagar Municipal Corporation to discuss the matter.

"I am a loyal soldier of TMC and Mamata Banerjee. On Friday, (Mukul) Roy all of a sudden came to meet me, as I had known him since his days in TMC I couldn't say no to him. But I was not aware that he had also informed the media about his visit to my place and had placed camera persons outside my house. He deliberately wanted to create a confusion," Dutta said after a meeting with the councillors.

Dutta claimed that

the two did not discuss a single word about politics.

"We spoke about cricket," he said.

Hakim said Roy, ahead of the elections, was deliberately trying to create chaos as the party doesn't have the right candidates to fight the Lok Sabha polls in the state.

"Just like a beggar a senior leader of BJP is knocking at every door with a request to contest the polls. We are all soldiers of Mamata Banerjee, we believe in the principles of Mahatma Gandhi and Netaji Sub-

has Chandra Bose, unlike BJP which believes in ideology of those who killed Gandhiji," Hakim said.

According to sources, TMC Rajya Sabha MP Dola Sen on Sunday went to Dutta's residence to discuss the matter and enquired about the entire sequence of events.

Later, Hakim and Mullick also spoke to Dutta.

It was only after Dutta's assurance that he was asked to come and attend the meeting of TMC councillors and leaders.

Dutta, also an MLA of

known as a loyalist of the latter during his days in TMC. Roy was once the number two in TMC but switched over to the BJP camp in 2017 following alleged differences with party chief Mamata Banerjee.

Dutta had stayed back in Banerjee's party even as Roy became a rebel.

Dutta is considered to be quite influential in North 24 Parganas' Dum Dum and Barasat Lok Sabha constituencies, both of which are adjacent to Kolkata.

Bidhannagar Municipal Corporation is the local governing body responsible for civic infrastructure of Salt Lake and Newtown satellite cities.

In the last two months, several TMC leaders, including sitting Lok Sabha MP from Bishnupur, Soumitra Khan, had switched over to the BJP.

The TMC leadership of late has been reaching out to its disgruntled leaders to thwart any "poaching" bid by the BJP ahead of the general elections.

and entrepreneurs have shared their experience at an interactive session organised by the Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) Expert Committee for Women Development and Empowerment.

Women entrepreneurs talked about their experiences in fighting perceptions in a male-dominated field, financial challenges and others during the discussion on Saturday.

The programme, attended by Indian Institute of Management Calcutta (IIM-C) Director Dr

help in understanding these problems.

Drawing from her academic and professional experiences, Seth stressed on the need for family support for empowering women and instilling the idea in them from a young age that women can become whatever they want to be.

Several young women entrepreneurs met Seth and other women business leaders after the session.

"Many women here are entrepreneurs, many have taken over their

thing which is neuronal," corporate relations expert Bhimani told PTI.

"It has been a vibrant session and the first woman director of IIM-C is a huge jolt to the mindset," Bhimani said.

The Co-Chairman of private education institution Techno India Group, Manoj Chowdhury, said a huge step taken by business leaders in managing women leaders in engineering and education, in commerce to come together and combine

JMM to contest polls in Odisha in alliance with Congress

BARIPADA (ODISHA), MAR 10 (PTI): The Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) Sunday announced it will contest the Lok Sabha and Assembly polls in Odisha in alliance with the Congress.

JMM supremo Sib Soren's daughter Anjani will contest from Mayurbhanj Lok Sabha constituency, the party's Central Working President

Hemant Soren said.

The candidature of Anjani, Hemant Soren's sister, has been finalised from Mayurbhanj.

Anjani, who lives along with her in-laws at Baripada in Mayurbhanj district, would be contesting for the first time, the former Jharkhand chief minister told reporters.

About the Assembly election, Soren said the

JMM will field candidates in some seats of Mayurbhanj and Sundergarh districts, for which a discussion is in progress with the Congress.

The seat sharing arrangement with the Congress will be finalised within four days, he said.

Assembly polls in Odisha will be held along with Lok Sabha elections in four phases from April 11.

Newspapers run blank front pages in Kashmir to protest 'denial' of govt ads to two dailies

SRINAGAR, MAR 10 (PTI): Most of the leading dailies in the Kashmir valley printed a blank front page on Sunday as a mark of protest against the "unexplained denial" of advertisements to two newspapers by the Jammu and Kashmir government.

The Kashmir Editors' Guild (KEG) had claimed last month that the state government had stopped giving advertisements to two major local dailies -- Greater Kashmir and Kashmir Reader.

"With utmost regret, the Kashmir Editors' Guild wishes to inform

that the Jammu and Kashmir government has stopped state government advertisements to two major daily newspapers -- Greater Kashmir and Kashmir Reader," it had said in a statement, adding that the decision was neither conveyed formally nor was any reason detailed to the respective publications.

As a mark of protest, the leading dailies here -- both English and Urdu -- printed a blank front page on Sunday.

The front pages of these newspapers only carried a message from

the KEG -- "In protest against the unexplained denial of government advertisements to Greater Kashmir and Kashmir Reader."

A spokesperson for the KEG said the decision by the Forum had on Saturday taken the decision to print a blank front page against the government's move "to scuttle" the dailies in Kashmir.

He added that the guild would also protest at the Press here on Sunday noon against the government decision.

7-phase LS polls in WB speaks a lot about law and order situation: Opposition

KOLKATA, MAR 10 (PTI): The state opposition parties on Sunday welcomed the seven-phase Lok Sabha polls in West Bengal and said it reflects the "deteriorating" law and order situation in the state.

However, the ruling Trinamool Congress said such a prolonged polling process will put a lot of pressure on the people because of the month of Ramzan and the summer in April and May.

Lok Sabha elections in West Bengal will begin on April 11 and polling would be held over seven phases through May 19, followed by counting of

votes for all seats on May 23, the Election Commission announced on Sunday.

"The seven-phase election reflects the law and order situation in the state... how people were stopped from exercising their democratic rights," CPI(M) politburo member Mohammed Salim said, referring to the violence that took place during the panchayat polls in the state last year.

"We hope that the polling will be held in a free and fair manner and the EC will be impartial, proactive and responsive," Salim said.

The state units of BJP

and the Congress welcomed the Lok Sabha polls. "It shows the state of law and order prevailing in West Bengal," BJP leader Roy said.

West Bengal Congress president Somen Chatterjee also echoed the view of the CPI(M) and the TMC.

Senior TMC leader Firhad Hakim said the party is not "alarmed" about the law and order situation.

"However, such a long duration would put a lot of pressure on the people, as the day coincides with the month of Ramzan and the summer season," said Hakim.

The Mayor of Kolkata

Time to throw out 'most dictatorial and anti-federal govt' in history: Kejriwal

NEW DELHI, MAR 10 (PTI): After the Election Commission announced the schedule for the 2019 parliamentary election on Sunday, AAP head and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said it was time to throw out the most dictatorial and anti-federal govt in the history of India. Time to seek answers on demonetisation, jobs, destruction of traders and destroying brotherhood amongst different communities," Kejriwal said.

The elections in Lok Sabha scheduled for May 12.

The Election Commission has fixed the date for removal of "autocratic" govt in the country.

...NGFING LEPCHA

...woman is the full circle. Inside her is
...ver to create, nurture and transform".
...above quote is true in many ways
...eds no further explanation. Every
...is a powerhouse not just for cre-
...ut also for destruction. To justify the
...itive aspect, I feel that the idea of
...and the strength they possess does
...d to be romanticized by saying only
...od things. Also, every individual
...s of gender is a form of either posi-
...negative energy. So, either to become
...or destroyer is solely an individu-
...vice which should not be tagged with
...ects such as gender, religion, nation-
...tc. but keeping aside the tug of war
...on positive and negative, this article
...the silent contribution of women in
...cular society where I carried out my
...rk.

...ently, we witnessed the celebration
...national Women's Day on the theme
...e for better", and I thought it would
...d if I wrote something on women
...lly to highlight their contribution
...the wheel of society moving. I
...und the theme "balance for better"
...menting the contribution of women
...the perspective of how I conceived the
...ing of the theme to justify this article.

...ough, in one of my previous articles
...already talked about the women in
...society, this article consists of my ex-
...e of living among the fishing commu-
...the contribution of women which I
...sed.

Vadabaliya fishing community re-
...at Annavaram village located 15 km
...Tagarapavalasa town of Bheemuni-
...Mandal of Visakhapatnam district,
...Pradesh. Their main source of live-
...comes from the ocean. They practice
...ditional form of fishing. All the men
...village participate in fishing which is
...task which starts as early as possi-
...ally at around 3-4am. By 7 AM, they
...net to the shore along with the fish



after which the fish is separated. Once, it is done, they eat their food prepared by their wives, mothers and daughters and their task is over. They take rest, some engage themselves in gambling and alcohol etc. but basically their job is done for the day.

I was standing by the shore and looking at the technique of fishing which was a totally new and exciting thing for me given the fact that I was told not to touch or cross the net, which, for some cultural reasons, women are not allowed to do. I lived near the ocean, so reached the shore early, by 6AM. As I stood there all flabbergasted, I noticed the women from the village started coming with lunch boxes and waited for the men to get over with their task. While, the men ate their food the women sat nearby.

After the food, I thought the women will head back to their respective houses but to my surprise it was then that the actual role of women came into play.

It wasn't just to wake up early and prepare the food for their men (families) but the women are the ones who set out to the market and far off places carrying fish in their baskets to make money out of it. The men sells the fish to the women at low rates and it is their re-

sponsibility to get the catch sold at higher rates to earn a profit. It is a daily challenge for the women but they do it without hesitation because that is what they have been doing for generations and that is how they participate themselves in the fishing economy. But the balance of workload is disrupted by the fact that once they come back from the market, their work does not end there, they are engaged in daily chores such as fetching water, laundry, cooking and cleaning which men won't because they do not do anything apart from fishing. I came to know about this fact when one of the informants discussed a miscarriage she had suffered because she had to fetch water even in the crucial months of pregnancy which caused her to get into an accident.

It is not that all women go to sell the fish; some are Anganwadi workers, school teachers, staff at a nearby laboratory but no matter in what profession women are in they are also required to take care of everything as well.

The area also practices early marriage of the girl child. Despite their more than equal contribution towards the community, they still have lesser autonomy than their male counterparts.

So, the theme balance for better should have been from both men and women keeping in view all the aspects of living but the daily scenario of the women of the Vadabaliya community seems a challenge which most of us would not accept and yet they are balancing their lives for the betterment of their families and community as a whole with their consistent hard work and dedication. It is not that women should accept discrimination but sometimes how the society moulds the concept of men and women turns them into how they are. Even though women play vital roles in a society yet their presence is always under a veil. They themselves may not realize their efforts they are putting in to balance their lives for the better but without them things will always be chaotic and disabled.

[the writer is a Research Scholar at Department of Anthropology, Sikkim University]

Between demands immediate hike of royalty on coal to 20 pc

CHENNAI, MAR 10 (PTI): Odisha Chief Minister Nara Chandrababu Naidu said that the Centre

royalty revision submitted on February 5, 2018 is still under consideration of the central government.

"It is once again requested that the central

one-fifth of the total coal production in the country, he said.

The Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act permits revision of

Rs 50 per tonne to Rs 400 per tonne during this period, Patnaik said.

Since introduction of clean energy cess on coal from 2010-11, the Cen-

least 60 per cent of such funds to deal with negative externalities, Patnaik said this may be considered by the central government early. The chief minister

the schedule for the 2019 parliamentary election on Sunday, AAP head and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said it was time to throw

out the most dictatorial and anti-federal govt in the history of India. Time to seek answers on demonetisation, jobs, destruction of traders and destroying brotherhood amongst different communities," Kejriwal said.

The elections in Lok Sabha scheduled for May 12.

The Election Commission has fixed the date for removal of "autocratic" govt in the country.

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...e teams ranked...
...n to 10th in the...
...e and Indian Su...
...eague (ISL) will...
...te in the qualifiers...
...a spot in the main...
...The final will be...
...played on April 13.

How a kid's visit to dentist gave birth to Vasan Bala's 'Mard Ko Dard Nahi Hota'



DELHI, MAR 10 (PTI): Director Vasan Bala's *Mard Ko Dard Nahi Hota* is an ingenious dramatization of martial arts and pain, origins of the director says, his curiosity to know more.

The film chronicles the life of a young man without pain reception, who longs to defeat opponents in a tournament.

The action-comedy bagged People's Choice Award in the Mid-Madness section of the International Film Festival.

Bala always wanted to make a martial arts film, he says, India has never made it as such though we have many unofficial remakes of the films, we have never used martial arts properly," Vasan Bala said.

That started as an action film, soon it became a humane story with quirk when he heard a true story.

A friend of mine told me about a kid who went to a dentist and asked for an anaesthetic and he got intrigued and the whole process was what his condition is started.

"Somehow while writing, this condition came in and it all merged with my martial arts love. This happened in 2015."

The film, however, involved "immense" rewrites for the director, who wrote it while listening to soundtracks of "Ilaiyaraaja, AR Rahman, Sinatra and everyone" to write the script the mood it needed.

"I would always go to scene one and start rewriting all over again. I must've rewritten it at least 10-15 times. I don't know why, but I think it's an obsession, when you think you've finished it, you go back and almost rewrite it again."

"Mard Ko Dard Nahi Hota" is the second feature of Vasan and the first to get a theatrical release, after his 2012 "Peddlers" which never saw the light of the day even after being lauded at the Cannes Film Festival.

Asked if all the rewrites got to his nerves, Vasan said, "It's frustrating when you're putting in so much hardwork and you don't know if the film is going to be made at all. If the films going to get made and you're rewriting, you're still at peace."

To make his vision come to life, actors Abhi-

manyu Dassani and Radhika Madan joined the action-comedy as principal cast along with Gulshan Devaiah in a double role.

Vasan says it was important to get the casting right and the team spent a considerable amount of time on it.

"A lot of times when I'm doing ads, I keep a note of actors I'm hundred percent going to cast. But for the main characters we had to spend a lot of time searching for them."

"For Radhika, I didn't see any audition. There was an introduction of hers which I had seen and it was just very instinctive. Abhimanyu went through quite a lengthy process of auditioning for one and a half months."

The film is scheduled to release on March 21 and Vasan hopes to get a sound sleep once it is appreciated.

"Eventually it's the goodnight sleep we are chasing. But also the sleeplessness. When a film comes out, no matter what you've been through, there's no greater feeling to see your crew, the people you look up to, be happy and smiling."

cannot bowl at Kohli's stumps, Warne tells bowlers

DELHI, MAR 10

To bowlers bruised and battered, and faced the frightening prospect of losing again running into Kohli, spin great Shane Warne offered an insight into Kohli's off stump, but not the stumps.

You're going to get a bowler like Kohli, you protect side. You cannot get the stumps, because you can hit you both sides.

Warne was quoted as saying "ESPNcricinfo".

I think you've to protect just one

with a slip, short cover and some protection out there. So then it'll be very hard for him to get it over the leg side. That's what I'd be trying to do and hopefully get a little bit lucky and he mis-hits one."

Warne said he has not seen anyone "dominate" one-day international cricket like Kohli has, but steered clear of calling him the greatest of all time.

"I got asked the question last night and again this morning: is Virat Kohli the best player in one-day cricket? Is he better than Tendulkar, is he better than Lara? I'm still thinking about it, I'm still trying to work that out."

The Indian has just scored his 41st ODI century, inching closer to Tendulkar's record of 49 tons.

"You know records are different in different eras and it's very hard to judge. All you can judge is how a player is in their era, and Virat Kohli is so far ahead in one-day

have seen anyone dominate one-day cricket like Virat Kohli has. The best player I saw (Don Bradman) the best so he doesn't even come into the equation but Viv Richards is the best player I saw. As a player, playing against them, Lara and Tendulkar were the two best players that I bowled to."

The Indian has just scored his 41st ODI century, inching closer to Tendulkar's record of 49 tons.

"You know records are different in different eras and it's very hard to judge. All you can judge is how a player is in their era, and Virat Kohli is so far ahead in one-day

fect, the Uttar Pradesh government hurriedly announced the names of top office bearers of certain commissions, councils and corporations by nominating people owing allegiance to the ruling BJP or its ally Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party (SBSP).

A UP government spokesperson said names of 72 people have been announced for various posts in 22 commissions, councils and corporations in the state.

A notable appointment was of Arvind Rajbhar, who has been made the chairman of UP Small Industries Corporation Ltd, apparently to soothe the ruffled feathers of his father and UP Cabinet minister Om Prakash Rajbhar, whose SBSP has often embarrassed the ruling BJP despite being an ally of the NDA.

Another office bearer of SBSP Rana Ajit Pratap Singh has been made the chairman of UP Beej Vikas Nisam (UP Seeds Development)

With the Election Commission Sunday announcing the Lok Sabha poll schedule, the ball was set rolling in Uttar Pradesh where the stakes of the ruling BJP is high as the state sends the highest number of 80 MPs to the lower house of Parliament.

With a major part of the gruelling exercise falling in the hot summer months of April and May, the fierce battle of ballots in all likelihood will scorch the electoral arena across the state.

The keenly watched contest will test the popularity of the fledgling opposition alliance of once bitter rivals Mayawati and Akhilesh Yadav, who have joined hands to take on the BJP, which had scooped a massive 73 seats in the 2014 election along with its ally, the Apna Dal.

The state will have seven-phase polling on April 11, 18, 23 and 29 and May 6, 12 and 19. Counting of votes will

Stakes high for BJP; litmus test for SP-BSP in 7-phase UP LS poll

Lucknow, Mar 10 (PTI):

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INDIAN WELLS (US), MAR 10 (PTI): Indian qualifier Prajnesh Gunneswaran achieved the biggest win of his career when he stunningly knocked world number 18 Nikoloz Basilashvili out of the Indian Wells ATP Masters event, continuing his dream run here.

Playing his maiden singles main draw at this level, the Indian left-hander secured a hard-fought 6-4 (6/6)-7 7-6(4) victory over the Georgian in two hours 32 minutes.

The world number 97 needed only a single break of serve to take the lead in

Pranjesh in the latter to seal a spot in the next round.

"It was definitely a huge match. I think I played well better than I did in the previous round. I had to step up because I was playing a really good player, someone who has been in form and is ranked in the top 20," Prajnesh told PTI.

"He is an aggressive tennis player, hits the ball big and I didn't have too much room to just put the ball in and hope for the best. I came out and was firing and stayed with the right intensity. I think this is one of my best matches

world number 89 Ivo Karlovic in the third round. He had got the better of Frenchman Benoit Paire in the first stage.

Talking about the match, Prajnesh said he regretted not finishing the match in the second game itself.

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"In the tie-break, I stepped up, there was a shift in the mon-

INDIA, MAR 10 (PTI): Hockey India Sunday announced a list of 60 players for a coaching camp for the junior national team.

The 21-day camp will be held from March 11 to 31 at the Sports Authority of India campus.

A total of six goalkeepers, 15 defenders, 18 midfielders and 21 forwards have been called up for the camp.

The list of campers comprises goalkeepers Pawan, Prashant Kumar Chauhan, Akashdeep Singh, Anant Vishwakarma, Rakesh Dahiya and Sahil Kumar Nayak.

The defenders who have been called for the camp include Mandeep Mor, Parampreet Singh, Suman Beck, Pratap Lakra, Sanjay, Dinachandra Singh Moirangthem, Lugun Cyril, Innocent Munda, Rajinder Singh, Princepal Singh, H. Thrishul Ganapathy, Pankaj, Sharda Nand Tiwari, Akashdeep Singh and

other country where there are good gymnasts, for just a short while. Just a week or two, to change the environment and then back to India," Comaneci, who is a member of the Laureus World Sports Academy, says.

According to Comaneci, one need not be born in a particular country to be good at gymnastics.

"Yes, over the years USA, Russia, and Romania have dominated the sport but it is fascinating to see a talented gymnast like Dipa emerge from India. Her success will ensure that it is no longer considered a bridge too far for an Indian to shine at the world stage in the extremely competitive sport of gymnastics," she writes in the foreword of

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Just go for very short training abroad: Comaneci advice for Dipa

New Delhi, Mar 10 (PTI):

Gymnastics legend Nadia Comaneci suggests that Dipa Karmakar does not need to change anything or move overseas to be able to challenge for a medal at the Tokyo Olympics but train for a week or two abroad just for a change in environment.

The five-time Olympic champion from Romania also sees great passion in the diminutive Indian gymnast for her sport.

"She (Dipa) does not need to move overseas to be able to challenge for a medal at the next Olympics. She clearly has a very supportive system in India and all I would suggest to her is to perhaps go abroad and train, either in America or any

other country where there are good gymnasts, for just a short while. Just a week or two, to change the environment and then back to India," Comaneci, who is a member of the Laureus World Sports Academy, says.

According to Comaneci, one need not be born in a particular country to be good at gymnastics.

"Yes, over the years USA, Russia, and Romania have dominated the sport but it is fascinating to see a talented gymnast like Dipa emerge from India. Her success will ensure that it is no longer considered a bridge too far for an Indian to shine at the world stage in the extremely competitive sport of gymnastics," she writes in the foreword of

a book "Dipa Karmakar: The Small Wonder".

She also says that she was very surprised to see Dipa attempt the Produnova at the 2016 Rio Olympics, where the Indian gymnast missed a bronze by a whisker.

"It is an extremely difficult and complex vault, yet she executed it with minimum fuss. As someone who has competed at the highest level, I must say that it requires a lot of guts and had I been given a choice, I would never have attempted such a dangerous vault."

"It is truly a reflection of the bravery and the dedication of this lovely gymnast that she was successful in executing it at a place no less than

the Olympics," Comaneci writes in the book brought out by Fingerprint! Publishing.

Dipa, according to her, may not have had the access to the facilities the best gymnasts of the world have today but she has a passion for her sport. "To succeed in sport you need to have passion. It is this which will see you negotiate the hurdles that you face over your career."

The book, co-written by Dipa's coach Bishweshwar Nandi, Vimal Mohan and Digvijay Singh Deo, has many untold stories of struggle and triumph besides rare archival photos from the Karmakars' private albums as well as competition photos.

INDIAN WELLS (US), MAR 10 (PTI): Indian qualifier Prajnesh Gunneswaran achieved the biggest win of his career when he stunningly knocked world number 18 Nikoloz Basilashvili out of the Indian Wells ATP Masters event, continuing his dream run here.

Playing his maiden singles main draw at this level, the Indian left-hander secured a hard-fought 6-4 (6/6)-7 7-6(4) victory over the Georgian in two hours 32 minutes.

The world number 97 needed only a single break of serve to take the lead in

Pranjesh in the latter to seal a spot in the next round.

"It was definitely a huge match. I think I played well better than I did in the previous round. I had to step up because I was playing a really good player, someone who has been in form and is ranked in the top 20," Prajnesh told PTI.

"He is an aggressive tennis player, hits the ball big and I didn't have too much room to just put the ball in and hope for the best. I came out and was firing and stayed with the right intensity. I think this is one of my best matches

world number 89 Ivo Karlovic in the third round. He had got the better of Frenchman Benoit Paire in the first stage.

Talking about the match, Prajnesh said he regretted not finishing the match in the second game itself.

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DUBAI, MAR 10 (PTI): India opener Mandhana has just won three places to a career-best position in the ICC Women's Player ranking released Sunday.

Mandhana, top-ranked ODI opener who led the T20I in the absence of manpreet Kaur, scored 72 runs in the matches, including fifty in the third.

Harmanpreet, who had missed the series due to an ankle injury, slipped two to the ninth spot.

Among the top five slots to reach position after three wickets from matches while left-arm spinner Bisht has also finished with three from three places to reach 56th in the

Off-spinner Patil has moved up 35th to 31st position.

England's Darcie Wyatt also achieved a career-best position in the T20I Player ranking after the visit to India 3-0 in a three-match series in Guwahati.

While Wyatt's 123 runs has helped her gain two slots and 17th in the list.

Tammy Beaumont and captain Katherine Knight have gained two places each to reach 33rd and 33rd respectively, while Lauren Greig (up eight to 45th) and Sarah Dunkley (up 16 to 86th) and other significant movers in the latest series update came out on Sunday.

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Kim Jong Un's rul-
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named candidates, a result unmatched anywhere else in the world.

"Our society is one in which the people are gathered around the respected Supreme Leader with a single mind," election official Ko Kyong Hak told AFP as voters queued at the 3.26 Pyongyang Cable Factory.

Participation in the election was a citizen's obligation, he said, "and there are no people who reject a candidate".

An editorial in the Roudong Sinmun, the mouthpiece of the ruling party, reinforced the message.

Voters "should cast approval ballots with their loyalty to the party and the leader; absolute support to the DPRK government and the will to share their destiny with socialism to the last", it said.

With a total absence of electoral competition, analysts say the election is held largely as a political rite to enable the authorities to claim a man-

date from the people.

It was the result of "established institutional inertia and a need to legitimise the government by simulating democratic procedure", said Andrei Lankov of Korea Risk Group.

Soviet-style Communist states had a long tradition of holding general elections, he said, even if the ruling party ignored its own rules about holding regular congresses -- something the North skipped for more than 30 years.

"North Korea is just emulating all other Communist states," he said.

"The early Communists sincerely believed that they were producing a democracy the world had never seen. So they needed elections and it became a very important part of self-legitimation."

The last significant government of a major country to dispense with elections altogether was Nazi Ger-

686 at the last election in 2014, when Kim stood in Mount Paektu, a dormant volcano on the border with China revered as the spiritual birthplace of the Korean people.

He received a 100 per cent turnout and 100 per cent in favour according to KCNA.

Some of the seats are allocated to two minor parties, the Korean Social Democratic Party and the Chondoist Chongdu Party, which has its roots in a 20th century Korean religious movement.

They are both in a formal alliance with the ruling party and analysts and diplomats say they exist largely on paper, with only small central offices maintained for propaganda purposes.

Even so, participation in the poll, like other obligatory rituals in the North, does reinforce loyalty to the government and social unity, Lankov said, "because humans love symbolism".

It is a marked contrast to the vibrant multi-party democracy on the other side of the Demilitarised Zone dividing the peninsula, where president Park Geun-hye was ousted in 2017 after mass street protests over

"definitely novel", said Sokeel Park, of campaign group Liberty In North Korea.

"The idea that you get to cast your vote and either be on the winning side or the losing side and you don't know what that's going to be until the results come in -- that's a big thing."

Sunday's voting took place in something of a carnival atmosphere in Pyongyang, children in red neckerchiefs parading in the streets to encourage voters to attend.

Bands played at polling stations, where voters lined up in numerical order according to voter lists displayed for days beforehand, and after casting their ballots women danced wearing flowing traditional dresses.

Architecture student Kuk Dae Kwon, 18, said he was excited to be taking part for the first time.

Ordinary North Koreans always express total support for the authorities when speaking to foreign media, and Kuk told AFP: "At this election we consolidate the single-minded unity around the Supreme Leader and also demonstrate the advantages of our socialism to the world."

...crashed shortly after
...takeoff from the capital
...Sunday morning killing
...all 157 thought to be
...on board, according to
...statements from the air-
...line and the state broad-
...caster.

There were no immediate details on what caused the crash of the Boeing 737-8 MAX plane, which was new and had been delivered to the airline in November.

The state-owned Ethiopian Airlines, widely considered the best-managed airline in Africa, calls itself Africa's largest carrier and has ambitions of becoming the gateway to the continent.

The airline's statement said 149 passengers and eight crew members were thought to be on the plane that crashed six minutes after departing Addis Ababa on its way to Kenya's capital.

The crash occurred around Bishoftu, or Debre Zeit, some 50 kilometers (31 miles) south of Addis Ababa, at 8:44 am.

While the airline said "search and rescue operations are in progress and we have no confirmed information about survivors or any



possible casualties," a separate statement by the Ethiopian prime minister's office offered its "deepest condolences" to families.

State broadcaster EBC reported all passengers were dead and that the passengers included 33 nationalities.

An Ethiopian Airlines spokesman said 32 Kenyans and 17 Ethiopians were among the victims.

James Macharia, Kenya's transport minister, told reporters that Kenyan authorities had not yet received the passenger manifest.

He said an emergency response had been set up for family and friends.

"My prayers go to all the families and associates of those on board," Kenya's President Uhuru Kenyatta said, as many Kenyans braced for the worst.

Records show that the plane was new.

The Planespotter civil aviation database shows that the Boeing 737-8 MAX was delivered to Ethiopian Airlines in mid-November.

In October, another

...from Jakarta, In-
...nesia's capital, killed
...189 people on board.
The cockpit d-
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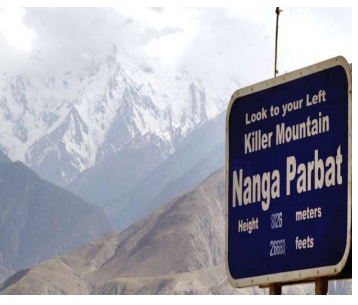
The last deadly
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Missing Italian, British climbers found dead on Pakistan's 'killer mountain'



PAKISTAN
ISLAMABAD, MAR 9
The bodies of two mountaineers from Italy were found in northern Pakistan nearly two weeks after the duo went missing while trying to climb Nanga Parbat in Gilgit-Baltistan region, the ambassador said Tuesday.

The search was interrupted by bad weather. It also got delayed because rescue teams were forced to wait for permission to send up a helicopter after Pakistan closed its airspace on Wednesday amid escalating tensions with India following the Pulwama attack.

Haidri also shared a message sent by Nardi's family on the tragic occasion.

"We are devastated by pain; we inform you that Daniele and Tom's researches are completed. Part of them will remain forever at Nanga Parbat," the family said.

Nardi had attempted to scale Nanga Parbat in winter several times.

15 dialysis patients die in Venezuela's blackout: NGO

CARACAS, MAR 10 (AFP): Fifteen Venezuelans with advanced kidney disease have died after being unable to get dialysis during the country's extended power outage, an NGO reported Saturday.

"Between yesterday and today, there were 15 deaths for lack of dialysis," said Francisco Valencia, director of the Codevida health rights group.

"The situation of people with kidney failure is very difficult, critical, we are talking about 95 per cent of dialysis units, which today likely hit 100 per cent, are paralyzed, due to

the power outage," Valencia added.

He warned that there are more than 10,200 dialysis-dependent people nationwide who were at risk by the blackout.

Venezuelans since Thursday afternoon have been in the grips of the worst blackout in the history of the oil-producing country.

President Nicolas Maduro government has charged that a US-led war on electric power supply was under way.

The United States backs the interim presidency of opposition leader Juan Guaido. He is now

recognized as interim president for more than 50 countries. Maduro told supporters Saturday that almost 70 per cent of power had been restored but at midday there was another cyber "attack at one of the generators that was working perfectly and that disturbed and undid everything we had achieved."

Although Caracas and the states of Miranda and Vargas -- home to the country's international airport and main port -- had intermittent power, the western regions of Barinas, Tachira and Zulia remained without electricity.

China protests US criticism of policies on religion



HONG KONG, MAR 10 (AP): China has issued a protest over remarks the US ambassador-at-large for international religious freedom made criticising Beijing's policies toward Muslim and Tibetan Buddhist minorities and saying the country was "at war with faith."

The foreign minis-

speech was given.

China's constitution and laws protect freedom of religion and critics should "cease their slander of China's policies on religion and the situation with freedom of faith and cease using religious issues to interfere in China's internal affairs," the office said in a statement.

Air India pilot deplaned, deported from US on child porn charges

NEW DELHI, MAR 10 (PTI): An Indian pilot of Air India was handcuffed in front of passengers and deplaned by US law enforcement authorities on allegations related to accessing and downloading child pornography, officials of the national carrier said on Sunday.

The incident took place at San Francisco on Monday and the pilot was deplaned by the authorities soon after his plane landed from New Delhi, they added.

"The US authorities seized his passport, cancelled his visa and deported him back to

India," the Air India officials said on the condition of anonymity.

"When the Delhi-San Francisco plane landed in the US on Monday, the pilot was handcuffed in front of the passengers and deplaned," they said.

"The pilot was under the scanner of US law enforcement authorities such as the FBI for accessing and downloading child pornography," the officials added.

The spokesperson of Air India did not respond to queries related to the matter.

In the United States, images of child pornography are not protected

under the First Amendment rights and legal contraband under federal law.

Section 2256 of 18, United States defines child pornography as any "visual representation of sexually explicit conduct involving a minor," who is someone under 18 years of age.

"Visual depiction" includes photographs, videos, digital or computer-generated images indistinguishable from actual minor images created, adapted, modified, but appearing to depict an identifiable minor.

SummitTIMES
informed, inquisitive, relevant

be the headliner for Saturday's Singapore Grand concert. Joining her are heavyweights in the music industry, Red Chilli Peppers and Swedish House Mafadlining on Sunday and Friday respectively. The 1 wave of performers join an already spectacular of artists, featuring Muse, Hans Zimmer, Fat Boy and more.

gional acts will also be taking the stage, including crooner Glen Wee, Malaysian R&B artist NJWA and more.

her controversial win at the Grammys this year, even led the rapper to deactivate her Instagram for a days, Cardi B is definitely one of the most anticipated perces of the event.

album, "Invasion of Privacy" won Best Rap Album in 19 Grammys and we can expect her to perform some greatest hits. Though her set list is yet to be released, fans are looking forward to hearing her chart-topping hits like "Drip", "Bodak" and "I Like It" live.

is the first time Cardi will be in Singapore and we're it will not be her last.

ir Khan's thirst for knowledge has stayed with me: Ali



Fazal began his career a decade ago with the film "3 Idiots" and says the superstar's hunger for knowledge has stayed with him throughout his career.

who had a cameo appearance in the film "Dhruva" was a learning experience for him. He always observed Ali. Between the two, he would snap out and play chess and books. That stuck with me for some reason. Ali, who was recently seen in films such as "Happy Phir Bhaag Jayegi", "Fukrey Returns" and the Hollywood project "Victoria and Abdul", believes people who do not hail from a film family have to often prove themselves.

"For somebody who doesn't have those connection, sometimes you have to prove yourself. You are your last hit film. Now I know I have to really plan, be careful."

"Of course, I can't say I can't deliver a flop, no one can. But what helps us is that there are no expectations from someone who's an outsider. You can quietly do your work and keep going."

"Milan Talkies" is scheduled to release on March 15.

Elton John to release memoir in October

MUMBAI, MAR 9 (PTI): Music legend Elton John has announced that he will come out with his memoir in October this year.

The 71-year-old music icon took to Twitter to share the news of the release of his official autobiography.

"My life has been one helluva roller coaster ride and I'm now ready to tell you my story, through my own words. My first and only official autobiography will be released October 2019," he wrote.

According to his publisher, Henry Holt & Co, a division of Macmillan, the book will be a "hardcore, no-holds-barred account" of John's life.

Multiple Grammy-winning legend and flamboyant superstar, Elton is the most enduringly successful singer/songwriter of all time. Fans have been eagerly waiting for him to tell his story. Now the wait is (almost) over," the publisher said about the anticipated memoir on its website.

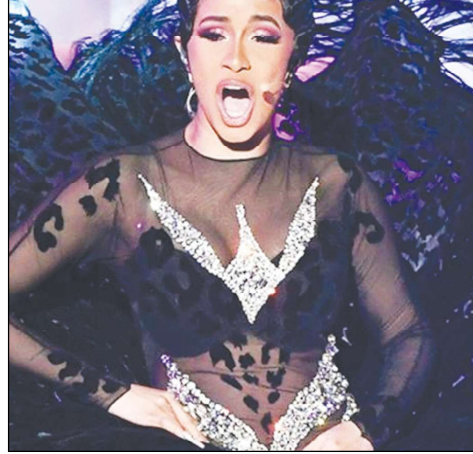
Elton's life will also be chronicled in a biographical drama film, titled "Rocketman". Actor Taron Egerton is portraying the legendary singer in the Dexter Fletcher-directed movie.

ARIES: The higher you climb, the more support you need. Today's productive angle between the confident Sun and structure junkie Saturn could illuminate a great coach, mentor or consultant who can guide you up the next rung of the ladder. It's not a sign of weakness to ask for help (need we remind you again, Aries?)

TAURUS: Yes, Taurus, it's your turn to call out the neon pink elephant in the room. But relax: Today, people are actually ready to hear it. They've known for a while that something was off, and it's been affecting the morale of the entire team. If there wasn't an actual mutiny on your hands, people have certainly been drifting.

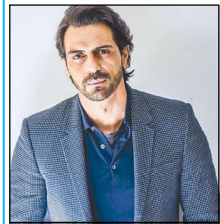
CANCER: Relationships will benefit from unapologetic honesty today, Cancer, but there's just one hitch. Don't confuse your opinions with the gospel truth. The way something SEEMS may not reflect the way it actually is, but you run the risk of flinging false accusations based on assumptions. If you are unhappy with a partnership, lay down your weapons and advance with curiosity.

LEO: Forget about going with your best guess today, Leo. A precise angle between the illuminating Sun and structure hound Saturn insists that you take exact measurements in all that you do. Do the cost breakdown of an upcoming project or travel plan. You may need to simplify or tweak



MUMBAI, MAR 9 (PTI): Actor Arjun Rampal has short-listed three feature films as his next projects and says they belong to different genres, including horror which he will star in and produce too.

The actor, who had produced "Daddy" and recently



made his digital debut, says he is "raring to work in feature films now."

"I've shortlisted three subjects which I'll be getting into the shooting soon. There are two thrillers, but both different than each other, and one adventure film. I've been wanting to do something like this since a while," Arjun told PTI.

The actor says these projects are in various stages of developments and he will be making an announcement soon.

"There's also a horror movie with a damn interesting premise which I'll be producing. It's a great story. I'll be starting in it as well but it's too soon to reveal other information," he added.

Arjun says he has become picky and choosy about the kind of films he wants to do and when a script comes to him, he looks at it from a holistic point of view.

"I react to stories when they are pitched to me by asking: is it something I'll watch myself, even if I wasn't part of it? Of course the people attached to it also matter."

"Will the producers be able to do justice to the director, the story and bring that alive."

steady Saturn could bring a hot prospect with staying power. You certainly won't meet this person while clearing out your Netflix queue. Follow the Sun's motivation to dress up and meet friends out on the town. Coupled Virgos, don't get lazy. Take a pause from co-hibernating and reserve a table for two.

LIBRA: Go ahead, Libra, let your inner control freak have the wheel today. With the can-do Sun productively angled to structure fanatic Saturn, you could really whip a plan into shape. Be a stickler for the details. If people's promises aren't making sense or their deadlines don't seem realistic, call it out. You don't have to go along with the first offer people make.



SUPER COOL! Actress Yara Shahidi sports fun look while stepping out in New York City

Hindi cine ma only showed physical abuse never consensual sex: Zoya Akhtar

Filmmaker Zoya Akhtar says her portrayal of sex in Hindi cinema has been problematic with more focus on physical abuse, rape and molestation than consensual sex.

Zoya said when people consume such content at a young age, the impact is visible later.

"I realised this much later that while I was growing up, I have only seen physical abuse in Hindi films. It was crazy because we were allowed to watch rape scenes, molestation and assault but we weren't allowed to see consensual sex."

"That has to impact the psyche because you do not watch people kissing, tenderness. You don't see people making love and how they want to be treated," she said during a session on 'Women Shaping the narrative in media and entertainment'.

The event was organised by Amazon Prime Video and Screenwriters Association.

The director said this portrayal of sex can be problematic as it sends a wrong notion.

"What you are putting out is that wom-



en will always say no and you will just go on them. When you are a kid, you don't really focus on it. When you grow up, you realise that was weird and it should change."

Zoya said she has become the person she is not only because of the strong men in her life but also men.

"I have been raised by a hardcore feminist. My male friends, colleagues in the industry and outside are all feminists. I've come a long time to realise and recognize a certain amount of sexism because it exists in my world. A lot of it went by without me even reacting to it."

could unearth a Eureka!-level discovery. **AQUARIUS:** Lift your nose from the grindstone and give your personal life some attention today, Aquarius, as the Sun's supportive boost from your co-constructed Saturn. If your house is in order—literally and metaphorically—going to be difficult to focus and be productive. Even cleaning your space can be meditative. Or maybe it's time to hire a cleaning service to deal with the bunnies you simply don't have the time to clear away anymore.

PISCES: Take charge of a floundering mission and get everyone focused and in line again. With the expressive Sun in Pisces, a propitious angle to can-do Saturn