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# SummitTIMES

ON TOP OF THE NEWS

Vol 04 | Issue 137 | Gangtok | Wednesday | 22 May 2019

RNI No. SIKENG/2016/69420

Pages 8 | ₹ 5

## SUVIDHA app to make counting smoother

**GANGTOK, 21 MAY (IPR):** SUVIDHA is one of the various IT applications introduced by the Election Commission of India for smooth conduct of elections. This application is a single window system for candidate registration, voter turnout and counting management system with provision to generate reports for various purposes particularly on the day of Counting and declaration of result.

Today a dry run was conducted wherein the actual simulation of the Counting process was performed for the Assembly Constituencies and Parliamentary Constituency at the Counting Centre of Biraspati Parsai SSS, Ranipool.

The dry-run was successful and various reports required by ECI were generated through the online SUVIDHA application system. This online application system is used for both Assembly Constituencies and Parliamentary Constituency.

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## Come June, Sikkim could lose it sole flight out

*Spicejet tells AAI it won't fly to Pakyong unless navigational equipment is installed*

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 21 MAY:**

If media reports are to be believed, Spicejet, the only carrier operating flights out of Sikkim, has decided not to service the Pakyong Airport unless the Airport Authority of India installs navigational equipment at the airport.

A news-report datelined Calcutta and published in The Telegraph today quotes the Regional Sales Manager, East, of Spicejet, Debjit Ghosh, as informing that the airline has decided to withdraw flights to and from Pakyong from 01 June onwards.

The reason cited is the high number of cancellations from Pakyong owing to poor visibility conditions. As per the Regional Sales Manager, the airline was averaging a staggering 20 cancellations per month from Pakyong. The carrier was operation a daily Kolkata-Pakyong-Kolkata flight, a route serviced by a 78-seater Bombardier Q-400 series aircraft.

Ever since the airport was inaugurated by the Prime Minister in September last year, it has been hounded by frequent

cancellations which required booked passengers to take a last-minute drive down to Bagdogra as an alternative. Several VIPs, including the Vice President of India during his recent visit to Sikkim, had to opt for Bagdogra against the planned itinerary of flying direct into Sikkim.

The report in question goes on to explain that in the absence of navigational equipment, the minimum visibility required to land at Pakyong was 5KMs. In comparison, the Calcutta airport, which has the required equipment, can have planes landing when visibility is as low as 50metres.

The report then goes on to quote an unnamed AAI official as explaining that installing the required equipment would require the runway to be at least 150 metres wide. The runway at Pakyong is currently only 80 metres wide.

The unnamed official goes on to explain that the runway cannot be widened because landowners are not agreeing to give land. The land acquisition for the airport has remained a vexed issue for a while now, it may

be recalled.

Be that as it may, what begs question is why none of the planners realized the need for navigational equipment when the airport was being designed. That should be standard equipment for any airport in any hilly region, especially so in a Sikkim with its record of rainy days and foggy winters. Had this been factored in at the beginning itself, adequate land would have been acquired before land acquisition became stuck in the current environment of allegations and counter claims.

Questions probably also need to be asked on whether Pakyong was the best suited location to develop an airport or whether there were better options which were ignored.

These questions will probably never be asked or answered in earnest. Meanwhile, what Sikkim stands to lose is the claim that it enjoys air-connectivity. And yes, it was always only a claim because on ground, this connectivity was always too erratic to be of any consequence.

## Number of counting halls increased

**GANGTOK, 21 MAY (IPR):** The counting of votes for simultaneous Election to Sikkim Parliamentary Constituency and Sikkim Legislative Assembly is scheduled on 23 May, 2019.

The counting shall take place at respective district headquarters by the respective Returning Officers.

As per the direction of the Supreme Court, mandatory verifications of VVPAT paper slips

of randomly selected 5(five) polling stations of Assembly Segments of Sikkim Parliamentary Constituency and Assembly Constituencies has to be conducted after completion of counting of EVMs and Postal Ballots.

Therefore in order to complete counting in time, counting halls in the counting centre earmarked for respective districts have been increased with due approval of the Commission.

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## Sikkim observes Anti-Terrorism Day



**GANGTOK, 21 MAY (IPR):** Sikkim joined the rest of the country in observing Anti-Terrorism Day today to mark the death anniversary of Late Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi who became victim of a terrorist attack in Tamil Nadu on this day in 1991.

Chief Secretary, Government of Sikkim, AK Shrivastava administered the pledge to all the officers and staff of the premises at Tashiling Secretariat.

Every year 21 May is observed as Anti-Terrorism Day, the Day is observed to generate

awareness among all sections of people about the danger of terrorism and violence and its effect on the people, society and the country as a whole.

The pledge taking programme had the presence of HODs of various Departments

and all officers and staff of all the offices situated at Tashiling Secretariat premises.

The Pledge taking ceremony was also observed across the State at all Government offices, Public Sector Undertakings and other Public Institutions.

## Dissent in model code violation cases won't be made public: EC

**NEW DELHI, MAY 21 (PTI):** Rejecting the demand of Election Commissioner Ashok Lavasa, the 'full commission' Tuesday ruled that dissents and minority views in EC orders in cases of model code violations would not be made public.

The dissent notes and minority views would remain part of records as it is the case now, the Election Commission (EC) said in a statement.

"In the meeting of the Election Commission held today regarding the issue of MCC (Model Code of Conduct), it was inter alia decided that proceedings of the commission's meetings would be drawn, including the views of all the commission members.

"Thereafter, formal instructions to this effect would be issued in consonance with extant laws/



rules, etc," the poll panel said in a statement.

Lavasa has recused himself from MCC violation cases, saying his dissent was not being made part of the orders.

He had given his dissent in some of the commission's clean chits to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and BJP president Amit Shah in complaints of MCC violations.

The EC had maintained that since the poll code violation cases are not quasi judicial in nature, they are not signed by the chief elec-

tion commissioner (CEC) and fellow commissioners, and thus, the dissent cannot be made part of the order.

"Status quo will be maintained. Dissent will not be made public but would form part of EC records," explained an official.

As per the law governing the functioning of the EC, efforts should have an unanimity, but in the case of a dissent, a majority (2:1) view prevails.

The full commission comprises CEC Sunil Arora and fellow commissioners Lavasa and Sushil Chandra.

## Legal Services Camp held at Mangshila



**WANGCHUK BHUTIA  
DZONGU, 20 MAY:**

Legal Services Camp As per newly approved (revised) model of NALSA on the core theme and scheme NALSA (Victims of Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation) Scheme 2015 was held at GVK Mangshila on 20 May.

Stalls and help desks were set up by different government departments which had also participated in the said programme. The programme was chaired by

District and Sessions Judge-cum-Chairperson DLSA, Sonam Palden Bhutia.

The main Resource persons were Advocate, Sonam Phuti Bhutia, DCPO North, Wendy Mair Lepcha, DCSO North, Palden Lachungpa, Dr Anita Gurung Phodong PHC, Welfare Inspector, Adarsh Shreshta and Dipen Lamichaney, and PLV, Mingma Doma Bhutia.

Legal Rights and various schemes of the concerned departments

were discussed during the programme. Prevention of Immoral Trafficking Act was discussed at length along with POC SO Act, Protection of women from Domestic Violence, Juvenile Justice Care and protection act, 2015, Protection of women from Domestic Violence Act was also discussed in the camp.

The gathering was also appraised about various beneficial social schemes. Around 150 persons were present in the said camp mainly

## Sikkim girl debuts in International Air Rifle Tourney

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 21 MAY:**

Sikkim born shooting talent, Devanshi Agarwal participated in her first International Tournament securing 612.8 points to be placed in the 34th position in 10m Air Rifle Women Junior category at the International Shooting Competition (under 21) at Hanover, Germany held from 03-12 May.

She was one of the youngest participants (aged 15) in the tournament that featured 96 participants from 38 different countries. Earlier at the 50th Grand Prix of Liberation held at Plzen, Czech Republic, she had scored 608.5 points.

Speaking from her hometown Singtam, Devanshi says it was the proudest moment wearing the Indian jersey and playing for the country.

"That moment can-



not be described in words. Shooters from all over the world had proudly dressed up in their respective jerseys. It was ecstatic to see all of them. The skills and tricks which they used were another reason to cherish, all of them trying their level best," she said.

In Czech Republic, it was an open championship; there were no

age categories, so that added to the excitement, she shared.

"In Hanover, I was in the under 21 category, it was a little difficult for me to adjust to that new range but it gradually changed," she further added.

On participating in her first international tournament, Devanshi said that there was a huge difference in

the competitions held in India and abroad. There are more and better shooters and the way the tournament was organized was also different, she said.

In the Air Pistol Junior Women category, another Sikkimese talent, Tusitta Rai scored 517 points securing 46th position. Both Devanshi Agarwal and Tusita Rai study at

Ecole Globale International Girls' School, Dehradun. School Head Coach, Shiv Lal Dogra, had also accompanied them at the two tournaments.

Both the shooters achieved the distinction of becoming the first from Sikkim to represent India and an International event. [from Shital Pradhan]



# State officials go on exposure-cum-study tour to Japan

**GANGTOK, 21 MAY (IPR):**

A team of six officers led by Chief Secretary, AK Shrivastava and Principal secretary-cum-PCCF and Chief Project Director, ML Shrivastava under JICA assisted Sikkim Biodiversity Forest Conservation and Management Project, Government of Sikkim, had undertaken study cum exposure trip to Japan from 14 Apr to 20 Apr, to gain exposure and knowledge on forest management, biodiversity conservation, ecotourism promotion, cultural tourism activities as practised in Japan and to replicate good practices followed in Japan as per the suitability in Sikkim context.

The team reached Tokyo on 14 Apr and held a meeting with Japan International Cooperation Agency officials at its headquarters in Tokyo, Japan. The meeting with JICA Officials at JICA Headquarters (Tokyo, Japan) was held on 15 Apr.

The meeting was attended by Director General, Shdrei Hara, JICA,



Deputy Director General, Terayuki Ito, JICA, Deputy Director, Takumi Kunitake, JICA and Deputy Director from JICA, Shigete Ikeda, Headquarters, Tokyo, Japan and from the visiting delegation, Chief Secretary, AK Shrivastava, Govt of Sikkim, Principal Secretary-cum-PCCF and Chief Project Director, ML Shrivastava, SBFP-JICA, Project Director, NW Tamanag, SBFP-JICA, Addl Project Director, M Ravikumar, SBFP-JICA, DFO, Sonam Norden Bhutia, Administration, SBFP-JICA

CA and SFS, DFO, Arati Basnet, Ecotourism, SBFP-JICA.

The Chief Secretary and Principal Secretary-cum-PCCF and Chief Project Director highlighted the achievements made by Sikkim on environmental front such as declaration of Khangchendzonga National Park as UNESCO World Heritage Site under mixed category (natural and cultural), declaration of Sikkim as the first organic State of the world and achievements made in the field of education,

health, tourism, etc.

The achievements made in increase of forest cover in Sikkim and contribution of the interventions through SBFP-JICA Project, infrastructure development for the Department and Ecotourism, Biodiversity Conservation and people participation in the management of forests. The JICA officials expressed satisfaction over financial achievement made under SBFP-JICA Project and insisted on the timely completion of SBFP-JICA

CA Project in Sikkim.

During the trip, the team visited the Asakusa Shrine, the imperial palace, Fujinomiya, Fuji-hakone National Park, Mt Fuji World Heritage Centre, Osaka and Kyoto.

Over all the this study tour to Japan is immensely useful for the delegation to study the forest management, biodiversity conservation, ecotourism initiatives, etc in Japan and also helped in exchange of ideas with JICA Headquarters and officials of Japan Government.

The best practices learnt in Japan will be replicated in Sikkim with modification to the local context and the different sectors like Forests, Wildlife, Biodiversity and Ecotourism will be considered for implementation of such practices. The consultation and coordination from the line departments will also be considered to implement the best practices learnt in Japan.

## Anti-Terrorism Day observed in North



**MANGAN, 21 MAY (IPR):** District Administrative Centre (DAC), North, observed Anti-Terrorism Day at DAC, Mangan. The

pledge was administered by District Magistrate, Raj Yadav, North. Anti-Terrorism day was also observed in Sub-Division

and Block Administrative Centre (BAC) of the district where pledge was administered by SDMs, BDOs and HODs.

## South all prepped for counting

**NAMCHI, 21 MAY (IPR):** The Returning Officer (South), Ragul K informed that the counting of votes shall be conducted in the counting centre established at Namchi Senior Secondary School. He added that there are six counting halls in this centre. Hall No 1, 2 and 3 will be used for counting of Assembly Constituencies. Similarly, Hall No 4, 5 and 6 will be used for Assembly Segments of Parliamentary Constituencies.

In Hall No 1 votes of Assembly Constituencies 09 Barfung, 12 Melli and 14 Temi Namphing will be counted. Likewise, in Hall No 2 votes of 10 Poklok-Kamrang, 13 Namthang Rateypani and 16 Tumin Lingi will be counted and in Hall No 3, 32 Sangha, 11 Namchi Singhithang and 15 Rangang Yangang Assembly constituencies will be counted.

In Hall No 4 counting

for Assembly segments of parliamentary constituencies namely 09 Barfung, 12 Melli and 14 Temi Namphing will be done. Hall No 5 will see the counting of Assembly segments of parliamentary constituencies of 10 Poklok Kamrang, 13 Namthang Rateypani and 16 Tumin Lingi. Hall No 6 will have Assembly segments of parliamentary constituencies of 11 Namchi Singhithang and 15 Rangang Yangang.

The strong room will be opened at 6:30am in the presence of the General Observers, Returning Officer and contesting candidates.

Additionally, the RO mentioned that four General Observers, Dharam Pal, Rajesh Jopgal, Shrish Chandra Verma and Tribhuwan Pati who have been appointed by the Election Commission of India have already arrived in Namchi for the

purpose of counting. The RO updated that these general observers have trained the micro observers on the various facets of counting at the conference hall of DAC today.

Dharam Pal also visited the counting centre and verified the security arrangements. The RO said that the entire IT and communication systems have been checked during the dry run which was conducted at 8:00am today.

It may be mentioned that an elaborate arrangement for the candidates, election agents and their supporters have already been done by South District Administration. The RO also requested the general public to abide with the provision put up on the day of counting including proper maintenance of law and order for smooth and peaceful counting of votes.

## Int'l Museum Day observed at Himalaya World Museum



**SUMMIT REPORT**

**GANGTOK, 21 MAY:**

Himalayan Heritage Research and Development Society, Bhurung Basti, Central Pandam, Sikkim observed International Museum Day at Himalaya World Museum, Bagdogra on Saturday, a press release informs.

On the occasion cultural programmes, seminar and award ceremony was organized. The three eminent personalities have been conferred with the Dooars Mitra National Award-2019 for their outstanding contribution in safeguarding, promotion and preservation of the cultural heritage at

Doors region. Arun Kumar (journalist), Pradosh Ranjan Saha (journalist) and Pramod Nath (scholar and author) were felicitated on the day.

A seminar on the topic "Museums as Cultural Hubs: The future of tradition" was held. The seminar was chaired by eminent Indologist and founder of the Himalaya World Museum, Prof. (Dr) Om Prakash Bharti.

Dr Bharti informed that the museum is open for all visitors throughout the week at its camp office and collection centre, Bhuttabari near Bagdogra International Airport, where about 300 masks, 100 musical

instruments, 130 ornaments and other households and artifacts are in display.

However, its collections are much more rich and diverse, comprising of 1500 ethnographic objects, 800 photographs, 300 manuscripts, printed works and musical instruments, 250 ornaments, 450 masks and other household objects and artifacts.

Two-acre land has been acquired for construction of permanent museum near Bagdogra International Airport of Darjeeling district of Eastern Himalayas, the release informs.

## Training on chaff-cutter held at Malbaisey



**SUMMIT REPORT**

**GANGTOK, 21 MAY:**

A training on maintenance of power operated chaff cutter was organized by the Agricultural Engineering cell of the Agriculture Department at Malbaisey

VLW Circle today. 50 people recruited under the "One Family, One Job" scheme attended the training offered by Executive Engineer (W), Jigme D Lepcha, a press release informs.

## East all set for counting

**GANGTOK, 21 MAY (IPR):** DEO East, Kapil Meena has informed that all necessary preparations for Counting Day have been made as per the latest rules and directions of Election Commission of India. The required number of Counting Officials have been trained in 2 rounds of training along with training imparted to Micro-Observers.

Other important officials including Assistant Returning Officers, support staffs, EVM/VVPAT transport teams, videographers etc. have been briefed on their roles and responsibilities.

For maintaining law and order, all 10 BDOs are designated as Sector

Magistrates for respective blocks to see law and order issues.

DEO further informed that at the Counting Centre, 10 Sector Magistrates have been deployed for manning various counting halls as well as for law and order at Biraspati Parsai Senior Secondary School ground meant for candidates supporters. SDM Rongli will be overall Magistrate In-charge for the Counting Centre to supervise the Sector Magistrates.

DEO, Mr Meena also mentioned that each and every vital activity and point inside Counting Centre shall be either covered by CCTVs or will be videographed.

## Cong pays tribute to Rajiv Gandhi

**SUMMIT REPORT**

**GANGTOK, 21 MAY:**

Sikkim Pradesh Congress Committee [SPCC] paid tribute to former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi at the party office here at 6th Mile, Tadong, on Tuesday to mark his death anniversary.

SPCC president, Bharat Basnet, senior leader, PL Gurung, Sumitra Rai and Ani-

ta Gurung and other leaders and workers of the party attended the somber function.

An SPCC press release informs that Mr Basnet spoke on the life and contributions of the late Prime Minister and about why it was important for the people of the country and Congress workers to understand his sacrifice.

## Mamring School observes Anti-Terrorism Day



**SUMMIT REPORT**

**GANGTOK, 21 MAY:**

The NSS unit and SAATHI cell of Mamring Senior Secondary School, East, today jointly organised a special observance of Anti-Terrorism Day.

The Day is observed to remember people killed in terrorist attacks and to condemn all acts of terrorism, create awareness among staff and students to spread harmony and peace.

A speech on the importance of observing Anti-Terrorism Day was

delivered by GTA, Bikash Bhattarai.

He pointed out that many countries are affected severely by terrorism.

"It's an act of cowardice that is against the constitution, democracy, established norms and peace. Terrorists mostly target crowds and innocent people and create panic among masses," he remarked.

Vice Principal IP Khatiwara addressed the gathering sharing some valuable strategies adopted so far to combat

terrorism. He stressed that no religion promotes terrorism and that terrorism knows no religion.

An oath of affirmation against terrorism was also administered to everyone present by Mr Bhattarai who is also the SAATHI Coordinator and NSS Program Officer of the school.

The program, held under the directions of the Principal, Prahlad Sharma, was attended by the staff and students of the school.

## Ghazal by Melina Rai released

**SUMMIT REPORT**

**GANGTOK, 21 MAY:**

Melina Rai of 'Kutu ma Kirtu' fame released her first ever ghazal 'Aadha' today on the YouTube channel, OSR Digital. The ghazal is written by Khushendra Rai of Sikkim and is from his album by the same name which will be released on

Youtube on Wednesday, a press release informs.

The ghazal was recorded in Kathmandu and the visual has been released under the banner of Parul Production, Sikkim. 'Aadha', the ghazal is a representation of the extremely busy and self-centred society, the release mentions.

The video has been directed by Director/Cinematographer, Pallawib Rai from Darjeeling and stars Raja Puniani and Puja Kadel. The music has been composed by Diwas Gurung of Darjeeling and arranged by Jiwan Prakash Pradhan.

## PNGS celebrates 96th Founder's Day

**SUMMIT REPORT**

**GANGTOK, 21 MAY:**

Paljor Namgyal Girls School celebrated its 96th School Founder's Day and Thanks Giving Ceremony today at the school premises.

The chief guest of the day was Director, (SCERT- HRDD), Dr. Robin Chettri along with the guest of honour, Imba Raj, Director of School Education and the members of Science faculty, SCERT, a

press release informs.

Also present were Reverend Bijoy Chettri, EPCS, Reverend Jenus Lepcha, CNI, former teachers, students, well-wishers and other distinguished guests as special invitees.

The Science Faculty organised an exhibition of its various ATL Projects completed by students and final selection rounds of best three

student Drone Pilots was conducted. The chief guest presented 3-D printed pilot badges to the selected students and wished them good luck for the upcoming Inter House Drone Competition in 1st Week of June 2019.

The School Founder's Day and Thanks Giving ceremony concluded with the school song and benediction by Reverend Bijoy Chettri, EPCS, Gangtok.

## SBJM donates water purifier to Pangthang school



**SUMMIT REPORT**

**GANGTOK, 21 MAY:**

Sikkim Bihari Jagran Manch, Central committee visited Government Junior High School, Pangthang in East Sikkim today, a press release informs. During their visit, they met with

the staff members and also interacted with students and provided Voltas water purifiers to the school students which will ensure safe drinking water facilities in the school.

The program was chaired by State president, Swami-

nath Prasad, State general secretary, Birendra Prasad along with other executive members. The president also ensured to provide a helping hand in case of any help required by the school in near future also.



## Siana Glam Miss Sikkim auditions underway

REBYNA RANA

**GANGTOK, 21 MAY:**

Siana Glam Miss Sikkim and Glam Miss Teen Sikkim, 2019 held its first audition here at the capital on 11-12 May, 2019. After Gangtok, the second audition was held in Namchi on 18 and 19 May, 2019. The next audition is scheduled to be held at Jorethang on 02 June.

Siana Glam Miss Sikkim and Glam Miss Teen Sikkim, 2019 contest is organised by the event management company, Siana Glam World. Siana Glam Miss Sikkim and Glam Miss Teen Sikkim, 2019 is the first of its kind pageant in Sikkim as the event has been organised in association with Gla-

manand Supermodel India, wherein the winners of the pageant will get direct entry into the Glamanand Supermodel India and Miss Teen India, 2019.

The goal of the pageant is to empower each contestant with personality, grooming and enrich their confidence providing them with a platform to showcase their talents and potential.

Chairperson for Siana Glam World, Srijana Bista told SummitTIMES that the main motive of the organisation is to give the best platform to aspiring girls from Sikkim in the glamour world, providing the winners national and international platforms.



## Buddhist shrine at Statue of Unity finalized

**SUMMIT REPORT**

**GANGTOK, 21 MAY:**

The Pang Lhabsoi Celebration Committee at the Statue of Unity, MG Marg, Gangtok, Sikkim, successfully conducted a workshop on the theme of Pang Lhabsoi & Unity, on 19 May.

A press release informs that the basic objective of the workshop was to seek advice and inputs from monks, intellectuals, organizations and concerned members of the Sikkimese society in the overall construction of the Dome and other components of the Complex. The daylong deliberation was held in the statue of Unity complex, MG Marg, Sikkim.

Welcome address was delivered by general secretary, Namgyal Lepcha followed by presentation on the journey of



construction of Statues and Dome by president PLCC, T Lachungpa.

Dr Hishey Wangchuck gave a PowerPoint Presentation highlighting various religious and cultural aspects. This was followed by PPT by Dr Kunzang N Lachungpa and Jigme Wangchuck on the details of the Buddhist Choesam (Shrine).

Lopen Tempo Gyatso presented a Thanka representing "Refuge Tree of Rigzen Sogdrup" to the president of PLCC and another one to the exec-

utive committee of the PLCC.

The draft drawing of the Lepcha shrine was also shared in the workshop by vice president, Tseten Lepcha.

After due deliberations it was decided that idols of 'Nalor Chyedzee', comprising Gyalwa Lhachun Chhinpo, Kathok Kunka Zangpo, Ngadag Sempa Chhinpo, Chogyal Phuntsog Namgyal and a large size idol of Guru Rinpoche will be installed. Further, the

Neysol texts will be kept in the shrine.

As per the advice of Lopen Tempo Gyatso, other aspects of the Shrine should be in conformity with the Choesam in Tsuklakhang (Royal Chapel), the release mentions.

A study team was also constituted to carry forth proper research and publication on Pang Lhabsoi, Unity (Brotherhood) and other related historical, cultural & religious with option for including other scholars.

## East holds final briefing for counting day

### Number of counting halls doubled to speed up process



**GANGTOK, 21 MAY (IPR):**

The final meeting for discussion on arrangements for the counting of votes with the candidates and political representatives was conducted at the Conference Hall of DAC Sichey today. The meeting was chaired by DC-cum-DEO East, Kapil Meena in presence of Observers, Kumar Rajeev and Ameyah Abhyankar, SP (East), Hemraj Rai, ADC (East), Bharani Kumar, SDMs and other officials.

The DEO East said that the number of Counting Halls have been increased from 4 to 8 halls at the Biraspati Parsai SSS in order to make the process of counting swift and error free. He also mentioned about the various instructions of Election Commission of India including timely completion and other important guidelines which the attendees need to follow during the process of counting.

The DEO also briefed them extensively on the arrangements of the counting halls and explained at length about the counting of Postal Ballots, Counting of Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballots, Counting of Votes recorded in EVMs, Counting of VVPAT slips and Compilation of data. He also spoke in depth about the filling of different forms, compilation of data and other necessary procedures to be followed.

While speaking further, the DEO informed that mobile phones and electronic items will be totally prohibited inside the counting halls, however, a separate collection room has been identified for storing of the electronic gadgets. The DC informed that the candidates' election agents and counting agents will not be allowed to enter the counting halls without valid identity cards issued by the authority.

Similarly, a Media Centre, a Medical Unit Room and a reserve Counting staff room has also been set up inside the complex.

The DEO also informed that the Strong room will be opened on 23 May, 2019 at 7:00am in the presence of Observer, candidates and their election agents and Counting will commence from 8 am sharp. Counting will start with Postal Ballot counting first followed by EVM Counting thereafter.

He also stated that the round wise and final results will be announced via loudspeaker which will be placed in all corners of the ground. It was also informed that the results can be accessed at the ECI website and it will also be updated simultaneously on the Government of Sikkim Facebook page as well as DM Gangtok East Sikkim Facebook page.

SP(East) in his address briefed about the

security and traffic arrangements for Counting day and requested everyone present to cooperate with the security personnel. He urged the political representatives to maintain self-discipline and quorum during the counting period and stated that Section 144 CrPc is still imposed in the whole state and thus to refrain from any kind of unethical activity and no major rallies/procession can be carried out without prior permission from the District Administration.

DEO East informed that only the designated Counting Agents must come and enter those Counting Halls where counting of their respective Constituencies is taking place. For Sangha AC and 01-Sikkim PC the results will be compiled by East District and the Returning Officer/DM East who shall announce the final results.

## Ranipool FC beats NDFA while Sumin FC outplays Queen Valley FC in C-Div league

**SAGAR CHHETRI**

**GANGTOK, 21 MAY:**

Ranipool Football Club beat North District Football Association 2-1 in its first match of the ongoing Sikkim Football Association C-Division Sikkim League 2019 here at Paljor Stadium on Tuesday.

A brace by Kinchok helped Ranipool FC register a victory in its first match of league and bag

three points. The solitary goal for North District FA was scored by Patrick.

In the second match of the day, Sumin Football Club trashed Queen Valley FC of Penlong 8-0. Ganesh Chettri scored a hat-trick for Sumin FC, while Yogesh Mangar struck a brace and Rigyal Tamang, Sagar Chettri and Keshav Chandra contributed a goal each towards the team's victory.

Twelve teams from all four districts are participating in the fortnight-long C-Division league kicked-off yesterday. The league is being organised by Sikkim Football Association.

On Wednesday, Sanju Football Academy, Sombaria will take on Namthang Football Club in the first match at 12 noon, which will be followed by a match

## IHRC members submit report to Governor



**SUMMIT REPORT**

**GANGTOK, 21 MAY:**

An 8-member delegation of the International Human Right Council, Sikkim, led by IHRC Sikkim State President, Ganesh Sharma, called on Governor Ganga Prasad at Raj Bhavan and submitted the detailed report of the IHRC to him.

## Sikkim to get its first business incubator AIC- SMUTBI by mid June

**SUMMIT REPORT**

**RANGPO, 21 MAY:**

The AIC-SMU Technology and Business Incubator (AIC-SMUTBI) is all set for its inauguration by mid-June 2019 at the SMIT Campus, Majhitar. Aiming at providing world-class state-of-the-art facilities to the start-ups, it is one of the 100 incubators envisioned by the Government of India through NITI Aayog, selected among the 2676 applicants from across the nation. With the gestation period of the start-up expected to be for a maximum duration of 3 years or Rs 20 crore of revenue (whichever earlier), the incubator boasts of being the state's first incubation center and the only Atal Incubation Centre in the North East.

AIC-SMUTBI received a grant-in-aid of Rs 8 crore to set up the center, the construction of which is in its final stages at the SMIT Campus. Housing a dedicated co-working space with a 50 seat capacity accessible 24x7 with the internet, it also has two board rooms with the best-in-class with a capacity of 20 and 40 seats to enable business meetings with potential clients for start-ups. Branding, Consulting and Partner services are some of the

few value additions in the incubator.

The incubation center spans in an area of approximately 1200 square feet along with a pool of other services like state-of-the-art fabrication lab with 3-D printers and scanners, CNC-routing machines, drilling mills and Printed Circuit Board (PCB) printer, etc. It also hosts one of the finest collections of equipment in its Makers' Space.

Moreover, the incubator has already signed MOUs with Amazon Cloud Services, CISCO Network, Intuit, etc. to support start-ups at all stages from the idea stage to the growth stage. Free cloud credit up \$5000 (valid for 4-5 years) is confirmed to be provided by Amazon to incubate, CISCO shall provide the best video conferencing network services through its CSR. Intuit, a Germany based company is also providing financial consultancy services to all its startups.

Speaking to the media, Chief Executive Officer, Prof Tejbanta S Chingtham,

AIC-SMUTBI said, "We have persistently encouraged not only the students but also the young aspiring entrepreneurs of the region to hone their skills in generating valued human resource rather than traditional manpower that feeds the need of the industry". As a result, there has been a surge in the number of aspiring entrepreneurs in the region whose innovative ideas need to be nurtured for the growth and development of them as individuals and in a broader view, the nation as a whole, he added.

Prof. Chingtham further extended his invitation to the young and entrepreneurial minds of Sikkim as well as the North East to take advantage of this world-class facility as such resources at our doorstep duly supported by the Government of India is no less than a dream for aspiring entrepreneurs, he said. He also expressed his gratitude towards the Board of Directors and the Board of Mentors for their support. [from Sanjay Agarwal]

## Missing you always, Daddy!



*There's a special kind of feeling when we think about you...*

**Dad, it's a pleasure to remember all the happy times we've had. There's a special kind of caring that is meant for you alone.**

There's a place somewhere within our heart that only you can own. Missing you always, Daddy. Your ever loving Roma, Annapurna, Puran, Ahaan and Jed

## ~ SummitTIMES ~ CLASSIFIEDS

### DOCUMENTS LOST

I lost my original admit card and class X pass certificate bearing Roll No- 3124603, govt. Girls Secondary School, Namchi(05436) and Class XII pass certificate bearing Roll No. 3222865, Govt. Sr. Secondary School, Soreng (05457), kept in a file got missing near Sikkim Manipal University (SMU). GD has been lodged accordingly. Whoever finds it will be rewarded. - Dr. Sajna Poudyal, Jorethang CHC. Contact no. 0593915041.

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

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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.



## Urban Woes

*Someone please take the lead on urban planning*

The municipal experiment in Sikkim is now of reasonable maturity to move beyond cleanliness drives and attempt some intelligent urban planning. Elected representatives, even if they have mostly arrived unopposed and did not need to campaign for votes, have a responsibility towards their constituents which should expand beyond the routine chief guest duties. Most of them have even been sponsored on study tours and must have completed several awareness sessions and workshops on urban planning. What is more, since they belong to the places they have elected from, they also know what is required, what the people want and what is possible. Now, what remains is to see them invest this knowledge and responsibility into urban planning. People's representatives in the urban local bodies need to be allowed a more involved role in this aspect because they would be able to table the best advice and speak the people's expectations. Of course, it is another matter that there appears to be no inclination towards urban planning anywhere. But let's let that be for now and focus on what the State requires for its urban spaces.

Since the municipal councils and nagar panchayats are new to the concept of urban identities, they will have to take Gangtok's lead. So where is Gangtok by way of planning? For whatever the officers might claim, the capital town is not really headed in any particular direction except getting crowded around already stressed clusters. Some years ago, an exhibition was held in town detailing a slew of what were presented as "urban infrastructural facilities" proposed for Gangtok. These, however, were essentially civil-engineering obsessed constructions and did not extend to explain how they would be serviced. There can be no protest against more pedestrian paths and foot over-bridges, or for that matter more parking lots and improved marketing avenues for produce from rural Sikkim. Several of these proposal are in various stages of suspended animation, and some have been completed and sit now as examples of slack planning and poor follow-up. If the finances allow, even the extravagance of a Fashion Street or a Gangtok Tower hugged by two bewildered red pandas and a revolving restaurant on top can be suffered, or enjoyed by the aesthetically challenged, as the case might be.

When one looks at all the facilities being proposed in the capital though, two things stick out as worries – one, almost all projects are huddled in the MG Marg to Deorali stretch, and two, there is nothing for the children (and no, cement pandas don't count). Till a few years back, the urban spread of Gangtok was limited to the stretch from MG Marg to Deorali, but this has now expanded almost right down till Ranipool on one end and up to Bojoghari at the other extremity. Traffic into and out of town is already jammed, and inserting more parking lots, office buildings and shopping complexes to this huddle will only create a series of bottlenecks which the present road, with no scope of expansion, will not be able to handle. Spreading these facilities across the GMC area should be an option that the planners seriously consider. Planning needs to look into the future requirements and while the need for parking space is acute around the main town area, it is only a matter of very few years before the rest of the GMC feels the stress as well.

It will be in everyone's interest if better coordination is incorporated into planning and parking concerns addressed along with the creation of new infrastructure. In this regard, one needs to look at the absence of such planning in the relocation of the District Administrative Centre to Sichey from the heart of town. Parking is now a major concern there, but would not have been so if it had been factored into the project at the design and proposal stage itself. The capital will also breathe much easier with the relocation of some, if not all, of the mega smart city type projects.

Move around Gangtok, and concrete monsters with names like "Old Children's Park Taxi Stand" and "Old West Point School Private Bus Stand" [now, just Private Bus Stand] and another, still unnamed or inaugurated, parking lot on what was a glade which could have been developed into a good park, reveal what we have stolen shamelessly from the young. Their spaces have been appropriated to accommodate excesses the elders indulge in, and what is worse, no compensatory allocation has been made out to them. MG Marg was developed as a tourist amenity and it is only by default that it has also become a safe place for kids to play. The planners need to be specifically directed by the policy-makers to start looking out for the young now. What the GMC can also consider is setting aside a special fund to help with the upkeep of grounds and campuses of schools, even private schools, in the GMC area on the condition that the school authorities keep them open for kids after school.

The role that elected representatives in urban local bodies can most effectively play is that of a link between residents, urban planners and professional architects. This connection should be sustained to keep goading planning to work in sync with aspirations and felt-needs of the people and the necessary collaborations nurtured to ensure that the limited opportunities are harnessed to the best. The urban bodies elsewhere in the State should look at Gangtok first to avoid the mistakes that the capital made, and second, hope that Gangtok takes the lead for the rest

# The Earth's magnetic north pole is shifting rapidly – so what will happen to the northern lights?

NATHAN CASE  
theconversation.com

Like most planets in our solar system, the Earth has its own magnetic field. Thanks to its largely molten iron core, our planet is in fact a bit like a bar magnet. It has a north and south magnetic pole, separate from the geographic poles, with a field connecting the two. This field protects our planet from radiation and is responsible for creating the northern and southern lights – spectacular events that are only visible near the magnetic poles.

However, with reports that the magnetic north pole has started moving swiftly at 50km per year – and may soon be over Siberia – it has long been unclear whether the northern lights will move too. Now a new study, published in Geophysical Research Letters, has come up with an answer.

Our planetary magnetic field has many advantages. For over 2,000 years, travellers have been able to use it to navigate across the globe. Some animals even seem to be able to find their way thanks to the magnetic field. But, more importantly than that, our geomagnetic field helps protect all life on Earth.

Earth's magnetic field extends hundreds of thousands of kilometres out from the centre of our planet – stretching right out into interplanetary space, forming what scientists call a "magnetosphere". This magnetosphere helps to deflect solar radiation and cosmic rays, preventing the destruction of our atmosphere. This protective magnetic bubble isn't perfect though, and some solar matter and energy can transfer into our magnetosphere. As it is then funnelled into the poles by the field, it results in the spectacular displays of the northern lights.

### A WANDERING POLE

Since Earth's magnetic field is created by its moving, molten iron core, its poles aren't stationary and they wander independently of one another. In fact, since its first formal discovery in 1831, the north magnetic pole has travelled over 2,000km from the



Boothia Peninsula in the far north of Canada to high in the Arctic Sea. This wandering has generally been quite slow, around 9km a year, allowing scientists to easily keep track of its position. But since the turn of the century, this speed has increased to 50km a year. The south magnetic pole is also moving, though at a much slower rate (10-15km a year).

This rapid wandering of the north magnetic pole has caused some problems for scientists and navigators alike. Computer models of where the north magnetic pole might be in the future have become seriously outdated, making accurate compass-based navigation difficult. Although GPS does work, it can sometimes be unreliable in the polar regions. In fact, the pole is moving so quickly that scientists responsible for mapping the Earth's magnetic field were recently forced to update their model much earlier than expected.

### WILL THE AURORA MOVE?

The aurora generally form in an oval about the magnetic poles, and so if those poles move, it stands to reason that the aurora might too. With predictions suggesting that the north pole will soon be approaching northern Siberia, what effect might that have on the aurora?

The northern lights are currently mostly visible from northern Europe,

Canada and the northern US. If, however, they shifted north, across the geographic pole, following the north magnetic pole, then that could well change. Instead, the northern lights would become more visible from Siberia and northern Russia and less visible from the much more densely populated US/Canadian border.

Fortunately, for those aurora hunters in the northern hemisphere, it seems as though this might not actually be the case. A recent study made a computer model of the aurora and the Earth's magnetic poles based on data dating back to 1965. It showed that rather than following the magnetic poles, the aurora follows the "geomagnetic poles" instead. There's only a small difference between these two types of poles – but it's an important one.

The magnetic poles are the points on the Earth's surface where a compass needle points downwards or upwards, vertically. They aren't necessarily connected and drawing a line between these points, through the Earth, would not necessarily cross its centre. Therefore, to make better models over time, scientists assume that the Earth is like a bar magnet at its centre, creating poles that are exactly opposite each other – "antipodal". This means that if we drew a line between these points, the line would

cross directly through the Earth's centre. At the points where that line crosses the Earth's surface, we have the geomagnetic poles.

The geomagnetic poles are a kind of reliable, averaged out version of the magnetic poles, which move erratically all the time. Because of that, it turns out they aren't moving anywhere near as fast as the magnetic north pole is. And since the aurora seems to follow the more averaged version of the magnetic field, it means that the northern lights aren't moving that fast either. It seems as though the aurora are staying where they are – at least for now.

We already know that the magnetic pole moves. Both poles have wandered ever since the Earth existed. In fact, the poles even flip over, with north becoming south and south becoming north. These magnetic reversals have occurred throughout history, every 450,000 years or so on average. The last reversal occurred 780,000 years ago meaning we could be due a reversal soon.

So rest assured that a wandering pole, even a fast one, shouldn't cause too many problems – except for those scientists whose job it is to model it.

*[the writer is Senior Research Associate in Space and Planetary Physics, Lancaster University]*

# Political cartoonists are out of touch – it's time to make way for memes

JENNIFER GRYGIEL  
theconversation.com

The New York Times came under fire after a political cartoon appeared in print on April 25, 2019. In it, a blind President Donald Trump, wearing sunglasses and a yarmulke, leads, with a leash, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who's depicted as a dog with a Star of David around his neck.

The Times later issued an apology, called the cartoon "anti-Semitic," and announced that it would discipline the editor and enhance its bias training. The newspaper also indicated that it will no longer use the syndication service that supplied the cartoon.

To some, this might appear to be a significant move. But it fails to address larger problems with editorial cartooning – namely, the ranks of cartoonists are too white, too old and too male.

As a scholar who studies social media and memetics, I wonder if political cartoons are the best way to connect with today's diverse readership. Many crave searing, cutting political commentary – and they're finding it in internet memes.

What if internet memes were elevated – not only as a serious art form but also as an important form of editorializing that's worthy of appearing alongside the traditional cartoon?

### BEHIND THE TIMES

Newspapers and magazine editors still rely on political cartoons to capture readers' attention and to deliver some lighter material alongside heavier news stories. The need for this content isn't going away, nor is the need for forms of communication that challenge governments and open up important public discussions – a role the political cartoonist has long held.

But in many ways, political cartooning can seem like a relic of a bygone era.

A 2015 Washington Post report also underscored the lack of diversity among political cartoonists in newsrooms, noting how not a single black individual was employed as one.

Then there's journalism's top prize, the Pulitzer.

An extensive 2016 study by the Columbia Journalism Review unveiled how the ranks of editorial cartoon Pulitzer winners have been largely dominated by white men. Since 1922, only two wom-

en have received a Pulitzer in this category, and it wasn't awarded to an African American until this year, when syndicated cartoonist Darrin Bell became the first to receive the award.

One roadblock to diversifying the ranks of political cartoonists is that the potential pool of candidates is limited. Few have the technical skill to draw pen-and-ink drollery, the common style for political cartooning.

Another has to do with industry trends. A 2017 study found that many newspapers don't even employ an editorial cartoonist anymore. Instead, they've come to rely on less expensive syndication services.

### A MORE DEMOCRATIC FORM

Given the important function of the political cartoon, simply discontinuing their use serves no one, including publishers.

But the field's high barrier to entry – not to mention the time it takes to actually produce a cartoon – clearly poses a problem. A new, quicker and more inclusive solution to political commentary is needed.

The political cartoon is technically a meme, which is simply any piece of culture that can be copied or replicated.

A different sort of political cartoon, the internet meme, dominates on social media. Often crudely constructed, they're far easier to create than, say, your typical New Yorker political cartoon. Many simply appear as a photo with text overlay, something that can be made within a few minutes via an online meme generator or mobile app. But the lack of technical skill needed means that they're democratic in nature – and those that resonate the best will get shared the most and rise to the top.

A new common meme format simply entails brief, humorous, text-based commentary. Words are memes, after all, and they can be used to communicate ideas very quickly and clearly, which avoids some of the issues with visual rhetoric such as misinterpretation or misrepresentation – the exact sort of thing that happened with The New York Times cartoon.

### MEMERS OF THE WORLD, UNITE!

Cartooning is undoubtedly a skilled art form. But in 2019, an ugly internet meme that uses a screen grab from "The Office" and quippy text overlay can have just as much clout – if not more –

than a sophisticated political cartoon.

Internet memes increasingly play a role in politics and even have the power to influence elections. Facebook groups with hundreds of thousands of followers are dedicated entirely to propagating and spreading political internet memes, such as the Bernie Sanders Dank Meme Stash and God Emperor Trump.

Politics has become, in many ways – as campaign strategist Doyle Canning put it – "a battle of the memes."

Some publishers and media outlets understand the value of user-generated content in political discourse and news gathering. For example, BuzzFeed occasionally posts lighthearted political internet memes on its social media platforms that speak to a younger audience. The Associated Press employs user-generated content editors who comb social media platforms for important images associated with news events.

Memers, meanwhile, are beginning to see their role in driving internet traffic – and ad revenue – and are beginning to formalize their work and employment as content creators. They're even beginning to organize, with some groups seeking union status. It's possible that new syndication services may develop for political memes out of these efforts.

But there have been few signs of anyone printing a meme in a physical newspaper or magazine unless it's controversial enough to become the topic of a news story. To serve print needs, what if publishers hired staff members or freelance members – individuals with a pulse for viral content and an understanding of what resonates with younger readers, who could construct stylized, more professional-looking memes that could appear in print and on the web?

Again, this isn't to say that traditional political cartoons no longer have a role. But it's time for publishers to anoint the internet meme as worthy of publication.

After all, the best political commentary is just as likely to be found on Tumblr as the pages of the Times.

*[the writer is Assistant Professor of Communications (Social Media) & Magazine, News and Digital Journalism, Syracuse University]*



# Arunachal MLA, ten others gunned down by militants

**ITANAGAR, MAY 21 (PTI):** Suspected NSCN militants Tuesday gunned down sitting MLA and NPP assembly poll candidate Tirong Aboh and ten others, including his son and security personnel, in Tirap district of Arunachal Pradesh, a top police officer said.

Aboh (41), who represented the Khonsa West constituency, was seeking a re-election from the seat.

Initial reports suggested that seven people were killed in the attack, but Director General of Police (DGP) S B K Singh put the death toll at 11 later in the day.

Aboh was on his way to his constituency from Assam, along with family members, three police personnel and a poll agent, when the suspected NSCN rebels opened fire at their ve-



hicles near 12 Mile area in the district at around 11.30 am, Singh told PTI.

One security officer, who sustained injuries in the incident, has been admitted to a hospital in Dibrugarh, Assam, the DGP said, adding that the MLA and ten others were killed on the spot.

Expressing his shock over the incident, Chief Minister Pema Khandu said the perpetrators will

be hunted down.

"Action will be initiated to hunt down the perpetrators. My heartfelt condolences. May the departed souls rest in peace," he said.

Condemning the attack, NPP president and Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma sought the intervention of the Prime Minister's Office and Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh.

"The NPP is extremely shocked and saddened by the news of the death of its MLA Shri Tirong Aboh (Arunachal Pradesh) and his family. We condemn the brutal attack and urge @rajnathsingh and @PMOIndia to take action against those responsible for such attack," Sangma tweeted.

Meanwhile, the Arunachal Pradesh Congress Committee blamed the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party for the "prevailing lawlessness and chaos" in the state.

"If elected representatives of the state are not safe under the present dispensations at the Centre and the state, how can common people feel secure," the party said in a statement.

Demanding a high-level judicial inquiry into the incident, it also said, "Chief Minister Pema Khandu and his BJP government are solely responsible for lawlessness and all chaos in the state."

Aboh was elected from the Khonsa West seat in 2014 on a Peoples' Party of Arunachal (PPA) ticket.

Assembly polls were held concurrently with Lok Sabha elections in Arunachal Pradesh.

## Nepal bans Alipay, WeChat Pay

**KATHMANDU, MAY 21 (AFP):** Nepal's central bank has banned popular Chinese digital wallets Alipay and WeChat, an official said Tuesday, fearing loss of foreign currency earnings from thousands of Chinese tourists that visit the country.

Nepal Rastra Bank issued a notice on Monday, banning the use of the Chinese digital payment platforms popularly used in hotels, restaurants and shops in tourist areas, especially in Chinese-run businesses.

Laxmi Prapanna Niroula, spokesman for Nepal's central bank said that using the platforms in the country was illegal without the bank's authorisation.

"We have enforced a ban on Alipay and WeChat Pay because the country is losing



foreign currency earnings through its usage. Action will be taken if anyone is found using the platforms," Niroula told AFP.

Niroula said currently there is no record of how many transactions have taken place through the platforms as they are not recorded in Nepal.

Alipay, started by e-commerce giant Alibaba and owned by its affiliate Ant Financial, and WeChat Pay, built into Tencent's popular messaging service, have hundreds of millions of users between them and

are China's dominant payment platforms.

Over 150,000 Chinese tourists visited Nepal last year, helping it reach a landmark of welcoming over a million tourists for the first time.

Tourism is a major revenue earner for impoverished Nepal, home to eight of the world's 14 peaks over 8,000 metres.

Tourism contributed 7.8 percent to Nepal's GDP in 2017, creating over a million jobs, according to the World Travel and Tourism Council.

## Bangladesh halts visas for Pakistani nationals amid diplomatic impasse

**BY ANISUR RAHMAN**

**DHAKA/ISLAMABAD, MAY 21 (PTI):** Bangladesh high commission in Islamabad has stopped issuing visas to Pakistani nationals for one week over a fresh diplomatic row, a Bangladeshi official said Tuesday, amid strained bilateral ties since 2013 when Dhaka decided to hang several of the 1971 war criminals.

The diplomatic row between Bangladesh and Pakistan is on the rise since last year when Dhaka denied a visa to the Pakistan high commissioner.

"You can call it a sign of protest against the Pakistani gesture," a Bangladeshi foreign ministry official familiar with the development told PTI.

The foreign office in Dhaka, however, is yet to make any formal confirmation and no official notification has been issued on the halting of visas to the Pakistani nationals.

But the official, who preferred anonymity, said the Bangladeshi diplomat in charge of issuing visas refrained from processing the application by Pakistanis as Pakistani authorities had been sitting on his own official visa renewal application for the past four months.

Pakistani high commission in Dhaka is not processing his family members' visa applications, barring Bangladesh high commission's press and visa affairs councillor Iqbal Hossain from meeting his family, the official said.

"Issuance of any visa



to Pakistani nationals remains suspended as the visa counter in Bangladesh High Commission in Islamabad has been closed since last Monday [May 13]," Dhaka Tribune quoted Hossain as saying.

The Bangladeshi councillor said they had informed the South Asia wing of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Pakistan.

According to the officials, Hossain is living in Islamabad with his daughter while his wife and son were in Dhaka.

No official in the Pakistani high commission was immediately available for comments over the impasse.

Pakistan apparently has delayed the renewal of the visa after Dhaka refused to accept the nomination of the new high commissioner of Pakistan to Bangladesh for over a year.

In March 2018, Pakistan Foreign Ministry proposed Saqlain Syedah as its new high commissioner to Bangladesh.

Bangladesh refused to accept Syedah's "agreement" (documents related to proposal of

nomination) as Pakistan high Commissioner.

Six months later, Bangladesh verbally notified Pakistan that it cannot accept Syedah's nomination, and asked for an alternative nomination. Pakistan has not come up with any alternative nominations yet.

The row over the 1971 war criminals' trials visibly prompted Bangladesh not to clear the credentials of the proposed Pakistani high commissioner to Dhaka.

Syedah is now appointed as high commissioner to Kenya, according to an announcement by Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi on Monday.

According to a report in Pakistani media, the foreign ministry made a suggestion to Prime Minister Imran Khan to downgrade Bangladesh mission in Islamabad as Pakistani mission in Dhaka was being run by a consular level officer.

Pakistan's national and provincial assemblies in recent years passed several resolutions while several of their ministers too issued statements protesting

trial of the top 1971 collaborators of Pakistani troops in Bangladesh.

The move prompted the foreign office in Dhaka to summon repeatedly Islamabad's envoy to be handed down protest notes.

Five top collaborators of the Pakistani army, four being leaders of fundamentalist Jamaat-e-Islami which opposed the country's 1971 independence from Pakistan, have so far been executed after their trial in Bangladesh's International Crimes Tribunal.

The strained bilateral relations worsened in 2016 when Bangladesh forced Islamabad to take back three of its officials, including a woman diplomat, alleging their links to Islamist militants.

Diplomatic negotiations between the two countries are at a standstill for a few years now over Dhaka alleging Pakistani high commission of financing terrorist activities in the country.

Foreign secretary-level talks have not taken place between the two countries in the past four years now.

port said.

The climbing season this year began on May 14 after an eight-member team of Nepali mountain guides successfully scaled the Mount Everest, becoming the season's first team to open the climbing route to the world's highest peak.

The height of Mt. Everest is 8,848 metres, while Mt. Lhotse is at 8,526 metres.

TMC meets EC

against BJP

demand for

deployment of

central forces

in West Bengal

till May 25

**NEW DELHI, MAY 21 (PTI):** Questioning the BJP demand for deployment of central forces in West Bengal till the Model Code of Conduct is in place, a miffed Trinamool Congress on Tuesday asked the Election Commission "if Emergency has been declared" in the state, sources said.

A delegation of opposition leaders met the EC and demanded verification of VVPAT slips of randomly-selected polling stations before the counting of the votes polled in the just-concluded Lok Sabha election begins on May 23.

TMC's national spokesperson and Rajya Sabha member Derek O' Brien raised the issue of the central forces with the EC and demanded that the poll body take action, the sources said.

"BJP's minister announced that central forces will be in Bengal for one week more. Has Emergency been declared by the BJP in Bengal? BJP-RSS members disguised as central forces are torturing citizens. Why special rules for Bengal. This is unacceptable," O' Brien was quoted to have told the EC.

Addressing a press conference on May 19, Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had said that the BJP was concerned that voters were being intimidated and genuine voters were not being allowed to cast their votes.

"To address these issues, BJP demands that the central security forces be deployed in the state till the Model Code of Conduct is in force," Sitharaman had said.

**HAVE A STORY TO SHARE?**  
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**news@summittimes.com**



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Namgyal Institute of Tibetology  
Gangtok, Sikkim  
Ph : (03592) 281525 / 280822

**ADMISSION ANNOUNCEMENT FOR 2019-20 ACADEMIC SESSION  
BACHELOR OF SOWA RIGPA MEDICINE AND SURGERY (BSRMS) COURSE FOR  
THE THIRD BATCH**

Application in prescribed form is invited for the Bachelor of Sowa Rigpa Medicine and Surgery (BSRMS) course for the academic session 2019-20 being organised by the Namgyal Institute of Tibetology, Deorali – Gangtok, Sikkim (India). The aim is to produce graduates having profound knowledge of Sowa Rigpa to become qualified physicians and surgeons, to preserve and revive the unique system of nature based healing to benefit all mankind.

**A. Qualifications required for admission:**

- Minimum qualification class 12<sup>th</sup> standard pass preferably with science (Physics, Chemistry & Biology) or any other equivalent examination recognised by States/UTs and Central governments.
- For foreign students any other equivalent qualification from recognized/registered universities of their respective countries will be allowed.
- All candidates should be well versed in Tibetan grammar, composition, Buddhist philosophy. Those candidates who fail to meet the required standard in Tibetan language which includes grammar, literature and composition should be prepared to undergo one year preparatory course in Tibetan grammar, composition and literature before they become eligible to join the first year Sowa Rigpa course.

**B. Other criteria for admission:**

- Maximum age limit is 28 years.
- All candidates must produce identification documents such as voter card, Aadhaar card, Passport etc. In addition, local candidates must produce COI/SSC or such other legal documents to prove their local origin.
- Maximum of 6 seats out of 10 seats will be reserved for local candidates holding COI/SSC subject to their qualification in the admission test. In case they do not qualify, the seats will be made available to others to the extent of remaining vacancy.
- Admission form can be obtained from the Namgyal Institute of Tibetology office or can be downloaded from the website – [www.tibetology.net](http://www.tibetology.net)
- The last date for submission of application is 10<sup>th</sup> June, 2019.
- The application should be accompanied by one time registration fee of Rs. 500 payable by demand draft (non refundable) in favour of Director, Namgyal Institute of Tibetology, Deorali – Gangtok (Sikkim) or the amount may be deposited through online transfer in the account indicated below.
- Security deposit of Rs. 1000 is required to be made by those who qualify for admission. This will be refunded on the basis of claim after graduation.

**C. Candidates may also submit their application online within 4<sup>th</sup> June, 2019 with scanned copies of supporting documents.**

Otherwise copies of self attested supporting documents should be submitted, where essential along with the application form. An entrance test will be conducted to select the candidates at the place and date indicated hereunder:

- Venue - Namgyal Institute of Tibetology.
- Date – 24<sup>th</sup> June 2019
- Time – 10:30 AM to 1:00 PM
- Subjects to be tested – Tibetan reading, speaking, writing (grammar, composition, letter writing etc.) and composition in English.

Candidates who qualify in the written test will be called for viva voce test at the Namgyal Institute of Tibetology.

Joint Director  
Namgyal Institute of Tibetology  
Deorali – Gangtok, 737 102  
Sikkim (India)  
Email – [directormtsikkim@gmail.com](mailto:directormtsikkim@gmail.com)  
Web site – [www.tibetology.net](http://www.tibetology.net)  
Ph. +91 3592 280 822  
(M) +91 98320 31614

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# Crisis-hit Sri Lanka far from sub-continent force this World Cup

**TAPAN MOHANTA GUWAHATI, MAY 21 (PTI):** From leadership crisis to infighting in team to poor results to administrative mess, Sri Lanka cricket has endured all in run up to the World Cup and the former champions require no less than a miracle to emerge a worthy challenger this time.

Always a dark horse in this showpiece event, Sri Lanka have an impressive World Cup record with one title, two runner-up finish and one semifinal appearance but this time they will start as the weakest opponent.

With selectors axing some big names including Dinesh Chandimal and Niroshan Dickwella, it will be Dimuth Karunaratne, who last played an ODI in the 2015 World Cup, will lead the side.

Chandimal and Dickwella both led the side in different formats till early this year before handing the baton to Lasith Malinga under whom they lost 12 games on the trot.

That Sri Lanka have seen nine captains in two years across the formats, speaks volumes about the leadership crisis that has struck them.

There are also cracks

within the team with Angelo Mathews having differences with head coach Chandika Hathurusingha.

Left with little choice, the Ashantha De Melled selection committee was forced to bring in Karunaratne, who had led them to a historic 2-0 Tests win in South Africa in February this year, for skipper's role.

For coach Hathurusingha however Chandimal was the preferred choice for captaincy. He had never kept Karunaratne in ODI scheme of things because of his inability to keep pace with the pace of the ODI format.

So it remains to be seen how the duo would work in tandem.

Add the recent corruption charges against legendary Sanath Jayasuriya among others, and the Sri Lankan cricket is in desperate times as they never looked so unsettled and in disarray.

It has reflected in their poor performances as they have lost 55 of the 84 ODIs they played since 2015 World Cup and have not won a single bilateral series since May 2016, while their last ODI win had come way back in October last year.



Their worst result came in 2017 when they lost to minnows Zimbabwe 2-3 in a five-match ODI series. They have lost all eight ODIs they have played this year.

Going by their woeful form in the recent past, it would not come as a surprise if teams like Afghanistan and Bangladesh stun the island nation in the 10-team World Cup where it's a round-robin league to determine the semifinals.

Odds heavily stacked against them, the Sri Lankan team will look for inspiration from the duo of Mathews and Malinga.

Removed from cap-

taincy, Malinga would look to prove a point being the best bowler of the country as he will be their key man in the bowling.

By delivering a clinical last over to win the IPL for Mumbai Indians recently, the 35-year-old showed why he still ranks among the best in business as far as death bowling is concerned.

Two of his three hat-tricks have come in the World Cup and Malinga would once again look to make an impact if they are to make the semifinals.

Former captain Mathews will hope that he remains injury-free and play the role of a fin-

isher besides providing breakthroughs with his medium pace bowling.

Sri Lanka will expect Thisara Perera to shine with his all-round ability. He is their highest run-getter in ODIs and only second to Malinga in terms of wickets.

Apart from these players, Sri Lanka lack experience. Lahiru Thirimanne, Milinda Siriwardana, Jeevan Mendis and Jeffrey Vandersay have not played ODI for long.

Behind the stumps too Sri Lanka appear depleted with their Kusal Perera and Kusal Mendis earmarked for duty when both players don't even keep wickets at domestic level.

Sri Lanka have made the knockouts every time since 2003 but looking at the present scenario it will be a miracle of sorts if they make the last-four stage this time.

The Karunaratne-led side will begin their campaign against New Zealand on June 1.

Sri Lanka Squad: Dimuth Karunaratne (c), Angelo Mathews, Lasith Malinga, Thisara Perera, Kusal Perera, Dhananjaya de Silva, Kusal Mendis, Isuru Udana, Milinda Siriwardana, Avishka Fernando, Jeevan Mendis, Lahiru Thirimanne, Jeffrey Vandersay, Nuwan Pradeep and Suran-ga Lakmal.

Asian C'ships winner Gomathi fails dope test, earlier breach was not communicated by NADA

**NEW DELHI, MAY 21 (PTI):** Gomathi Mari-muthu, who won the 800 metres gold at the Asian Championships last month, was Tuesday handed a provisional suspension after being tested positive for a banned substance.

The 'A' sample of the 30-year-old runner from Tamil Nadu, who clocked 2 minute and 2.70 seconds to win the gold on April 22, has returned positive for a steroid in the test conducted during the Asian Athletics Championships in Doha.

If her 'B' sample also tests positive, she faces a maximum ban of four years -- as this will be her first doping offence -- while India will lose a gold medal from the Asian Championships. India had won three gold, seven silver and as many bronze medals in the Asian Championships.

"Yes, Gomathi has tested positive for a steroid and she has been placed under provisional suspension," a top source told PTI on condition of anonymity.

It is learnt that Gomathi had earlier tested positive for a banned substance in the sample the National Anti-Doping Agency collected in Patiala during the March 15-18 Federation Cup but was not communicated by the national anti-dop-

ing watchdog on time. "We have learnt that Gomathi also tested positive in the sample taken during the Federation Cup which was held in mid March. But that report is yet to reach us even now, after more than two months. That report is on the way, we have told.

"If the report was handed to us on time, she would have been stopped from taking part in the Asian Championships and the country would have been saved from this humiliation.

"We have no idea why the NADA did not inform us on Gomathi's dope positive result to us before the Asian Championships. There was more than one month's time in between," the AFI official said.

Gomathi has been on the national circuit for some time but her timing has been mediocre. Not a national camper, Gomathi's 2:03.21 performance that gave her a gold in the Federation Cup in March raised questions over her sudden improvement.

"She was not in the national camp and that is why we have been emphasising on the requirement that athletes who have to take part in the international events should be from the national camp," the official said.

## Dhoni's role massive in India's WC campaign, says Shastri

**MUMBAI, MAY 21 (PTI):** Mahendra Singh Dhoni will have a massive role in India's bid to regain the World Cup, coach Ravi Shastri said Tuesday, harping on the veteran's ability to influence the game's little moments.

"Massive as it has always been," Shastri told reporters when asked what he thinks would be Dhoni's role in the ICC's upcoming showpiece.

"He is right there, his communication has been fantastic. As a keeper, he has shown over the years that no one is better than him in this format, not just in taking catches, inflicting those run-outs or stumping, these are little moments in the game which can change it on the head and there was no one better than him," he said.

Dhoni, who will be playing in his fourth World Cup, amassed 416 runs at an average of 83.2 in the last IPL and led Chennai Super Kings to the final, and Shastri said he was impressed with his footwork during the league.

"It is great to see the way he was moving in the IPL especially when he was batting, the footwork, the power with which he was hitting the shots, he will be a big player in this World Cup," Shastri said at the team's pre-departure press conference.

Shastri said it would be the most challenging World Cup considering the quality of the opposition teams and the change in format.

"It will be very challenging. If you look at 2014 and 2019 now, the gap has become closer



between the teams. You see what Afghanistan, Bangladesh were in 2014 and what they are now, so it is a strong competition. West Indies, on paper, is as strong as any other team," he said.

The pitches in England have become flatter over the years with the recent ODI series, involving the hosts and Pakistan, witnessing scores over 350 runs almost regularly.

The former skipper said India will have to be flexible since overcast conditions can change things at the Old Blighty.

"I think our mantra will be to be flexible according to the conditions because this is one country in the world where the pitches may be flat but if there is overcast condition then you have to be up for it," he said.

"In no other country, overcast conditions matter so much but in England they do, London might not make that difference but if you go up north and it does get overcast then you will see things happen, so we have to be ready for that and prepare to be flexible."

Shastri believed India shouldn't try to do anything differently and only play to their potential.

"This team has played good cricket in last five years. They have been striving for consistency. They will not play any differently because it is World Cup. They need to enjoy it and if they play to their potential the Cup can be ours," he said.

Talking about the bowling attack, the coach said: "This is an experienced unit. They have been together for the last 4-5 years, they have bowled as a unit together, they accomplished what they set out to do in Tests and the endeavour will be the same here as well, to complement each other and keep the pressure right through the 50 overs."

Should World Cup have play offs like the IPL and Shastri responded in the affirmative.

"I have always said that, that's why the IPL format is fantastic, you never know in future, down the line, they (ICC) might think of doing it because of what exactly you said, you know that can happen, but at this moment of time, we will have to just say bad luck."

## Indian shuttlers suffer 2-3 loss to Malaysia in Sudirman Cup

**NANNING, MAY 21 (PTI):** Sameer Verma suffered a shocking straight-game loss in men's singles on Tuesday as India were stunned 2-3 by a young Malaysia in a group 1D match to jeopardise their hopes of reaching the knockout stage of the Sudirman Cup mixed team championship here.

Mixed doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Ashwini Ponnappa produced a brilliant performance to outdo Malaysia's Goh Soon Huat and Lai

Shevon Jemie 16-21 21-17 24-22 in an hour and 10-minute opening match to give India a 1-0 lead.

But India's decision to field world no 13 Sameer instead of Kidambi Srikanth in men's singles backfired as the former couldn't get going against Lee Zii Jia, losing 13-21 15-21 in 48 minutes to allow Malaysia level the scores 1-1.

Olympic and world championship silver medalist P V Sindhu then steamrolled Goh Jin Wei 21-12 21-8 in



35 minutes to bring India back on track but doubles pair of Manu Attri and B Sumeeth Reddy lost narrowly 20-22 19-21 to Aaron Chia and Teo Ee Yi.

With India and Malaysia level at 2-2, Ashwini once again took the

court -- two hours after her mixed doubles match -- alongwith N Sikki Reddy but the women's doubles pair couldn't get across the world no 13 pair of Chow Mei Kuan and Lee Meng Yean, losing 11-21 19-21.

Eighth seeded India's hopes will now rest on their next match when they take on the mighty China Wednesday.

China boosts of All England champion Chen Yufei and world no 2 Shi Yuqi besides three formidable doubles pairs -- all figuring the world's top 10 and it will take a miraculous effort from India to overcome the 10-time champions.

India had reached the quarterfinals in the 2011 and 2017 editions of the Sudirman Cup.

## New docu captures back story of 2019 polls; to premiere soon on National Geographic channel

**NEW DELHI, MAY 21 (PTI):** From the highest echelon of the Election Commission to booth level officers, and from the topmost political leaders to ground-level party workers, a new documentary has captured the dramatic events during the seven-phase Lok Sabha polls and the challenges in carrying out the mammoth democratic exercise.

The 2019 general election saw 8,049 candidates across the country battle it out for getting berths in Parliament.

National Geographic has shot the film over the last few months capturing the high-octane drama during campaigning period and crucial moments in parties' war rooms, and also shines a light on the role of social media in the just-concluded polls.

"The multi-crew production shot at 37

locations across the length and breadth of the country tells the tale of the largest democratic exercise in the world," a spokesperson of the network said.

Some of the cities shot during the film are -- Varanasi, Aamethi, Nagpur, Salem and Bishing, the official said.

"From the highest echelons of the Election Commission to booth level officers (BLOs), from the topmost political leaders to ground level party workers, from first-time voters to 100-year-old voters, there is absolutely nothing that cameras have not covered to bring the story of the world's largest elections that had the entire world enthralled," the National Geographic said in a statement.

The seven-phased election which began on April 11 ended on May 19, and counting of votes will take place



on May 23.

"The film captures key political leaders on their campaign trail. The cameras also take viewers behind the scenes of political party's war rooms, to a ring side view of gargantuan political rallies, examine the role of social media and cover new technology in wooing the voters and unravel the trail that leads to Parliament," the spokesperson said.

The official said the huge size of the electorate, large number of

poll officials also made the story of the world's largest democratic exercise, an incredible one.

While much of the world realises the nature and scale of conducting elections in India, the National Geographic team has travelled to the heart of the country to capture the very grassroots stories, the network said.

"The documentary further spans high power corridors of the Election Commission's office in Delhi, remote locations on

the Indo-China border, densely populated bylanes of Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, highly sensitive areas of Chhattisgarh and thick forests of Sunderbans, covering the expanse of a geographically and socio-politically diverse country," the statement said.

The documentary, yet to be titled, will premiere soon on the National Geographic channel, the network said.

Gayatri Yadav, President and Head-Consumer Strategy and Innovation, Star India said, "National Geographic is excited to tell a story of democracy that is relevant to the world over."

"For the first time, viewers will get to understand the complexities and vastness of the largest democratic exercise in the world and every Indian will feel proud of being a part of this incredible journey," Yadav said.



OECD cuts global growth forecast as US-China tensions rise

PARIS, MAY 21 (AFP): The OECD on Tuesday cut its forecast for the world economy, urging governments to resolve their trade disputes as the latest flare-up in the China-US trade war threatens to crimp global growth.

“Governments must act urgently to reinvigorate growth that benefits all,” the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development said as it pared back its forecast for global growth to 3.2 percent this year from 3.3 percent earlier.

“Resolve trade disputes through increased international cooperation while fixing the international rules-based system,” the OECD said.

“Invest in infrastructure, digital transformation and skills to meet tomorrow’s challenges. In the euro area, combine structural with fiscal policies to stimulate activity.”

The OECD’s updated forecasts did not take directly into account the latest flare-up in the long-running trade war between Washington and Beijing, “insofar that



there is still a great deal of uncertainty about the length of time (tariffs) will remain in place and the future evolution of the trade relationship between the two countries,” an OECD source told AFP.

Nevertheless, the projections did “incorporate” the increased uncertainty generated by the trade tensions, the source said.

As both Washington and Beijing slap trade tariffs on more and more of each other’s goods, President Donald Trump has barred US companies from engaging in telecommunications trade with foreign companies said to threaten American national security.

US internet giant Google, whose Android mobile operating sys-

tem powers most of the world’s smartphones, then announced that it was beginning to cut ties with China’s Huawei, which Washington considers a national security threat.

While the OECD pared back its global growth forecast for the current year, it predicted a pick-up in activity to 3.4 percent next year.

It notched up its forecast for US growth this year by 0.2 percentage point to 2.8 percent, but predicted a slowdown to 2.3 percent next year.

Chinese growth was projected to slow to 6.2 percent this year and 6.0 percent next year.

The outlook for the euro area growth was unchanged at 1.2 percent this year.

Australia govt says it won’t break election tax pledge



CANBERRA, MAY 21 (AP): Australia’s newly reelected administration says its promise to slash income taxes might be delivered late but won’t be broken as the government hopes to stimulate consumer spending and revive a flagging economy.

Treasurer Josh Frydenberg said Tuesday

passing the legislation that would reduce the annual tax bill of 10 million Australians by 1,080 Australian dollars (USD 740) is the government’s first priority when Parliament resumes once the vote counting from Saturday’s election is finished.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison chose the latest

possible date to call an election that delivered his conservative coalition a surprise victory.

But the timing means he probably won’t be able to recall Parliament to pass the tax cuts before July 1 when Morrison promised during the election campaign that the lower tax rate would take effect.

Indonesia’s Joko Widodo wins second term as president

JAKARTA, MAY 21 (AFP): Indonesia’s Joko Widodo has been re-elected as president of the world’s third-biggest democracy, the elections commission said early Tuesday, beating rival Prabowo Subianto, a retired general who has vowed to challenge any victory for the incumbent leader.

The commission was expected to announce the official results of the April 17 poll on Wednesday in the Southeast Asian nation of 260 million.

But amid fears about unrest and street demonstrations in response to the final count, the final tally was released early with little advance notice.

Widodo and his vice-presidential running mate Ma’ruf Amin won the election by a 55.5 per cent to 44.5 per cent margin over Subianto and Sandiaga Uno, the elections commission said.

“This ruling was announced on May 21... and will be effectively immediately,” the commission’s chair Arief



Budiman said in a live streamed announcement that was broadcast on major media.

Widodo, 57, had been widely predicted to win according to unofficial results.

His challenger Subianto, 67, has vowed to challenge any victory for Widodo, alleging widespread voter fraud, and warned that it could spark street protests across the world’s biggest Muslim majority nation.

Some 32,000 security personnel were being deployed across the capital Jakarta, including in front of the General Elections Commission’s downtown office which has been barricaded with razor wire. Tensions have also

been heightened after police said Friday that they have arrested dozens of Islamic-State linked terror suspects, including some who planned to detonate bombs at political demonstrations when election results were to be announced.

Last month, Indonesia held its biggest-ever election, a massive one day poll featuring more than 190 million registered voters and a record 245,000 candidates vying for the presidency, parliamentary seats and local legislator positions.

This year’s campaign was punctuated by bitter mudslinging and a slew of fake news online -- much of it directed at the presidential contenders.

Malawi votes in tight three-way election

LILONGWE, MAY 21 (AFP): Malawi goes to the polls on Tuesday after a closely-fought election campaign, with President Peter Mutharika battling to hold off two serious rivals in a race that focused on corruption allegations and economic development.

Mutharika, who has been in power since 2014, will face opposition from his own deputy Saulos Chilima and former baptist preacher Lazarus Chakwera.

“We have set Malawi on the path of progress,” Mutharika, 78, told several thousand cheering supporters of his ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) in Blantyre at his final campaign rally at the weekend.

His bid for a second term has focused on the economy and his record of improving road and electricity infrastructure across the south-eastern African country.

Under Mutharika, inflation has fallen from 23 percent to below nine per cent, but still only 11 percent of the population has access to electricity.

The election is the first since a new law forced parties to declare large donations and banned the once-common practice by candidates of giving



cash handouts.

Polling starts at 06:00am (0400 GMT) on Tuesday.

Food shortages, power outages and ballooning external debt have hurt Mutharika’s popularity ahead of the vote.

He faces a strong challenge from Chakwera, leader of the main opposition Malawi Congress Party (MCP), who came a narrow second in the 2014 election.

Ahead of the vote, Chakwera told AFP that he expected “nothing less than victory -- we are winning.” Mutharika’s other opponent, Chilima, quit the ruling party last year to form the youth-focused United Transformation Movement, while staying on as vice president.

Under Malawi law, the president cannot fire the vice president.

Chilima, 46, emphasised his youth credentials by doing push-ups on stage during the campaign.

More than half of the 6.8-million registered voters are under 35.

Dan Banik, a politics professor at the University of Malawi, told AFP that the election posed many questions.

“What will happen when a winner is declared by a narrow margin?” he said.

“How will losing presidential candidates take defeat? Will supporters of the incumbent DPP peacefully accept losing?” he asked.

Banik said that the election commission and the courts could be se-

verely tested by counting complaints after polling day on Tuesday, when voters will also choose lawmakers and local councillors.

In Malawi’s “winner takes all” system, Mutharika won in 2014 with just 36 per cent of the vote.

He came to power in the aid-dependent country vowing to tackle corruption after the “Cashgate” scandal erupted a year earlier, revealing massive looting from state coffers.

But his government has been dogged by several high-profile cases of corruption and nepotism.

Last November, Mutharika himself was forced to return a 200,000 donation from

a businessman facing a corruption case in a 3-million contract to supply food to the Malawi police.

“It will even be more uncertain and tight than last time. It could undermine the legitimacy of the winning candidate,” said Michael Jana, a Malawi politics specialist at Johannesburg’s University of the Witwatersrand.

Malawi won independence from Britain in 1964, and was then ruled by Hastings Banda as a one-party state until the first multi-party elections in 1994.

The country, which has a population of 18 million people, has one million adults living with HIV -- one of the highest HIV prevalence rates in the world.

Christchurch attacker charged with terrorism: police

WELLINGTON, MAY 21 (AFP): The man accused of shooting dead 51 Muslim worshippers in the Christchurch mosque attacks was formally charged with terrorism for the first time on Tuesday, New Zealand police said.

In addition to the terror charge, Brenton Tarrant also faces 51 charges of murder and 40 of attempted murder over the March 15 attacks that rocked the South Pacific nation.

“The charge will allege that a terrorist act was carried out in Christchurch,” police said in a statement.

New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern has characterised the mosque killings as “a well-planned terrorist attack” since the day Tarrant, a self-described white supremacist, allegedly carried them out.

But until now the charges against him were less expansive, as New Zealand’s Terrorism Suppression Act was only introduced in 2002 and is untested in the courts.

Police said the decision to lay the terror charge more than two months after the attack was made following consultation with prosecutors and government legal experts.

Tarrant, a 28-year-old Australian, is currently in a high-security prison undergoing tests to determine if he is mentally fit to stand trial for the worst massacre in modern New Zealand history.

His next court appearance is scheduled for June 14.

Police said they had met survivors and victims’ families Tuesday to explain the additional charges.

US delays Huawei ban for 90 days

WASHINGTON, MAY 21 (AFP): US officials have delayed a ban on American technology exports to Chinese tech giant Huawei until mid-August, saying the time was needed to allow for software

updates and other contractual obligations.

A Commerce Department filing Monday said the delay does not change the ban imposed by President Donald Trump on national security

grounds, an action with major implications for US and Chinese technology firms.

The document said authorities would not enforce the ban for 90 days to give Huawei and its partners time

“to maintain and support existing and currently fully operational networks and equipment, including software updates and patches, subject to legally binding contracts and agreements... on or before May 16, 2019.

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## Excited for 'Hera Pheri 3': Suniel Shetty

**MUMBAI, MAY 21 (PTI):** Suniel Shetty says he is excited about working on the third film in the "Hera Pheri" franchise and the team will start working on the film by the end of this year.

Directed by Priyadarshan, "Hera Pheri" released in 2000 and also featured veteran actor Paresh Rawal and Akshay Kumar.

It revolved around a quirky, kind-hearted garage owner Baburao Ganpatrao Apte (Rawal), a cunning loafer Raju (Kumar) and a struggling pauper Shyam (Shetty).

The trio returned with a sequel "Phir Hera Pheri" in 2006, which was directed by Neeraj Vora.

"Talks are on with Priyadarshan for the third part. It should happen by the end of the year. There is a lot of discussion around it. I am excited for it," Shetty told PTI in an interview.

The 57-year-old actor said he loved the part one but did not enjoy



the second film that much.

"People loved and related to the honesty, simplicity and the struggle of these three men in the film and found humour in struggle.

"I don't love 'Phir Hera Pheri' as much as I liked the first one. (It had) honesty, great writing and the pure genius of Priyadarshan," he said.

Shetty, who was last seen in Sidharth

Malhotra's "A Gentleman" (2017), said he wants work in good films.

"I am looking forward to doing a lot of good work, be it here or in the south in the few years. I am doing roles that suit me," he said.

"I am doing a film in Kannada, Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam languages. These are interesting films. I will talk about them when the time is right," he added.

## Punjabi film industry has grown immensely: Diljit Dosanjh

**MUMBAI, MAY 21 (PTI):** Punjabi superstar Diljit Dosanjh believes his film industry has grown a lot in the past seven years, both in terms of content and viewership.

The 35-year-old actor, who is one of the biggest names in the Punjabi entertainment scene, credited overseas audience for the growth of the industry.

"The Punjabi film industry has grown immensely in the past seven-eight years and has reached newer heights in terms of content and also expanding its audiences worldwide, and that's a great thing. I hope the industry keeps growing in this positive direction.

"We are not only having a great audience for Punjabi films in north India but we are also seeing growth in other places like Mumbai, Pune, Bengaluru, Kolkata, Indore, etc. And the overseas audiences have always been good for us. Without them we couldn't have taken Punjabi cinema to such heights," Diljit said in a statement.

The actor will next be seen in Punjabi film "Shaada", which revolves around a man and a woman who are past the eligible age of marriage.

Diljit, who will be starring opposite Neeru Bajwa in the movie, said the story challenges the norms associated with the institution of marriage.

"Shadaa" is written and directed by Jagdeep Sidhu and is produced by Atul Bhalla, Amit Bhalla, "Kesari" director Anurag Singh, Aman Gill and Pawan Gill.

It releases on June 21.

## What he did was shameful: Kher on Vivek Oberoi sharing meme on Aishwarya

**MUMBAI, MAY 21 (PTI):** Actor Anupam Kher has slammed Vivek Oberoi for sharing a meme about Aishwarya Rai Bachchan's personal life and called it shameful and in poor taste.

Oberoi apologised for sharing the meme and deleted the controversial tweet after being severely criticised on social media.

When asked Kher about it, the actor told reporters, "It's very shameful. It's as simple as that. He shouldn't have done that. It's absolutely not cool."

The actor was speaking at the trailer launch of his upcoming "One Day". His co-star, actor Esha Gupta, also slammed Oberoi and said the tweet is a reflection of who he is.

"It just shows your mentality, specially if you're getting a minor involved. It's not in good taste at all. It just shows how he is. It doesn't reflect on what others are. It was shameful," she said.

Oberoi, who reportedly dated the former Miss World in early 2000s, on Monday posted a meme on Twitter with three panels, one featuring him, another with Salman Khan and a third with Aishwarya's husband Abhishek and daughter Aaradhya.

The meme was a take on the 2019 Lok Sabha election, the results of which will be declared on Thursday.

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**TALK SHOW TIME! The actress, Bryce Dallas Howard is cool in a red top and maroon skirt on Lorraine in London.**

## 'Humans' cancelled after three seasons



**LOS ANGELES, MAY 21 (PTI):** Sci-fi drama "Humans" will not be returning for a fourth season, the creators have announced.

Writers Jonathan Brackley and Sam Vincent shared the news on Twitter on Monday.

The series, that ran on Channel 4 and AMC, was fronted by "Crazy Rich Asians" star Gemma Chan.

"Sadly, there won't be a fourth season of Humans. In this age of unprecedented choice and competition, we can have no complaints. Channel 4 and AMC were the perfect partners. They supported the show brilliantly and above all let us make three seasons. We're gutted, of course, but we were so lucky. We got to make the show we wanted to make, for 24 episodes...

"So here's to every last actor, director, writer, producer, exec, commissioner, DoP, editor, composer, crew member and the unfailingly generous Swedish team behind the original

version," the writer duo said in a statement.

Brackley and Vincent thanked fans for their support and regretted they were unable to "keep the story going for the people that love it".

The end for the series is a surprise as last year executive producer Emma Kingsman-Lloyd told Deadline that there was no end in sight for the show.

The writers admitted they know "we left some threads hanging".

"That was the way we always wrote the show. Maybe one day we'll get a chance to pick them back up. If there's anyone out there with a few million quid and an interest in AI stories, we're all ears. DM us Elon. Thanks for watching," they further said.

The third season of "Humans" premiered in the US in June 2018 and in the UK in May same year.

**ARIES:** Take time today to get your finances in order, Aries—even if you're not in a number-crunching mood. No one loves facing the monetary music, but ignoring those bills and impulse-shopping like there's no tomorrow could leave you in the red. No one's telling you to cancel that fancy trip to Tulum or to halt all spring shopping.

**TAURUS:** Looking to change things up? That big transformation might finally happen, Taurus—though it may not play out exactly as you imagined. Tectonic shifts could cause unexpected aftershocks as the Sun and unpredictable Uranus hold their annual summit, this year in YOUR sign and your first house of identity.

**GEMINI:** Draw the blinds and hang the Do Not Disturb sLook inward, Gemini. Today marks a rare and potent cosmic concord, but you'll need to be proactive to benefit from it. The ego-driven Sun meets up with radical Uranus in your twelfth house of the unconscious and healing. The stars will support you if you need to confront deep-seated issues or

unhealthy habits. You might want tap a coach, therapist or healer because these types of problems can be complex and difficult to unpack. Keep a journal on your nightstand: Psychic messages may come through in your sleep.

**CANCER:** You'll be the life of the party, Cancer, as the Sun dances its annual do-si-do with shock, jock Uranus in your eleventh house of group activity. Your charms are irresistible today, as you give everyone in your path a dose of your flattering attention. Whether you're chatting up your boss at work or bantering with a waiter at dinner, no one will be able to resist your allure.

**LEO:** Set your sights on that brass ring! This Saturday, the Sun enters Taurus and ignites your career zone until May 20. For the next four weeks, lean all the way into your loftiest goals. Flaunt your sign's natural leadership skills and rub elbows with industry leaders and VIPs. Since el Sol will gift you with added charisma, there's no need to downplay your ambitions.

**LIBRA:** On Saturday, the sizzling Sun slides into Taurus and your sultry eighth house,

cranking up the spring fever. Until May 20, your superpower is drawing sexy admirers like moths to a flame. But adding another notch to your Gucci belt isn't the end goal here since the eighth house is all about playing for keeps. Single Libras are far more interested forming an intense and lasting bond with someone special.

**VIRGO:** It's good to be cautious, Virgo, but are you playing it a bit TOO safe? As the life-giving Sun forms its annual alignment with irrepresible Uranus, you'll be inspired to explore new frontiers. Your heart is open, and you're ready to dive into the unknown, whether that's a budding friendship, a foreign locale or a life-changing workshop.

**SCORPIO:** This Saturday, the Sun slides into your seventh house of committed partnerships, activating your urge to merge. But does your highly selective sign need to lower the bar just a little? Nobody will ever meet ALL your criteria. You could do yourself a disservice by dismissing someone over a few petty flaws. For the next four weeks, bring more balance to friendships, romance and business alliances.

**SAGITTARIUS:** Hang up your hedonist's hat, Archer. After a wild and carefree month of excess, the Sun glides into Taurus and your healthy sixth house from Saturday until May 20. Skip the extra Americano and opt for a matcha latte or fresh smoothie for clean, green energy. Fill your plate with fresh veggies and cut back on animal products, excess salt and sugar. Incorporate more self-care into your regimen: daily movement, massage, acupuncture or even a trip to the spa!

**CAPRICORN:** Lights, camera, action! This Saturday, the confident Sun blasts into Taurus and your passionate fifth house, setting the stage for romance and fame. But don't expect it to happen while you hide in the shadows, Cap. You're going to have to step out in a big way before May 20, wearing your heart on your sleeve and unabashedly expressing yourself. Work this cosmic charisma to your advantage and turn up the charm dial to maximum. You could find yourself in front of some serious power players during this phase,

and you'll want to be ready for anything!

**AQUARIUS:** Personal transformation is the name of the game today, as the Sun and your emancipated co-ruler Uranus align in your fourth house of home and family. They say, "There are no secrets that time does not reveal," so why not get a healing head start and divulge them yourself? If you've been longing to get closer to a relative or newish friend, carpe diem. Meet for dinner or schedule a long phone call to-night. Has a negative energy invaded your inner circle? !

**PISCES:** Incoming breakthroughs! Today, the Sun teams up with transformational Uranus in your third house of ideas and communication. In a surprising plot twist, a life-changing revelation could emerge out of "innocuous" small talk. Don't censor yourself if you know this realization could help others. Share your white-light moment with everyone from your office friends to your social media squad. This is why people consider you a role model and inspiration.

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