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SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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SDF ELECTION CAMPAIGN REACHES RAVANGLA

Opposition will see new avatar of Chamling & SDF next term, says Chamling

**ARPAN PRADHAN
RAVANGLA, 05 APR:**

"The opposition has underestimated SDF but they will see a new avatar of Pawan Chamling and the SDF government in the next government," said SDF president and Chief Minister, Pawan Chamling today. He ridiculed Sikkim Krantikari Morcha stating that the leader of the party cannot contest till 2024 and they do not have a Chief Ministerial candidate till now.

Mr Chamling was addressing the 7th day of his Vijay Sankalp Rally, the SDF election campaign at Ravangla in South Sikkim.

Highlighting various programmes, promises and schemes included in



the election manifesto, he said that the next SDF government will construct a nine-post building for the needy and make Sikkim a Kachha Ghar Free state.

The programme had the presence of

party candidates for Temi-Namphing, Barfung and Yangang and the Lok Sabha candidate. Also in attendance were senior SDF leaders, former Minister, DD Bhutia, former Speaker, KN Rai along with other party

leaders and a huge number of party supporters and workers.

Speaking on the occasion former Minister, DD Bhutia said that more than 70% of the people of Sikkim still have faith in SDF and will vote for

the party to save Sikkim from destruction.

He urged people of these three constituencies not to pay heed to rumors and make SDF victorious this election.

Regardless of who the candidate is, remember that the party behind them is SDF, he said.

Addressing rumors on his candidature, Mr Bhutia said that he willingly decided not to contest the election this time and had requested the party president to allow him to rest this time.

On the other hand, Mr Chamling said that former Minister, DD Bhutia will be given a respectable position in the government and may be appointed as Senior Advisor to the Chief Minister.

SKM accuses SDF of conspiring to thwart Golay's chances of becoming CM



**SAGAR CHHETRI
GANGTOK, 05 APR:**

Sikkim Krantikari Morcha party spokesperson, Jacob Khaling, today alleged that Sikkim Democratic Front was hatching a conspiracy to stop a "genuine Nepali Sikkimese" from becoming Chief Minister. SKM, it may be recalled, has announced its president, PS Tamang [Golay], as its chief ministerial candidate even though he is not contesting the elections. Following his conviction in a corruption case which also led to his disqualification from the legislative assembly, Mr Tamang cannot contest elections for six years. SKM is however convinced that it has the

legal arguments at hand which would allow him to contest should SKM form the next government in Sikkim.

Mr Khaling claimed today that the people of Sikkim want Mr Tamang as Chief Minister, but that the SDF has started a "conspiracy" to thwart him. Such conspiracy, he went on to contend, was not just against Mr Tamang but against the entire Sikkimese Nepali community.

Addressing a press conference here today, Mr Khaling accused SDF of spreading misinformation and doing its best to stop Mr Tamang from becoming the CM.

Even as he accused the Chief Minister of

working against the interests of the Sikkimese Nepali community, he also alleged that the CM harbored a "hidden agenda" of Greater Nepal.

Mr Khaling claimed that SKM has already raised this issue several times and has also taken the matter to the Centre.

Continuing with his allegations of SDF being opposed to the Sikkimese Nepalis, he linked a book on Sikkim tourism published during SDF spokesperson KT Gyaltsen's tenure as Tourism Minister which stated that Nepalese were "immigrants" in Sikkim, as evidence of this slant.

Mr Khaling also condemned the circulation of

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Sikkim all set for final round of Santosh Trophy after 14-year gap

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK 05 APR:**

A 23-member Sikkim senior boys' football team is all set for the final round of National Football Championship for Hero Santosh Trophy to be held from 08 to 21 April at Ludhiana in Punjab. The state team will be leaving for the final round on Saturday.

It has to be mentioned here that the State football team has qualified for the final round of this prestigious football tournament of the country after a gap of 14 years by defeating strong teams of West Bengal and Bihar in the qualifying round played last month.

The state team comprises of Ugen Pinto Sherpa and Lakpa Dorjee Bhutia as goalkeepers, Kunal Tamang, Sonam Zangpo Bhutia, Roshan Mangar, Dawa Sherpa Jasman Gurung and Temphe L Bhutia as defenders and Boxer Pradhan, Roshan Pradhan, Bibek Bhutia, Robin Sharma, Nikesh Gurung, Prashant Chettri and Sonam Tshering Bhutia as midfielders.

turn to pg02

'MODI IN, CHAMLING OUT' SAYS BJP

CBI entry into Sikkim inevitable: Ram Madhav



REBYNA RANA

GANGTOK, 05 APR:

'Modi in, Chamling out' said Bharatiya Janta Party (BJP), National General Secretary, Ram Madhav while addressing a campaigning meeting held at Truck Stand at Ranipool today.

Taking on Sikkim Democratic Front and accusing the party and leadership of corruption, Mr Madhav said that the only solution to corruption is punishment as per the law and the entry of CBI into Sikkim is inevitable as the Prime Minister has zero tolerance for corruption.

"Every time we talk about CBI, the CM gets an-

gry and brings up Old Laws to prevent the entry of CBI into Sikkim," he alleged.

At the same time, he said that pending issues like the Assembly seat reservation for Limboo-Tamang will be dealt with immediately after the election and protection of Old Laws will be ensured.

"It is not the Chief Minister who can say he will protect and preserve the sanctity of special status, provisions under Article 371F, it is the Prime Minister who is the real protector and we assure that the old laws of the state will continue to be protected as we are the real 'Chowkidars' of the

nation," said Mr Madhav.

All the north eastern states under the leadership of the BJP government and Prime Minister, Narendra Modi has already started the journey of development whereas the state of Sikkim is lagging behind on all fronts of development including basic needs, he stated.

The Chief Minister claims that Sikkim is self-sufficient and showcases the GDP and per capita income but one thing must be understood, without the support of the Government of India, the so called self-sufficiency will not continue nor will the

turn to pg02

check out an experiment with some podcasting from Sikkim.

Visit our website www.summittimes.com or find us on SoundCloud at <https://soundcloud.com/tshering-eden-506860426/stray-thoughts-01>

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SHRI D.B. CHAUHAN
Sikkim-BJP President
and Arithang candidate



**SHRI LATEN
TSHERING SHERPA**
Lok Sabha candidate

**Sikkim ki janta bharey hunkaar
Charam-par hein bhrashtachar
Aa rahein hein Chowkidaar**

Modi Sarkar Aa Rahi Hein Bhrashtachari Sarkar Jaanewaali Hein

Appeal By: BJP, SIKKIM



SDF Soreong-Chakhung candidate at Budhang



**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 05 APR:**

Today Soreong-Chakhung SDF candidate, SR Subba along with Election Campaign Incharge, Dr AD Subba, visited Singha Devi Mandir at Budhang and received blessings, a press release informs. This was followed by public interactions at Budhang GPU ward No. 04. Mr Subba was accompanied by PWD Minister, RB Subba, JB Tamang, Zilla Panchayat, Panchayat Members, party supporters and public

HSP Dzongu candidate relinquishes ACT president post

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 05 APR:**

Affected Citizens of Teesta [ACT] has stated, through a press release, that its president, Athup Lepcha has relinquished his post on personal grounds.

Mr Lepcha is also the founder member of ACT and has been serving the post from 2004. The organisation will always be indebted for his spirit and long service to the organisation and will always be seeking his advice and blessings in future, the release states. He will be in the organisation as a member, it is added.

It may be mentioned that Athup Lepcha is contesting the upcoming Assembly elections from Dzongu on a Hamro Sikkim Party ticket.

EC teams seize liquor, drugs & unaccounted cash in Nagaland

KOHIMA, APR 5 (PTI): Liquor, drugs and unaccounted cash amounting to Rs 2.96 crore have been seized from different parts of Nagaland since the model code of conduct came into effect in the state, a top state election official said Friday. Election to the lone Lok Sabha seat in Nagaland and byelection to the Aonglenden Assembly constituency will be held on April 11.

The seizure is a consolidated figure till April 5 since enforcement of the Model Code of Conduct for the dual polls in the state, said Chief Electoral Officer Nagaland, Abhijit Sinha.

Total cash seizure is 89,58,240, which include Rs 72.10 lakh by Income Tax Department and Rs 17,48,240 by Flying Squad (FS), Static Surveillance Team (SST) and Police force, Sinha said.

A total of 61,624.93 litres of liquor amounting to Rs 1,72,40,923.583 have been seized till date by the team, including Excise Department.

SDF criticizes BJP's assurance on LT seats

**SAGAR CHHETRI
GANGTOK, 05 APR:**

Sikkim Democratic Front spokesperson, KT Gyaltsen, on Thursday criticized the assurance given by a senior leader of Bharatiya Janata Party that seat reservation for Limboo-Tamang will be

the first gift of BJP to the people of Sikkim after forming the government at the Centre.

Mr Gyaltsen stated that this statement from a BJP leader also proves that this matter is purely a matter in the Union list and only the Centre

can take the decision. He questioned BJP on why it has not given seats to LT communities of Sikkim till now.

"They were and they are not sincere about our demand," he said.

He stated that the people of neighbouring

hills made BJP candidates victorious twice in Lok Sabha election but their BJP MP never raised any voice on the Gorkhaland demand of the people of Darjeeling in last 10 years in the Parliament. He added that this shows

that BJP will never fulfil its promise.

Mr Gyaltsen stated that the SDF government has been persistently pursuing this issue with the Centre and even placed this issue to the Prime Minister many times.

Final round of training for Presiding and Polling Officers in West

GYALSHING, 05 APR (IPR): The final round training to Presiding and Polling Officers of West District for the upcoming election 2019 was held today at the Conference Hall, Gyalshing, West Sikkim.

The training was presided over by The District Election Officer (DEO), Karma R Bonpo along with ADC (W), Karma T Lepcha, Master trainer, Santosh Kr Alley and KCS Tongden Lepcha.

While addressing the gathering, DEO, Mr Bonpo motivated the officers to conduct the elections with right frame of mind. He emphasized on filling up the "FORM 17A" "FORM 17C" and PRESIDING OFFICER'S DIARY strictly.

He instructed the polling parties to understand the task at hand and to perform their assignment as per the guidelines and leave no room for any errors. He suggested officers present to take consultations for any clarification or problems.

Master trainer, Mrs Tongden imparted training on general duties of the presiding and polling officers, wherein she explained in detail about the role and responsibilities of the officers for conducting the successful election.

The hands on training on Electronic Voting Machines (EVM), VVPATs and its technical aspects were attended by all the present participants.

GO-East visits remote polling stations



GNATHANG, 05 APR (IPR): General Observer, East, Mousumi Chattaraj Chaudhuri, today visited the far flung areas of Thegu, Kupup, Gnathang and Zuluk polling stations to review arrangement of Polling stations.

These polling stations are the farthest and highest altitude polling stations in East district.

The General Observer took stock of the arrangements put in place for the convenience of the voters

on polling day (11 April).

The General Observer reviewed facilities being provided at the polling stations including water, electricity, toilets, cleanliness and facilities for specially-abled voters, transport facilities etc.

The General Observer stressed that officials and field staff (BLOs, FST, VST) work in close coordination with each other to ensure smooth conduct of the election process on polling day.

CBI entry...

state be in a position to speak of GDP and per capita income, Mr Madhav added.

He went on to accuse the SDF government of misusing funds from the Centre meant for development of the State.

BJP is ready to be an alternative if the people of Sikkim want a fresh and honest government, said the BJP national general secretary.

"If given a chance we will showcase what a national party with a good intention can do for the state of Sikkim. So far the BJP led government at the Centre has introduced more than 136 welfare schemes for the poor but none of the schemes have been implemented in the state in the true sense," said State BJP president, DB Chauhan.

Mr Chauhan, who is contesting from Arithang vowed to convert his constituency into a model constituency.

MP candidate, Laten Sherpa said that he has the courage to raise his voice even though he is not as educated as other candidates and is ready to sacrifice everything for the State.

The meeting was also attended by National Secretary and Sikkim BJP In-Charge, Rajnish Kumar, Election In-Charge Sikkim, Nitin Nabin and the 12 Assembly candidates of BJP.

SKM accuses...

an anonymous leaflet being circulated in the name of SI-BLAC and alleged this was a mischievous handiwork of SDF instead to bring division between the Bhutias and Lepchas.

SKM vice-president [frontal organisation], Nakul Das Rai, in turn pointed out that many individuals and organisations from Sikkim and outside had contributed towards securing tribal status for Limboos and Tamangs and that SDF cannot take sole credit for it as it has been doing. In fact, he added that the SDF MP was not even present in Parliament when the Bill according ST status for Limboos and Tamangs was placed in the House.

Meanwhile, SKM general secretary, Puja Sharma, urged the Election Commission to ensure proper implementation of the model code of conduct. She alleged that SDF workers have been found violating the model code of conduct.

Commissioning of EVMs and VVPATs in West Sikkim



GYALSHING, 05 APR (IPR): The Commissioning of EVMs and VVPATs for the Eight Assembly Constituency was successfully completed at the Control Room Setup at Girls Senior Secondary School, Kyongsa.

The Commissioning was done in the presence of DC-Cum-RO West, Karma R Bonpo; General Observer West, Faisal Aftab; ADC West, Karma L Lepcha; SDM (HQ), Tushar G Nikhare; SDM (Gyalshing), Gilbert Lepcha and other Officials.

The Commissioning of EVMs and VVPATs machines along with Re-

serve EVMs and VVPATs for the remaining four Constituencies and one Sangha (Rinchenpong, Daramdin, Soreng Chakung, Salghari Zoom and Sangha) were successfully completed on 05 Apr, 2019 in the presence of the Political representatives.

Culture of violence ingrained in SKM: PD Rai

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 05 APR:**

Sikkim Democratic Front spokesperson, PD Rai has said that Sikkim Krantikari Morcha is promising to bring anarchy and chaos into the state. Accusing SKM of poll violence, he has said that SDF condemns "such acts of senseless and inhumane violence and all

those responsible for it."

In a press release issued today, the Lok Sabha MP has accused SKM of propagating such violence in the last elections as well. "These recurring incidents are the proof of SKM's continued politics of lies, unrest and chaos," he states.

Further, urging people to be mindful of such

activities he has asserted that "parties resorting to politics of fear and violence will be rejected by the people of Sikkim."

"We strongly condemn the acts of vandalism that SKM has been spreading all over the state and hope that better sense would prevail in the minds of SKM leadership," the release adds.

Street play on voter awareness in North District



MANGAN, 05 APR (IPR): M/S Diksha Audio Vision, Tibet Road, Gangtok performed a street play on voter awareness at North District Zilla Bhawan, Mangan today.

The play was performed to generate awareness on election process like Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) machine, low vote cast, low female voter

turn up, Person with Disability (PwD) voters and their facilities etc. among public at large.

The skit was performed by the renowned artist, Timothy Rai supported by other eight artists. The title of Skit was "Shano Bhul Thulo Nokshan" (little mistake big lost). According to ADC (Dev), Mangan cum Nodal Officer, Systematic Voters' Education and

Electoral Participation (SVEEP), Election Department, North District, KR Limboo, street play successfully conveyed the message of skit to the public at large.

The programme attended amongst other by BLO Mangan Bazaar, Representatives of Election Department Mangan, Hemant Khatiwara, US RMDD-cum- Assistant officer, SVEEP.

Sikkim all set...

The team strikers are Roman Subba, Sukraj Subba Sanjay Rai, Mayal Dok Lepcha and Asish Chettri. The team will be accompanied by Keshav Dutt [AFC 'B' license coach] as team coach, Engpohang Subba as team manager and Dr Manoj Kharka as physiotherapist.

In the final round, Sikkim will take on Karnataka in its first match on 11 April. Then Sikkim has another match against Assam on 13 April, with Punjab on 15 April and

finally against Maharashtra on 17 April. The semi-final is scheduled to be played on 19 April and finals on 21 April.

After returning to the State from the qualifying round, the State team underwent rigorous training camp under technical directors of Sikkim Football Association, Arjun Rai and Chewang Paul Sangdarpa. The team underwent two sessions of coaching camp at Paljor Stadium and then at Mangan in North Sikkim. For the

first time, SFA also conducted a fortnight-long residential coaching camp at Mangan to get acclimatized before departure.

Speaking to media this morning at Paljor Stadium, SFA president, Menla Ethenpa stated that SFA has engaged an AFC 'B' license coach and conducted a residential coaching camp for the first time. He stated that the team is in good form and high spirits to give its best in the final round of the championship.

Police Observer inspects Polling Stations and Temi Police Station



NAMCHI, 05 APR (IPR):

Police Observer for Sikkim, Naveen Arora, visited polling stations at Deythang Secondary School, Zarong Secondary School, Kewzing Senior Secondary school under Barfung and those at Temi Senior Secondary School and Tarku Senior Secondary School under Temi Namphing assembly constituencies today.

During his visit, he interacted with the concerned Sector Magistrates, Flying Squad Teams and Booth Level Officers.

The observer also looked into the facilities available at the polling stations for the convenience of voters.

Additionally, he also met voters at Temi bazaar and explained how they play a crucial role in democracy.

Thereafter, Mr Arora inspected Temi Police Station which is the Women Police Station for South District.

Station House Officer Anupa Gurung informed the observer about the effective police administration, including maintenance of law and order managed by Temi Police.

She also detailed the people-friendly measures taken by the police department towards ensuring a peaceful election in the locality.

The Observer also offered suggestions for strengthening and better functioning of the all-Women Police Station and spoke about the overall security required for the ensuing election.

He also detailed the deployment of security manpower available under the Police Station along with stationing of jawans from SSB and IRBn at different polling stations for a smooth, free and fair election in the region. The Police Observer also thoroughly checked the licences of the deposited arms.

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KUTSHE SHEGU

Our sincere gratitude and deep appreciation to all our dear friends and well wishers who have been so supportive and forthcoming during our time of bereavement, the sad demise of our beloved daughter Late **Kes-sang Tongden Lepcha** who left for her heavenly abode on 19/02/2019. Once again in all humility we request your benign presence in offering prayer for the departed soul, the 49th day of Kutshe Shegu which falls on **07/04/2019 (Sunday)** at our residence at Tongden Lee, Dikchu Bazar, East Sikkim. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank all those who stood by us in our hard time and regret our inability to thank them individually.

**Wangchuk Bhutia (Husband)
& all family members.**



SU Teachers' Association elects new executive committee

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 05 APR:

Election for the office of Executive Committee of the Sikkim University Teachers' Association (SUTA) was conducted on 28 March. Two full panels contested to strengthen the democratic process in SUTA, a press release informs.

Dr Salvin Paul and Dr Pooja Basnett were elected as president and general secretary respectively for the next two years. The induction programme of the newly elected SUTA team was conducted on 03 April in the presence of Prof Avinash Khare, the Vice-Chancellor and T K Kaul, Registrar along with other officials of Sikkim University, teachers and SUSA.

Dr. Dhani Raj Chhetri, the Chief Electoral



Officer, declared results of SUTA and explained the entire election process of SUTA. The other office bearers are Shankar N Bagh, Dr Dinesh K Ahirwar as vice presidents, Lekhika Chhetri, Binod Bhattarai as joint secretaries, Dr Surendra Kumar, Dr Amit Kumar Singh as treasurer and co-treasurer.

Elected members of the Executive Committee are Dr Anil Kumar Mish-

ra, Bidhan Golay, Dr Hare Krishna Tiwari, Dr K. Indira, Dr K. Birla Singh, Dr Pushpa Sharma, Dr Saurabh Maheswari, Sona Rai, Sonam Yangchen Bhutia, Dr Sujata Upadhyay, Dr T.J.M.S Raju.

Dr Saurabh Maheswari gave the details of initiatives taken up by the last SUTA Executive Committee. Dr Salvin Paul, incumbent president, in his address elaborated the role of SUTA

to promote democratic function by stressing on 'rule of law' to improve the current status of Sikkim University. The new president also emphasised on the social commitment of teachers to work together with all the stakeholders of university for the betterment of the Sikkim State that is enshrined in the Sikkim University Act, 2006.

Dr Pooja Basnett, the general secretary, high-

lighted the agenda on which the new team got the mandate by explaining various issues and challenges that are being faced by the teachers in teaching and research, file movement, allowances, complying with UGC guidelines etc. The Vice-Chancellor congratulated the newly elected office-bearers and extended his cooperation to work with SUTA in the coming days.

The VC specially congratulated the Election Committee headed by Dr Dhani Raj Chhetri and his team consists of Dr Niladri Bag, Dr Garima Thakuria, Dr Santosh Kumar Rai, Dr Krsihna Murari for the smooth conduct of the election. Dr S.K. Gurung, the Deputy Registrar was the official observer of the election from the Administration.

KIIT enters Times Higher Education World University Impact Rankings

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 05 APR:

Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT), Bhubaneswar, is among a handful of Indian universities to enter the World University Impact Rankings 2019 of Times Higher Education (THE).

The first edition of the Times Higher Education World University Impact Rankings 2019 was released on 03 April, 2019 and includes more than 450 universities from 76 countries. The rankings assess universities against the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

KIIT Deemed to be University is the only self-financing university from eastern India and

Odisha to enter this prestigious global university ranking that aims to measure an institution's impact on society based on its success in meeting the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Times Higher Education World University Impact Rankings is the only global performance table that assesses universities against the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

According to the ranking report, KIIT has been rated high on sustainable development parameters such as Reduced Inequalities (SDG 10), Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions (SDG 16), Partnership for Goals (SDG 17) and Quality Education (SDG 4).

Entrepreneurship Development Cell inaugurated in SRM University



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 05 APR:

The Entrepreneurship Development Cell of SRM University Sikkim was inaugurated at SRM Main Campus today. The key aim of the EDC is to mentor successful student entrepreneurs by helping them inculcate entrepreneurship skills and management skills, make available entrepreneurial resources, serve as a networking base and provide a forum for exchange of ideas, insights, resources, information and expertise, a press release informs.

The inauguration was attended by more than 75 students from various departments. CEO, Entrepreneurs Hub and Founder and CEO of NE Taxi, Rewaj Chhetri, was present on the occasion as the chief guest.

Mr Chhetri, in his keynote address, stressed the importance of developing an "entrepreneurial mind set" and "doing the right thing, at

the right time." He was completely able to identify with the students and their struggles and dreams. He assured them that his office is open to all budding entrepreneurs.

Likewise, founder Namchi Designer Candles, Smita Rai also spoke on the occasion. She said that one becomes a successful entrepreneur through "hard work, patience and having an undying dream." Dr AN Shankar from Sikkim University and Advisor to the EDC of SRM University Sikkim also expressed his delight to be a part of this group and extended his guidance, support and direction for the students to achieve their dreams.

All the guests were felicitated by Vice Chancellor (i/c) of SRM University Sikkim, Prof Ch Satish Kumar who stated that "EDC itself is a start up and the products it produces are the student entrepreneurs."

Final training on EVMs and VVPATs



GANGTOK, 05 APR (IPR): The last and final round of training on various poll-related procedures and the handling and functioning of the EVMs and VVPATs was held at the conference hall of Manan Kendra today.

Master trainer Yadav Sharma, DPO (Zilla), conducted the training attended by the General Observer for East District, B Ram Shastri, General Observer for Parliamentary Constituency, Ameya Abhyankar, CEO Sikkim, R Telang and the DEO/E-cum-Returning Officer/ East, Kapil Meena.

Mr Abhyankar, in his address to the polling parties, stated that it was a great responsibility to be assigned polling duty and hence they must exercise utmost caution and sensibility during the polling process.

The Master Trainer briefed the Presiding Officers and Polling Offi-

cers about their assigned roles and responsibilities with respect to the smooth and successful conduct of the polling process.

BEL engineers were on standby to impart hands-on training on the functioning of the EVM and VVPATs to the Polling Officers and familiarize them with the functioning of the machines. Mock polls with 50 votes per machine on the day of polls was emphasized and all the necessary procedures pertaining to the polling process demonstrated.

At the end of the training session detailed hands on practise session on EVMs and VVPATs was done which was participated by all polling teams. This was followed by distribution of Identity Cards and Postal ballots to the polling personnel who were allowed to caste their Postal ballots in the voting components set up for the purpose.

SIKKIM को ELECTIONS

Thank you Bhairi!

Panda: I want be going to write this elections.

I lost my right leg in an accident last year.

...moving about these days is a lot of pain.

There are many facilities provided by the Election Commission.

Person with disabilities like you are given top priority at the polling stations.

You can enter without waiting in the queue.

There will be a volunteer there to help you if you need, there will also be a wheel chair if its required.

You could call prior to the poll day and these facilities will be arranged for you.

Oh wonderful! I did not know there were such elaborate facilities provided for people like us.

I will also encourage folks that to come with me. He also has the same condition as me.

Thank you Panda for the information.

You are welcome!

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Website- <https://eastsikkim.nic.in>
E-mail ID- dmgtangtok@gmail.com

ELECTION URGENT

Memo NO: 154/DCE/2019

Date: 3/04/2019

NOTICE

It is hereby brought to the notice of all contesting candidates for Sikkim State Legislative Assembly Election 2019 and Sikkim Parliamentary Constituency Election- 2019 that the facilitation centre for casting postal ballots for the General Election 2019 will be set up during training/briefing sessions of Polling Parties at Manan Kendra on 4th & 5th of April 2019 and 6th, 7th and 8th of April at Conference Hall of District Administrative Centre, Sichey, Gangtok. Similar facilitation centre will also be set up at Biraspati Prasai Sr. Sec. School, Ranipool, Marchak on 10th of April, 2019. The timing for facilitation centre for 4th to 8th April, 2019 shall be 2pm to 4pm. However, timing for facilitation centre for 10th April, 2019 at Biraspati Prasai Sr. Sec. School, Ranipool, Marchak shall be 7am onwards before the dispatch of Polling Parties to respective Polling Stations.

You are kindly requested to be present or depute your agent to witness the casting of Postal Ballot in above cting of Postal Ballot in above designated places.

Notice No. 145/DCE/2019 dates 1/4/2019 stands superseded.

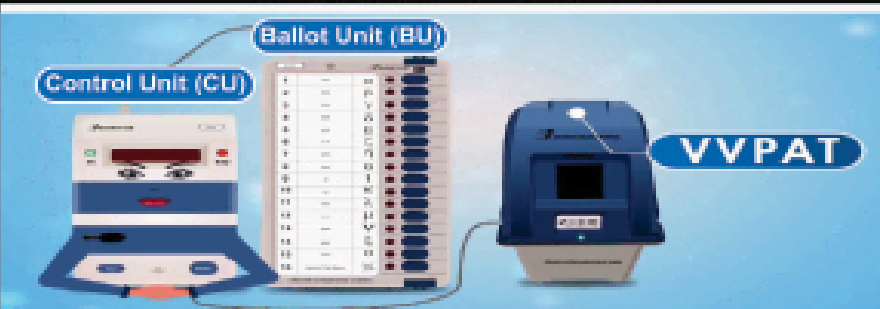
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FAQ



EVM with VVPAT Unit



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

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

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

CALL **1950** FOR ANY ELECTION RELATED QUERIES
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MCC IS IN EFFECT

WHAT IS MODEL CODE OF CONDUCT?

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

Visit the website: eci.gov.in

SummitTIMES

ON TOP OF THE NEWS

Sure, All of India Should Say Jai Shri Ram

And also Allahhu-Akbar, Jai Masi, Lha Gyalo, Achuley

So, in these times of competing obnoxiousness, or is it just a race to obnoxiousness, the running assertion of the bhakts is to insist that everyone in the country say “Jai Shri Ram”. Sure, as commanded we will do so, after we are done with standing in attention in the prescribed posture to the national anthem before the screening of “Private Teacher”, rested our legs after a liquor shop hunt, beaten up some Gujjars herding their animals to the next pasture, tweeted about the loud azaan which distracted us from finishing the 2GB playlist for Ganesh Chaturthi, picketed the “African” embassy because they called us racist, counseled the gay cousin to try yoga...

There is really so much to get through to earn the credentials of becoming a patriot that while we are getting processed, people like the West Bengal BJP chief who believes that those opposing the chants of “Bharat Mata ki Jai” and “Jai Sri Ram” will become history, can carry forward the responsibilities of good Indians and continue raising more slogans, starting with Allahhu-Akbar, moving to Jai Masi and then also remembering the margins and also saving breath for Lha Gyalo and Achuley. And while he is at it, he could also try wrapping his tongue around Sewaney and Phyafulo.

Because, isn't that what our definition of secular is? Not no special treatment for any religion, but special treatment for all faiths? Why, even Sunny Deol knew this in 1947 when he chased after his wife into Pakistan in Gaddar [no, not gaddaar which is the current word in vogue in Sikkim] and agreed to zindabad a different faith and different country, but drew the line when he was asked to run down his own desh. The hand-pump moment followed. So you know what happens when you push people beyond their breaking point. Yes, we rip out hand pumps. Wait, what did you say, that was just a movie? So he did not actually pull out that hand-pump and smash all those heads? That was all bakwaas, you say? And what you are peddling is not?

So fine, no pulling out hand pumps. How about pressing the EVM buttons with the middle finger then?

WRITE US:

Readers are invited to comment on, criticise, run down, even appreciate if they like something in this paper. Letters carrying abusive/ indecorous language and personal attacks, except when against people responsible in this newspaper (who are fair game), will have to be ignored. Letters which carry forward a conversation or initiate a dialogue will command immediate attention and receive prominence.

Mail us at: news@summittimes.com

Venezuela's power struggle reaches a tense stalemate, as human suffering deepens

DAVID SMILDE
theconversation.com

Even in a country where crisis has become the norm, the past month has been eventful for Venezuela.

On April 3 Juan Guaidó, the Venezuelan National Assembly president who is leading an effort to remove President Nicolás Maduro from office, was stripped of his parliamentary immunity. Arrest seems increasingly likely. Guaidó's chief-of-staff was jailed on March 22, on charges of organizing a “terrorist cell.”

Two days later, two Russian military planes carrying 35 tons of unspecified equipment and 100 soldiers landed at the international airport in Caracas.

Meanwhile, three blackouts left over 90 percent of the country in the dark. Since water pumps need electricity to run, neighborhoods and families were forced to organize water rationing systems or fetch water from polluted rivers and streams.

Maduro blames the blackouts on “sabotage” by Guaidó and the United States. The opposition blames government corruption and neglect of Venezuela's energy grid.

Thousands of Venezuelans protesting the power outages on March 30 were met with violent repression. Counter-protestors came out to support the Maduro government.

These extraordinary events may give the appearance that armed conflict is on the horizon. But having researched Venezuela for over 25 years, I believe a prolonged deadlock – and deeper human suffering – is the more likely result.

INTERNATIONAL CONFLICT

Each side in Venezuela's political struggle has powerful international backers.

Guaidó has been coordinating with the Trump administration since before assuming the interim presidency, and Trump has made regime change in Venezuela a foreign policy priority. Over 50 countries now recognize Guaidó as Venezuela's legitimate president.

Maduro's government retains important support from Cuba, Turkey and China – though China, which has loaned Venezuela some \$60 billion over the last 12 years, has diminished its public backing of Maduro.

Russia has become Maduro's most important ally. The Russian military equipment and personnel sent in March will likely help maintain and operate Venezuela's sophisticated Russian-made S-300 air defense system, which protects the capital and key military bases from air attack.

The missile defense system may have been damaged in recent power outages, or left understaffed by desertions from Venezuela's military.

In a March 29 press statement, White House national security adviser John Bolton called Russia's military assistance to Venezuela a “direct threat to international peace and security in the region” that will “perpetuate the economic crisis that has destroyed Venezuela's economy.”

Russian officials retorted that the deployment is part of a prior bilateral arms trade agreement with Venezuela.

“The United States is present in many parts of the world and no one is telling it where it should or shouldn't be,” said Russian President Vladimir Putin's spokesman Dmitry Peskov at a March 28 Kremlin press conference.

REGIME CHANGE STALLED

Venezuela's opposition coalition and its allies in the U.S. appear to have thought that global rejection of Maduro's re-election and Guaidó's assuming the interim presidency – coupled with threats of a U.S. military invasion and sanctions on Venezuelan oil – would lead Venezuela's armed forces to turn against Maduro. That would then usher in a democratic transition.

Recent events have shown that this strategy was simplistic. More than 500 Venezuelan soldiers have defected to Colombia and Brazil. But most have stayed loyal, as have the generals who hold high positions in Maduro's government. And Maduro has shown himself quite adept at using dispersed violence to discourage dissent.

Despite President Donald Trump's repeated mentions of a “military option” for dealing with Venezuela, it's become clear in recent weeks that the U.S. has no actual plans for military action. In-



deed, it does not have significant military assets in position near Venezuela.

Venezuela's armed forces are the fifth most powerful in Latin America, according to Global Fire Power, which ranks military strength. It has around 200,000 troops, a volunteer militia, plus paramilitary forces and a fleet of Russian Sukhoi fighter jets.

The presence of Russian troops in Venezuela further complicates any plans for U.S. intervention. Russia is a nuclear power, so incurring Russian casualties is probably too big of a risk for the U.S. to take.

Adam Isacson, a defense expert at the Washington Office on Latin America, a human rights organization, suggests that removing Maduro by force would not only kill thousands of people on the ground, it would likely require tens of thousands of U.S. troops to occupy Venezuela for years in order to stabilize it.

Outside of south Florida, where some 200,000 Venezuelan exiles are clamoring for Maduro's ouster, few Americans would have an appetite for such a prolonged operation.

U.S. economic sanctions – which are now targeting Venezuelan oil – appear to be hurting the Venezuelan people more than Maduro's government.

That will only make a democratic transition more elusive. Depriving the Venezuelan government of cash and credit will impede it from fixing the electrical grid by preventing the purchase of new equipment. And without electricity and water, Venezuelans, who in their vast majority oppose Maduro, will be concentrating on survival rather than protest.

WORKING FOR PEACE

An international effort led by the European Union, Uruguay, Ecuador and Costa Rica is seeking to negotiate new elections. Calling itself the International Contact Group, this coalition has sent technical teams to Caracas twice to meet with the Maduro government and the opposition.

The International Contact Group has not actually found much interest on either side.

The opposition and its allies in the Trump administration still believe that their strategy of political pressure and economic punishment will lead

to the government's collapse. Maduro, it appears, thinks he can hunker down and wait out the storm.

There is one glimmer of hope.

After years of political wrangling over humanitarian aid, on March 29 the International Committee of the Red Cross announced that it had brokered agreements with both the Maduro government and the opposition. They will allow the Red Cross to distribute food and medicine to Venezuelans, who have suffered severe shortages of both since 2015.

The United Nations estimates that 94 percent of Venezuela's population now lives in poverty, and a quarter of its people urgently need humanitarian assistance.

The Red Cross deal shows what can be achieved with “satellite diplomacy” – that is, negotiations that engage with rival factions independently rather than requiring them to meet face to face.

This is significant. It is the first time that this diplomatic technique has succeeded in Venezuela's conflict.

In the best-case scenario, the humanitarian aid agreement will stick. And it could serve as a model for how international actors can facilitate a democratic transition in Venezuela.

[the writer is Professor of Sociology, Tulane University]

Bouteflika steps aside as Algerians push to reclaim and own their history

DOUNIA MAHLOULY
theconversation.com

Algeria's long-time leader Abdelaziz Bouteflika has agreed to step down following a series of mass protests against his original plan to bid for a fifth term.

After weeks of uncertainty, the country's military chief Ahmed Gaed Salah declared the 82-year-old leader constitutionally unfit to rule. An interim leadership will be formed under the supervision of the army. Everything seems to suggest that the country is heading towards elections and a constitutional referendum.

Some observers have drawn parallels between events in Algeria and the “Arab Spring”. These mass demonstrations against corruption and acts of police brutality which swept through North Africa from 2011. The pro-democracy uprisings led to the overthrow of three authoritarian regimes: Tunisia's Ben Ali, Libya's Muammar Gaddafi and Egypt's Hosni Mubarak.

Political pundits and analysts drawing these comparisons may be tempted to speculate about hidden agendas, or deplore the lack of a common ideological framework for the opposition. This is because, in countries where opposition forces failed to cohere in a meaningful way, the 2011 revolutionary momentum was easily hijacked by counter-revolutionaries. But these debates miss the point.

They overlook the social and cultural value of the Algerian protests. They also reveal that the international community has remained centred on the question of political stability since the civil war of 1991-2002. In fact, the singular achievement of these demonstrations is that Algerians have reclaimed ownership of their past.

This is apparent in the way that protesters invoked the memory of the war of independence. It could also be seen in their allusions to slogans or songs from that time, calling for “Algeria's liberation”.

The memory of Algeria's liberation was politically hijacked by the elites who've held power since the 1954-1962 Algerian war of independence.

THE OUIDJA GROUP

During the independence war against France, the National Liberation Army placed Bouteflika in charge of the western border, close to the Moroccan city of Oujda. He became part of the Oujda group led by Houari Boumédiène. It was Boumédiène who helped Ahmed Ben Bella unseat the first post-independence provisional government in 1962.

Boumédiène then became defence minister, and had much influence over the government through the army. Bouteflika became foreign minister. Following political tensions at the top Boumédiène overthrew Ben Bella in a 1965 military coup. Under the military-led National

Liberation Front, Algeria was a one party state until the 1989 constitution introduced a multiparty system. Bouteflika became a member of the Front's central committee when serving as a foreign minister. With the help of interior minister and the head of intelligence, he took office in 1999.

Bouteflika was initially able to gain popularity by acting as if he intended to break with his predecessors' anti-colonial and pan-Arab traditions. He capitalised on the imperative of national security to build legitimacy in the aftermath of the civil war. Algeria remained under a state of emergency for almost 10 years after the end of the civil war. This was known as Algeria's “black decade”.

Beyond the country's borders, Bouteflika proved popular. The international community was particularly receptive to this narrative in the context of the post-9/11 “war on terror”.

UNDER BOUTEFLIKA

Under Bouteflika, the penal code was amended to impose punishments for any “insulting or defamatory” statement likely to harm the president. This law saw independent journalists and human rights advocates repressed in the name of national security.

During the same period, a law was promulgated which granted amnesty to terrorists guilty of committing crimes during the civil war. Implicitly, this new law exonerated members of

the Algerian secret services. Many of them had served with the Armed Islamic Group. This was one of the two main Islamist insurgent groups that fought the Algerian government and army in the Algerian civil war.

Historically, the power elite – made up of the military, the secret services and the Political Bureau of the National Liberation Front – built its legitimacy on a distorted memory of the war of independence. This arguably added to Algeria's post-colonial identity crisis and the climate of polarisation that laid the ground for civil war.

Bouteflika later capitalised on the trauma of the “black decade”, while depriving Algerians of the economic and social resources they needed to cope with the growing challenges regarding migration, climate, water scarcity and security. Ironically, this is partly the reason why the question of political stability still prevails today.

LOOKING AHEAD

This history demonstrates why the debate around today's political crisis often misses the mark and ignores the real issues. It's important to fully appreciate what it means for Algerians to reclaim ownership of their history with confidence – and to consider a world beyond Bouteflika's troubled leadership.

[the writer is Senior Teaching Fellow, Social & Political Sciences, SOAS, University of London]

West Bengal performed poorly in almost all governance issues: Survey

KOLKATA, APR 5 (PTI): The West Bengal government has performed “poorly” in almost all governance issues, mainly on providing better employment opportunities, agriculture loan availability and higher price realisation for farm products, according to a survey released on Friday.

The West Bengal Survey Report 2018 also said the three issues -- providing better employment opportunities (for 39.28 per cent of survey participants), agriculture loan availability (35.86 per cent) and higher price realisation for farm products (35.21 per cent) -- which have been neglected by the state government are in the top priority list for voters in the state.

“The government has performed poorly in almost all governance issues, with the exception of average performance on matters such as em-

powerment of women and security and electricity for domestic use,” said the report, which is the third part of the survey jointly conducted by the West Bengal Election Watch (WBEW) and the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) on ‘Governance issues and Voting Behaviour 2018’.

The survey report was released on a day when Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee said at an election rally that the state government has won the United Nations Public Service Award for its Kanyashree programme, which was introduced in 2012 to aid the girl child in education and her wellbeing.

The WBEW is a civil society process, linked with NGOs ADR, New Delhi, and the National Election Watch India. This survey report has a dedicated chapter for West Bengal covering all 42 Lok Sabha constitu-

encies in the state and approximately 21,000 voters as respondents.

The survey, which was conducted between October-December 2018, covered 534 parliamentary constituencies and more than 2.37 lakh voters.

It found that for the urban voters in West Bengal, the top most issues were providing better employment opportunities (45 per cent), reducing water and air pollution (39 per cent) and traffic congestion (39 per cent).

The state government performed poorly in providing better public transport (2.36) and reducing noise pollution in urban regions of the state, it stated.

On the voting behaviour of the electorates in the state, the survey said the highest percentage of voters felt that the chief ministerial candidate was the most signif-

icant reason for voting a candidate in an election.

While 38 per cent of the voters said this was important, 46 per cent felt it was “very important”. A large number of voters (67 per cent) said distribution of cash, gifts for polls were illegal, while 32 per cent said they were aware of instances where such inducements were offered in lieu of their votes.

“Ninety eight per cent voters felt that the candidates with criminal background should not be in Parliament or the state assembly, while only 36 per cent voters said they could get information on criminal records of the candidates,” the report elaborated.

In relation to voting candidates with criminal antecedents, 36 per cent voters felt that people vote for such candidates because they were unaware about their criminal records. In the opin-

ion of 34 per cent voters, people vote for criminal candidates as they feel that the cases against such candidates were not of serious nature, the survey said.

Voters in West Bengal while voting for candidates with criminal records also keep in mind whether they were powerful (34 per cent), belong to the same caste or religion (33 per cent) or whether candidates were otherwise doing good work (34 per cent).

Seventy-four per cent of the people included in the survey were from rural areas, while 26 per cent were from the urban regions of the state. While 61 per cent were males, 39 per cent were females.

A total 63 per cent people surveyed were from the general castes, 23 per cent scheduled caste, seven per cent scheduled tribe and six per cent from the other backward classes.

Golay confident that party will sweep polls



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 05 APR:

An election campaign meeting of Sikkim Krantikari Morcha was held at Chuba-Perbing and Bar Dara of Kateng under Namthang-Rat-eypuni constituency in South Sikkim on Friday. The meeting, which was chaired by Delay Theeng and attended by the SKM candidate, Sanjeet Khar-el, was also addressed by the SKM president, PS Tamang [Golay].

An SKM press release informs that Mr Tamang expressed confidence that SKM would win the election from the con-

stituency. Mr Tamang, it may be recalled, had lost from this constituency in 2014.

This time, the people were keen on SKM, he claimed, while alleging that the SDF government has failed to work in the interest of Sikkim workers employed at private companies and that the government has still not abolished the labour contract system despite of its announcement to do so.

He also alleged that SDF government was not in the favour of the youth of Sikkim and has made them dependent. On the same, he urged the youth

to cast their votes wisely to become self-reliant in the future.

Mr Tamang also announced today that should SKM form the government, it will promulgate a rule which will require MLAs to work in their respective constituencies for 15 days a month.

He asserted that SDF will be wiped out after 11 April, the day of polling and assured to pursue all political demands of the State after forming the government.

The release informs that 170 SDF families joined SKM during the meeting.

Nagaland observes 75th anniversary of Battle of Kohima

KOHIMA, APR 5 (PTI): The 75th anniversary of the Battle of Kohima was observed by the Nagaland government on Thursday with representatives from the UK and Japan speaking on the theme of ‘Remembrance, Reconciliation and Rebirth’.

The dignitaries from the UK and Japan assembled at the programme to seek “reconciliation and forgiveness” for the “sufferings and pain” caused against each other at the Battle of Kohima, that was fought in three stages during the Second World War in 1944.

Recounting the loss of “thousands of precious lives” in the battle, Ambassador of Japan to India, Kenji Hiramatsu, said the peace “we enjoy today was built over tremendous sacrifices”.

He said Japan stands committed to “never repeat the devastation of the war”.

Noting that relations of the countries which “once fought with each

other” have been “transformed for the good”, he said, “genuine reconciliation is only possible through dedicated efforts by us all.”

The Japanese envoy said the relationship between Japan and the Northeastern region has become “substantially closer”.

Two years ago, the ‘Act East Forum’ was started to help accelerate the development of the region and the people-to-people exchanges, particularly among the youth, he said.

British High Commissioner to India, Dominic Anthony Gerard Asquith said, “We are here to remember the British, Indian and Commonwealth service personnel who lost their lives during the battle, together with the Naga non-combatants who died valiantly supporting the successful defence of the Kohima Ridge against a numerically superior force.”

Asquith said India,

Japan and UK stand together as “three great democracies” to work with each other for peace and prosperity globally and committed to facing today’s challenges.

Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio recalled that Kohima was the theatre of the War in 1944 and the Nagas were drawn into it on both sides some with the British and some with the Japanese.

“The relationship with the UK and Japan over the last 75 years stands as a model of the power of reconciliation,” he said.

The 75th anniversary of the Battle of Kohima will be a yearlong celebration, Rio said.

Rio said post the Second World War, the Nagas were witness to “more wars and bloodshed”. However, the past two decades have been peaceful and Nagaland is moving forward on the path of development, he said.

Movement of vehicles from Myanmar to Mizoram banned

AIZAWL, APR 5 (PTI): The deputy commissioner of Champhai district has issued an order banning movement of all vehicles from Myanmar to Mizoram from Friday, an official statement said.

Movement of people would not be restricted as of now, but the international border at Zokhawthar border trade centre and Saikhumphai entry points would be completely sealed from Monday next to prohibit human entry till completion of the polling on April 11, the statement said.

The order banning

movement of all vehicles from Myanmar to Mizoram and from Mizoram to Myanmar was issued by deputy commissioner Naveen Aggarwal in view of the coming Lok Sabha election in the state, it said.

Election to the lone state Lok Sabha seat in Mizoram would be held on April 11.

Bootlegging of liquor and other intoxicants from Myanmar was on the rise after closure of liquor vendor shops in the state from March 31, it said, adding that the order was also meant to stop the bootlegging.

Tea exports fall during Jan-Feb 2019



KOLKATA, APR 5 (PTI): Country-wise tea exports during the months of January and February this year fell to 41.60 million kilograms from 44.72 million kilograms during the same period last year, according to Tea Board data.

Exports to CIS countries during the first two month period of 2019 fell to 9.20 million kilograms from 11.36 million kilograms in same period of 2018.

Exports to Iran during the period touched 11.37 million kilograms during the first two months of 2019, a rise from 5.13 million kilograms in the same period of 2018, it said.

Exports to Pakistan fell marginally to 2.35 million kilograms during the period in 2019, from 2.68 million kilograms in the same period of 2018.

Value of exports during the two-month period of 2019 increased to Rs 934.08 crore, as compared to Rs 858.47

crore in the same period of 2018.

Unit price per kilogram during the period increased to Rs 224.34 per kilogram in 2019 as compared to Rs 191.97 per kilogram in the same period 2018.

During the 11-month period from April 2018 to February 2019, country-wise exports stood at Rs 231.75 million kilograms, as compared to 236.07 million kilograms in the same period from April 2017 to February 2018. Value of exports during the 11-month period from April 2018 to February 2019 stood at Rs 4993.07 crore, lower from Rs 4676.03 crore in the similar period from April 2017 to February 2018.

Unit price per kilogram during the 11-month period from April 2018 to February 2019 was higher at Rs 215.45 from Rs 198.08 in the similar period from April 2017 to February 2018.

Polling teams airlifted in Arunachal Pradesh



ITANAGAR, APR 5 (PTI): Polling teams for conducting elections in four remote polling stations of Arunachal Pradesh have been airlifted from Miao to Vijaynagar, election office sources said here Friday.

The Indian Air Force MI-17 helicopter transported the team members in two sorties on Thursday for conducting elections at Ramnagar, Gandhigram, Vijaynagar and Two-Hut polling stations.

Arunachal Pradesh will vote for Lok Sabha and Assembly polls simultaneously on April 11.

The four polling stations fall under Miao assembly constituency and the Arunachal East parliamentary seat.

Each team has one presiding officer, four polling officers, one attendant and two policemen with four sets of EVMs and VVPATs, state nodal officer Lod Takkar said.

Miao and Vijaynagar are about 163 km apart with no road connectivity and

the journey takes six days by foot.

Three of the teams will stay in Vijaynagar till April 10 and then undertake a foot march for their respective polling stations. It will take one to three hours for the polling personnel to reach the polling stations, Takkar said.

The team bound for Gandhigram will leave on April 9 and embark on an eight-hour journey by foot, he added.

While Ramnagar polling station has 252 voters, Gandhigram booth has 1,338 voters, Vijaynagar 8,65 voters and Two-Hut has 726 voters respectively. Eight polling teams for Tali assembly constituency in Kurung Kumey district were also scheduled to begin their journey on Thursday, but were thwarted by weather conditions.

Another attempt to airlift them would be made on Friday and if it fails, the polling officials would have to walk for three to four days to reach the polling booths, Takkar added.

Biraj Adhikari campaigns in Rhenock

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 05 APR:

Hamro Sikkim Party candidate for Rhenock constituency, Biraj Adhikari shared his plans to place Rhenock on top of the tourism map in Sikkim. He assured to increase tourism and economic activities in the constituency to provide opportunities to the people.

HSP spokesperson, Mr Adhikari, who is also Lok Sabha candidate of the party, is presently on his door-to-door campaign in Rhenock.

Speaking to media persons, He stated that Rhenock has an important place in Sikkim’s history as it has the first post office, police station and many administrative offices of Sikkim also started from Rhenock.

“Despite having such rich history and falling on the old silk route it is an irony that Rhenock is still not even on the map of Sikkim tourism,” he



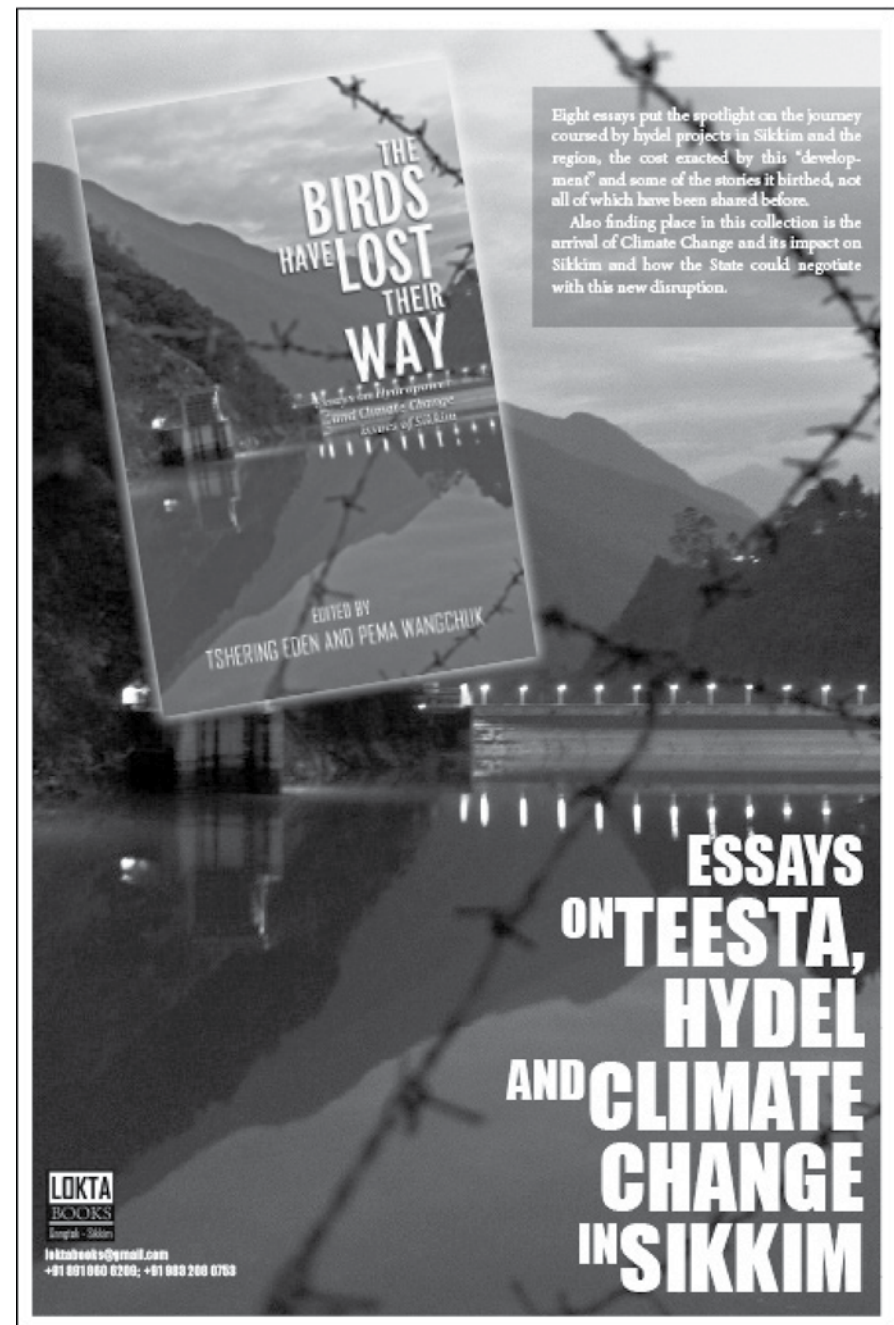
said. He added that the absence of opportunities for the people has affected Rhenock negatively and made many people dependent on the government.

“I had contested the election from Rhenock when I was in my early 30’s and lost but I have never sat silent since then but have been continuously raising my voice on different issues of Sikkim. So, if I can raise voice for the State then I can definitely raise voice for my own place,” he said.

He stressed upon the need to increase eco-

nomics activities by creating opportunities for the people of the area. He assured to take Rhenock to new heights if the people vote for him in this election.

Speaking on pending political demands of the State, the HSP Lok Sabha candidate stated that these political demands have been pending due to the approach of the State government with the Centre on these issues. To pursue these issues on the basis of Article 371F and find a solution, people should send him to the Parliament, added Mr Adhikari.



Peerless PSG on verge of another French title

PARIS, APR 5 (AFP): Paris Saint-Germain can clinch a sixth Ligue 1 title in seven seasons this weekend and complete the first part of a domestic double after booking their place in the final of the French Cup.

Thomas Tuchel's team will know ahead of kick-off whether they can round off their title procession with a victory at home to League Cup champions Strasbourg.

PSG would claim the championship for the eighth time -- and draw to within two of the record held by Saint-Etienne -- with a win at the Parc des Princes if Lille slip up away to Reims.

Yet Tuchel, whose side are on track to shatter their 96-point return from the 2015-16 campaign, denied recent reports he has signed an extension with PSG until

2021. "I can't confirm, we should wait a bit," said the German, who saw his team agonisingly knocked out of the Champions League last 16 by Manchester United last month.

Marquinhos became the latest high-profile PSG injury casualty during Wednesday's 3-0 semi-final defeat of Nantes, joining Neymar, Edinson Cavani and Angel Di Maria on the sidelines.

"At Toulouse, we were 14 players, we were missing two on the bench," Tuchel bemoaned, having travelled with a reduced 16-man squad for last week's 1-0 win.

"It's not possible to manage the players. Some guys we use too much. It's horrible because we're missing a lot of key players... but the team continues to win



every three days.

"It shows our hunger to win, which for me is exceptional," he added.

After flirting with relegation last season, Lille are looking to cement their Champions League return by holding off

Lyon in the fight for second place. Lyon are third, four points back with eight games left, but the focus this week has centred on the future of manager Bruno Genesio, who is out of contract in June.

-NO MOURINHO AT LYON-

Tuesday's 3-2 loss at home to Rennes in the French Cup prompted club president Jean-Michel Aulas to shelve a two-year extension for Genesio, whose side host bottom side Dijon on Saturday. While Genesio faces a fight to save his job, Aulas ruled out the possibility of Jose Mourinho pitching up in Lyon next season. "I saw Mourinho in Moscow last summer and we spoke a bit, but not to talk about coming to Lyon, we spoke about

recruitment," Aulas told French sports daily L'Equipe. "The special one is not compatible with the club's economy." Marseille's push for Champions League football appears doomed after they tossed away a two-goal lead in their 2-2 draw against Angers to fall eight points adrift of Lyon.

"The goal was to do better than last season. It would be a failure" to miss out on the top three, said 19-year-old defender Boubacar Kamara.

"But we have to finish the season well. In terms of points anything can still happen."

Mario Balotelli scored twice against Angers to take his goals tally to seven in nine games for Marseille, but the Italian is a doubt for Friday's trip to Bordeaux due to a muscle strain. Meanwhile, Nice sporting director

Gilles Grimandi has insisted Patrick Vieira is going nowhere as the ex-France and Arsenal star approaches the end of his debut season on the Cote d'Azur. Vieira "will be by our side next season. At Arsenal he was courted by quite a lot of people. As a coach he will be on shortlists and in demand by big clubs," said Grimandi, who assumed his new role last month.

Fixtures (all times 1800 GMT unless stated): Friday
Bordeaux v Marseille (1845)
Saturday
Lyon v Dijon (1500), Amiens v Saint-Etienne, Angers v Rennes, Guingamp v Monaco, Nimes v Caen
Sunday
Reims v Lille, Toulouse v Nantes (both 1300), Nice v Montpellier (1500), Paris Saint-Germain v Strasbourg.

Did Delhi Capitals pitch coordinator 'mislead' Ponting on Kotla track?

NEW DELHI, APR 5 (PTI): Delhi Capitals coach Ricky Ponting might have blamed the Feroz Shah Kotla groundsmen for providing the team with the "worst pitch" but the head coach may not have been properly briefed about the nature of the track by his team's support staff.

Sunrisers Hyderabad won the match by five wickets on a low and slow Kotla track, which suited the visiting team's slow bowlers more than the home attack, prompting criticism from Ponting.

"I think it is fair to say that the wicket surprised us a lot. Talking to the groundsmen before the match, we thought this would be the best pitch that we had by far but it was the worst. You saw how little it bounced and how slow it was," an angry Ponting told reporters after the match.

However, a senior Delhi & Districts Cricket Association Official (DDCA) official said that neither did Ponting speak to any of the groundsmen, nor was he promised a fast and fast track.

"To the best of my knowledge, Ricky Ponting only takes inputs from Delhi Capitals' designated pitch coordinator. Therefore none of the DDCA groundsmen ever told Ponting that the pitch will aid fast bowlers. I feel Ponting was completely misled by their pitch co-ordinator, the gentleman, who probably is not a qualified curator," a senior DDCA official, privy to the development, told PTI on Friday.

After the match on Thursday night, DC advisor Sourav Ganguly was seen talking to Kotla pitch curator Ankit Datta for close to half an hour.

Repeated calls to Datta went unanswered, but the senior DDCA official said that DC have been assured that they will try and do some "recovery work" as the next match is on April 18, against Mumbai Indians.

"We have two weeks' time and we would try to provide a firm, even bounce wicket but we can't promise anything. This year, Kotla hosted an ODI, four Ranji games, Deodhar Trophy games, U-19 Cooch Behar Trophy matches, BCCI women's matches. In any case, Kotla track is slow and bald in nature. IT is a tired track at the end of the season," the official said.

However, the official also admitted that this year the new management wanted Kotla to host most of the BCCI games whenever it was available.

"Roshanara is no longer on DDCA roster. The junior matches earlier used to be played at the Stephen's ground but this year bulk of it was played at Kotla. Ditto for so many women's games. You can't blame the curators," he added.

Bairstow looks to continue run riot and SRH juggernaut

HYDERABAD, APR 5 (PTI): Jonny Bairstow will be keen to continue his run riot and keep the Sunrisers Hyderabad juggernaut rolling against a Mumbai Indians side that is getting into the groove after an up-and-down start, in their IPL match here on Saturday.

Currently holding the top spot in the points table with three back-to-back victories, the confident Sunrisers would not like to spare an inch against Mumbai, lying at sixth place, with two wins and as many losses from four outings.

However, Mumbai will take heart from the fact that they defeated defending champions Chennai Super Kings, their first loss in four games, in the last match.

In contrast, the Sunrisers, after losing their opening game against Kolkata Knight Riders, went on the win against Rajasthan Royals, Royal Challengers Bangalore and Delhi Capitals.

The Sunrisers, in fact, were without the services of their captain Kane Williamson during Thursday's match against Delhi because of an injury, but they did not let that have an im-



pact. Bhuvneshwar Kumar led from the front as the seamer, along with Mohammad Nabi and Siddarth Kaul, chipped in with two wickets each to restrict Delhi to 129 for eight.

And with opener Bairstow (48) once again shinning with the bat, the Sunrisers had a cakewalk, cruising to a five-wicket win.

Come Saturday, the Sunrisers would again be banking on the English batsmen to deliver the goods, besides Australian David Warner.

The marauding pair of Warner and Bairstow have been in scintillating form this season, having shared three century-plus opening stands in four matches.

After a 118-run opening stand against KKR in a losing cause, Warner and Bairstow continued their dominance up the order with 110-run and 185-run partnerships against Rajasthan and Bangalore, respectively.

Among the bowlers, Afghanistan spin duo of Nabi and Rashid Khan, and Bhuvneshwar will be keen to fire in unison to counter the likes of Rohit Sharma, Yuvraj Singh, Suryakumar Yadav, Quinton de Kock, Kieron Pollard and Pandya brothers (Krunal and Hardik).

Although Mumbai

Battle of leadership styles of Dhoni and Ashwin as CSK take on KXIP

C SHYAM SUNDAR CHENNAI, APR 5 (PTI): It will be a battle of leadership styles of Mahendra Singh Dhoni and Ravichandran Ashwin when Chennai Super Kings clash with Kings XI Punjab an IPL match here on Saturday.

Dhoni's ability to stay calm and keep his cool even in the trickiest of situations versus Ashwin's aggressive approach and out-of-the-box decisions would certainly make for an interesting contest.

The two teams have three wins each and both will try to outdo each other to take the upper hand. Defending champions CSK suffered their first defeat at the hands of Mumbai Indians in their last match after three straight wins, and they would hoping to get back to winning ways as they return to their 'den'.

The two previous matches at MA Chidambaram stadium have produced contrasting performances. While Royal Challengers Bangalore were shot out for 70, Rajasthan Royals made CSK sweat before going down by eight runs on a better surface for the batters.

The spin-heavy CSK will now be up against KXIP, which also have quality spinners in their line-up with Ashwin himself at the forefront apart from Muejeb Ur Rahman, leggie M Ashwin and mystery bowler C V Varun.

The home team's bowlers will be wary of Chris Gayle's power-hitting provided he plays after missing the game against Delhi Capitals on April 1.

With Gayle sitting out in their last match, KXIP showed it is not about the hard-hitting West Indian alone as KL Rahul, Mayank Agarwal put their hands up. And Punjab would hope that they continue to shine.

CSK has relied on team effort to win their matches as different players have delivered the goods in the IPL so far.

The only worry would be the form of opener Ambati Rayudu, who has struggled to get going after last year's success, perhaps creating a chance for Murali Vijay at the top.

There is uncertainty over the availability of star all-rounder Dwayne Bravo for tomorrow's game after he suffered a hamstring injury against Mumbai. His absence could open up a spot for the New Zealand pacer Scott Kuggeleijn.

World's first 5G phone released in South Korea

Seoul, Apr 5 (AFP): Samsung Electronics on Friday released the Galaxy S10 5G, the world's first available smartphone with built-in fifth-generation communications technology, as South Korea seeks to build a lead in the transformative system.

On Wednesday the South became the first country to commercially launch nationwide 5G services, with three superfast networks going live offering data speeds that allow users to download entire movies in less than a second.

Hours later US giant Verizon began commercial services in Chicago and Minneapolis, after rival AT&T made a 5G-based system available to selected users in parts of 12 cities in December.

South Korea's three mobile carriers -- SK Telecom, KT and LG Uplus -- held launch events across Seoul for the Galaxy S10, whose base version costs 1.39 million won (1,200).

Interactive virtual-reality displays and robot demonstrations were on show to tout the capabilities of the latest iteration of mobile internet speed, and new users were excited about the possibilities, especially live streaming of



sports games and university lectures.

"I watch a lot of videos often, movies and lectures," said buyer Shim Ji-hye, 38. "I hope faster speeds will help me manage my time better."

Another user said he was most excited about virtual reality content -- which includes games and even "celebrity VR dating" apps according to the country's mobile carriers.

With 5G, said researcher Lee Sang-yoon, VR content "can be enjoyed in real time with no delay... I'll be able to enjoy it in better resolution and speed".

Before Friday's roll-out of the Samsung phone, the 5G service had been restricted to a handful of specially selected users in South Korea.

Rival manufacturer LG is due to launch its V50 ThinQ, another 5G phone, in the South later this month, while in the US, Verizon's network works with Lenovo's Moto Z3 smartphone fitted with a special accessory.

Commercialising 5G gives South Korea the chance to build around the technology, which is crucial for the future development of de-

vices such as autonomous vehicles and the Internet of Things.

It is expected to bring about 565 billion in global economic benefits by 2034, according to the London-based Global System for Mobile Communications, an industry alliance.

The implications of the new technology have pitted Washington against Beijing -- whose firms dominate 5G technology -- in an increasingly bitter standoff.

The US has pressed its allies and major economies to avoid 5G solutions from Chinese-owned telecom giant Huawei, citing security risks that technological backdoors could give Beijing access to 5G-connected utilities and other components.

Chinese entities own a total of 3,400 5G patents -- more than a third of the total, according to data analysis firm IPlytics -- with 1,529 of those registered by Huawei. South Korea comes next, with its companies holding 2,051 patents, while US firms have 1,368 together.

Neither KT nor SK Telecom use Huawei technology in their 5G networks, but it is a supplier to LG Uplus, the companies told AFP.

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Anti-apartheid activists laid to rest in peace, 50 years on

PRETORIA, APR 5 (AFP): Pulane Koboekae looked pensively at the seven nooses suspended over a trap door in Pretoria Central Prison where her brother Richard Motsoahae was hanged by South Africa's apartheid regime in 1964. Then she pulled out a white tissue and sobbed silently.

"It has opened up old wounds. I'm feeling mixed emotions. I feel sick, but also relieved," said Koboekae, 66, a retired nurse, her lips trembling. "We've long been waiting for this," she said, on the day in August last year when her brother's remains were finally disinterred, 54 years after he was buried unceremoniously in an unmarked grave.

Motsoahae was an activist for the Pan Africanist Congress, an anti-apartheid movement which split from the African National Congress (ANC) in pursuit of a more radically "Africanist" agenda.

Motsoahae and three others -- the so-called Krugersdorp Four -- were hanged for killing a policeman -- among 135 political prisoners executed by the whites-only apartheid government that ended with the country's first democratic elections 25 years ago this month.

Those executed at the gallows were hastily buried, often anonymously-



ly, sometimes in mass graves. Koboekae remembers the day of the execution of her 23-year-old brother "like it was yesterday". She was just 13.

"I was left alone at home and I was not allowed to come and visit" him in prison, she said softly. "I was sent to school and when I came back, I was all alone."

Next-of-kin such as Koboekae are finally getting a degree of closure decades later thanks to the Gallows Exhumation Programme, created to find the remains of hanged activists and return them to their families for burial.

The project is a spin-off of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, set up by the post-apartheid, ANC-led

government to probe atrocities committed by the whites-only state. The bodies of about 50 executed activists have been found and reburied so far.

Under the exhumation programme, bereaved families are invited on a visit of the prison and the gallows as part of the coming to terms with their loss. Recently, relatives of seven hanged prisoners went to Pretoria Central Prison -- since renamed the Kgosi Mampuru II Correctional Centre -- which was the headquarters of capital punishment in apartheid South Africa.

The prison briefly also housed Nelson Mandela pending trial. Guide Abram Rahlogo detailed the last walk of a prisoner, hands cuffed behind his back, from the cell to the gallows, passing the

chapel on the way.

One of the visitors, 59-year-old Lazarus Molathegi, had pictures taken of him touching the nooses. "I know those ropes aren't the ones that they used. But it's a rope exactly like that one that killed my brother. I was five at the time," he said.

Molathegi's brother Thomas, 31, was one of the Krugersdorp Four.

After the emotional hour-long visit to the prison and gallows which included them walking past the coffins that will receive their loved ones' remains, the families set off for the cemetery of Mamelodi, a township of Pretoria where black prisoners were buried.

The graves of seven men lay exposed, freshly dug up, the soil carefully dusted from the bones.

Koboekae leaned over the grave to look at her brother's skeleton, of which only the leg bones remained intact.

"It's a strange feeling. I never thought I would see my brother's skeleton one day... It's a bit unreal. It's the kind of things you see on TV, things that happen to other people", she said. The bereaved were offered special counselling before coming face to face with the mortal remains.

"The decomposition process... we tell them how it works," a member of the pathology team that carries out the exhumations told AFP on condition of anonymity. "Some are worried or scared when they see the broken bones... They are afraid that their loved ones were tortured," the expert said.

Xi says 'new substantial progress' made to end US-China trade war

BY K J M VARMA

BEIJING, APR 5 (PTI): Chinese President Xi Jinping on Friday said that "new substantial progress" has been made on the China-US economic agreement, generating optimism for an end to the trade war between the world's two largest economies.

Xi's remarks were part of a message conveyed to US President Donald Trump at the White House by Chinese Vice Premier Liu He, Beijing's lead negotiator to resolve the nine month-long trade war.

The US and China are locked in a trade war since Trump imposed heavy tariffs on imported steel and aluminium items from China in March last year, a move that sparked fears of a global trade war. In response, China imposed tit-for-tat tariffs on billions of dollars worth of American imports.

China is the world's second largest economy after the US.

Liu, who is in Washington to continue the trade negotiations, met President Trump on Thursday and conveyed Xi's message.

The Chinese President said that new substantial progress has been made on the text of the China-US economic and trade agreement in the past more than one month.

Xi encouraged the two sides to keep up with the spirit of mutual respect, equality and mutual benefit, and resolve issues of mutual concern so as to conclude the negotiations on the agreement text as soon as possible.

Under the current situation, a healthy and stable development of China-US relations concerns the interests of both Chinese and American people, as well as the interests of people of other countries around



the world, and it needs, in particular, their strategic leadership, Xi told Trump, state-run Xinhua news agency reported.

Xi also said that he is ready to keep close contact with Trump through various means, and believes that the China-US relations will make new and greater progress under their joint guidance.

Top trade officials of the US and China have been holding a series of talks to end the trade war. Trump is demanding China to reduce the USD 375 billion trade deficit and protection of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR), technology transfer and more access to American goods to Chinese markets.

The US increased tariffs on over USD 250 billion worth of Chinese imports and threatened to extend 25 per cent tariffs on USD 200 billion Chinese imports. China too slapped reciprocal tariffs on some US products.

Trump held back his threat to impose additional tariffs on the rest of Chinese imports as both sides stepped up talks to finalise the text of the deal.

Liu, after meeting Trump, said the Chinese and US negotiation teams have over the past two days conducted fruitful consultations and reached new consensus

on important issues such as the text of the economic and trade agreement.

During the meeting, Liu said that the two sides, guided by the consensus reached by the two heads of state, will continue with the consultations to achieve more progress on issues of mutual concern so as to conclude the negotiations as soon as possible, Xinhua reported.

Separately, Chinese commerce ministry spokesperson Gao Feng announced reciprocal suspension of additional tariffs slapped by both the countries on each other's goods since last year, saying the move would "undoubtedly" create a conducive atmosphere for the China-US economic and trade negotiations.

China's State Council or central cabinet said last Sunday that China would continue to suspend additional tariffs on US vehicles and auto parts after March 31, in a goodwill gesture following a US decision to delay tariff hikes on Chinese imports.

China said in December it would suspend additional 25 per cent tariffs on US made vehicles and auto parts for three months, following a truce in the trade dispute between the world's two largest economies.

Saudi Arabia arrests 8 more activists, including US citizen

DUBAI, APR 5 (AP): Saudi Arabia has detained eight people, including a dual U.S.-Saudi citizen, in new arrests targeting individuals supportive of women's rights and connected to detained activists.

A person with knowledge of the arrests, who spoke anonymously for fear of retribution, told The Associated Press the individuals had been detained Thursday.

The individuals are not seen as frontline activists. Rather, they are writers and advocates who quietly supported greater social reforms, like the right of women to drive before the ban was lifted.

Among those detained is Salah Al-Haidar, a dual U.S.-Saudi national who has a family home in Vienna, Virginia, and lives with his wife and child in Riyadh. His mother is prominent women's rights activists Aziza al-Yousef, who is on trial and recently was temporarily released from prison.

South Korea launches 5G networks early to secure world first

SEOUL, APR 4 (AFP): South Korea launched the world's first nationwide 5G mobile networks two days early, its top mobile carriers said Thursday, giving a handful of users access in a late-night scramble to be the first providers of the super-fast wireless technology. Three top telecom providers - SK Telecom, KT and LG Uplus - began their 5G services at 11 pm local time Wednesday, despite previously announcing the launch date would be April 5.

Hyper-wired South Korea has long had a reputation for technical prowess, and Seoul had made the 5G rollout a priority as it seeks to stimulate stuttering economic growth.

Along with the US, China and Japan, South Korea had been racing to claim the title as the world's first provider of the ultra-fast network.

But speculation that US mobile carrier Verizon might start its 5G services early forced South Korean providers to hastily organise a late-night launch, Yonhap news agency reported.

In the event, Verizon began rolling out its 5G services in Chicago and Minneapolis on Wednesday in the US, a week ahead of schedule.

But according to Yonhap, the South Korean launches came two hours earlier.

"SK Telecom today announced that it has activated 5G services for six celebrities representing Korea as of 11



pm April 3, 2019," the country's biggest mobile operator said in a news release Thursday. The celebrities - including two members of K-pop band EXO and Olympic ice-skating heroine Kim Yu-na - were "the world's first 5G smartphone subscribers", it said.

Both KT and LG Uplus said they also went live at the same time, with a total of three specially-selected users: KT offered it to the wife of a technician setting up its network on the disputed island of Dokdo, while LG Uplus provided it to a television personality and her racing-driver husband. For general customers, the services will be available from Friday - the original launch date - when Samsung Electronics rolls out the Galaxy S10 5G, the world's first available smartphone with the technology built in.

Verizon's network will work with Lenovo's Moto Z3 smartphone fitted with a special accessory, while rival US

carrier AT&T launched a 5G-based system in parts of 12 cities in December - although it is only accessible to invited users through a free hotspot device, rather than paying customers with mobiles. Qatari firm Ooredoo said it offers 5G services in and around Doha - but does not have devices available to use them - while Japan is also expected to roll out a limited deployment in 2019 before full services start in time for next year's Tokyo Olympics.

Experts say 5G will bring smartphones near-instantaneous connectivity - 20 times faster than 4G - allowing users to download entire movies in less than a second.

The technology is crucial for the future development of devices such as self-driving vehicles and is expected to bring about 565 billion in global economic benefits by 2034, according to the London-based Global System for Mobile Communications, an industry

alliance. The implications of the new network have pitted Washington against Beijing - whose firms dominate 5G technology -- in an increasingly bitter standoff.

The US has pressed its allies and major economies to avoid 5G solutions from Chinese-owned telecom giant Huawei, citing security risks that technological backdoors could give Beijing access to 5G-connected utilities and other components.

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They are archetypal and hopeful: 'Endgame' co-director Joe Russo on why superhero mythology works

BY BEDIKA

MUMBAI, APR 5 (PTI): Superheroes represent hope in a world full of conflict and it is up to the filmmakers to weave real-world issues in the storylines, says "Avengers: Endgame" co-director Joe Russo. Just like mythology, he says, superheroes appeal to a cross-section of people. So one can be a fan of Captain America for his morality while another would be attracted to Deadpool's amorality.

"They become important because they are archetypal, hopeful and accessible to global audience. There is a lot of darkness in the world and we try to infuse thematics that are valuable on a global level to these movies. You can find the code, ethics or values you can identify with. It is no different to any mythology, Greek or any gods you can think of," Russo told PTI in a group interview.

He believes there are multiple layers to the story as both the sides are driven by a motive greater than them.

"Infinity War" has the message that sometimes villains win. It's a fairly relevant subject matter if you are an American at the moment. There is a mirror held up to society by the films that at least we try to do. This is why they have reached the level of pop culture saturation that they have." This is why, he believes, even a villain like Thanos may find acceptance in some people for his fanatical dedication to his 'altruistic' cause of killing one half of the world's population and preserving the other.

"People understand that we are dealing with potential global crisis issues... He is a sociopath and has a sociopathic self-importance. But we tried to make him emotional and we gave him all the beats of the hero in the film (Infinity War). They are horrific beats -- throwing his daughter to her death in order to obtain a stone to complete his goal. People related to his fanatic dedication to his cause.

"At the end, he is nuts but there are elements to his personality that are admirable to some of the audience members. It complicates the matter for them. They are not sure whether to hate or root for him," Russo says. The director

says he and his brother, Anthony, have tried to decode what it takes to stand up and be a hero in "Avengers" finale.

"Both 'Infinity War' and 'Endgame' ask the question: what is the cost to be

those of Taika Waititi, James Gunn or Ryan Coogler. Nobody tries to emulate the tone. Fans really go along with that. They like that there are different filmmakers behind each film, like there



a hero? Is it worth the price of standing up? That's a relevant question.

"Today, if you look at these films, they are about community, they are about community of heroes that is trying to stand up against tyranny. As waves of nationalism sweep the world, you certainly look at that and think whether it is about individualism or community. If you watch our films, you get our answer."

The director duo have worked hard to give a justified end to 22 storylines in the Marvel Cinematic Universe with the two-part magnum-opus. There are multiple directors who have worked on developing the characters of different superheroes over a decade but Russo believes fans accept all the different iterations.

"Our films are tonally different from

are different writers behind the comic books. They understand the notion that depending on the author, the tone, the energy and the inflection of the characters change," he explained. Having directed four major films in the MCU, Russo said they are constantly trying to deconstruct the world of superheroes.

"My brother and I, we try to bring psychological realism in characters. We like to deconstruct stories and I think when you look at our films - 'Winter Soldier' to 'Endgame', there's a consistent tone process, a lot of psychological realism and constantly deconstructing the universe. "So, in 'Winter Soldier', we found out that the good guys were actually the bad guys. 'Civil War' deconstructed the Avengers by splitting them up and in 'Infinity War', we did that by killing half of the characters. That's a theme with us as filmmakers and issues that are important from storytelling point."

"Endgame", set to hit the theatres on April 26, features an ensemble cast of Robert Downey Jr, Chris Evans, Mark Ruffalo, Chris Hemsworth, Scarlett Johansson, Jeremy Renner, Don Cheadle, Paul Rudd, Brie Larson, Karen Gillan, Danai Gurira, Bradley Cooper, Tessa Thompson and Josh Brolin.

The film will release in India in English, Hindi, Tamil and Telugu.



Britney Spears seeking mental health treatment amid father's illness

LOS ANGELES, APR 5 (PTI): Pop icon Britney Spears has checked into a mental health facility.

According to Billboard, the 37-year-old singer has entered into a 30-day programme to cope up with the stress related to her father Jamie Spears' health problems. The singer's father recently underwent a surgery to combat issues from his colon rupturing.

On Wednesday, Spears took to Insta-

gram to let her fans know that she is taking some "me time". "We all need to take time for a little 'me time'," the singer wrote in her post, next to a photo with the saying: "Fall in love with taking care of yourself, mind, body, spirit".

In January, Spears had announced that she would be taking an indefinite work break to be with her father during his illness. She had also put on hold her "Britney: Domination" residency in Las Vegas.



AB FAB! THE ACTRESS, LUCY HALE SHOWS OFF HER TONED TUMMY DURING A COFFEE RUN IN L.A.

Marilyn Monroe drama series in works

LONDON, APR 5 (PTI): A drama series on the final months of screen icon Marilyn Monroe's life is in development at BBC Studios.

Tentatively titled, "The Last Days of Marilyn Monroe", the show will explore her relationship with Hollywood studios and with public figures such as former US President John F Kennedy and Robert F Kennedy.

The show will be based on parts of Keith Badman's book "The Final Years of Marilyn Monroe: The Shocking True Story", the studio said in a statement.

Monroe, who died in 1962 at the age of 36 of a suspected suicide, is one of the most famous Hollywood icons ever. It will also explore the delays in reporting her overdose on the night of her death. BBC Studios, the network's production and commercial arm, has teamed up with Dan Sefton and Simon Lupton's UK indie producer

Seven Seas Films to develop the show.

The producers said the series would cover a period in which her behaviour became increasingly erratic as her dependence on alcohol and medication caused her glittering film career to plunge. Sefton, who is set to write the series, said, "Marilyn's desire to be taken seriously as an actress and her battle with the powerful men who control the studio system is sadly as relevant today as it ever was."

No broadcaster or platform is attached to the project as yet.

Previously, projects such as "My Week with Marilyn" (2011), which featured Michelle Williams as Monroe, and 2015's made-for-TV drama film "The Secret Life of Marilyn Monroe" with Kelli Garner in the lead, have explored parts of the Hollywood legend's life.



ARIES: There's no such thing as TMI for you today, Aries. With the moon in your sign, you're in your live-out-loud element. Don't feel bad about being so...overt. Your bold authenticity will actually create a safe space in which others can open up. Own your past, Ram! Those "embarrassing" mishaps birthed golden lessons that you can pass on to others who are struggling with the same issues.

TAURUS: You're in an emo groove today, Taurus, so just go with it. This is one of those days when you'd benefit from setting aside that intense work ethic so you can bond with the people in your environment. Power down your laptop and go have lunch with a colleague. You could even have a chance to pass along some of your sage wisdom to someone who is struggling with an issue you've overcome. Reach up to mentors too, especially a powerful woman who's been in your corner in the past.

GEMINI: Lighten up about love today, Gemini. With the moon in your "the more the merrier" eleventh house, you could turn

that table for two into a table for six or eight. If your entourage has yet to meet your amour du jour, this would be the perfect day for a getting-to-know-you gathering. Single? Sparks could fly with a friend of a friend.

CANCER: Be more "purpose-driven" in your personal life today. People adore you, and there are plenty of friendships you COULD cultivate. But since each one requires an investment of time, you want to reserve your energy for folks who fill your cup—not a bunch of small-talking randos. Have you been loading up your calendar with "meh" events out of fear of being lonely?

LEO: Bigger, stronger, faster: Well, why not, Leo? Today's moon in your expansive ninth house could bring rapid expansion to one of your goals. Take your foot off the brake, but keep your hands on the wheel. You of all people know that progress CAN happen at supersonic speed. People from other parts of the globe could be involved, so get ready to fire up Skype or Zoom and brainstorm away! To accelerate the process, you might have to take a risk. Make sure it's a

calculated leap instead of an impulsive gamble.

VIRGO: Got secrets? One of those skeletons is rattling the closet door, begging to be freed. Time for a confessional conversation, Virgo—the truth will liberate your soul. Connect with a trusted confidante tonight, over the phone or huddled in a private corner. If you just want them to listen without offering advice, make that clear up-front.

LIBRA: Forget all those parental advisories about the dangers of talking to strangers. Today, your usual people-watching could erupt into a fascinating dialogue when you see someone at a coffee shop who's reading a book that changed your life or who's wearing an indie-label designer that only a few insiders know about.

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

SAGITTARIUS: Put a little luxe in your life. Today's decadent fifth-house moon gives you a hall pass to be a little hedonistic. This doesn't have to be harmful to your health or the Earth. Skip the avocado toast and sip a smoothie made with young coconut milk, which requires less water to produce. Looking for a signature accessory for spring? Find a sustainable jeweler who repurposes gold and gems from antique pieces. This romantic lunation can turn up the heat with a love interest. Slip off for a lunch date, and don't be surprised if it turns into a spicy nooner. Though it's a weeknight, do what you can to lure friends out for some cultural activities—or at least happy hour!!

CAPRICORN: Bless this mess? Not today! With the Aries moon percolating in your domestic fourth house, tidying up your spaces could lead to sharper thinking. As within, so without, right? Now, here's the rub: The piles in your space might be a metaphor for situations you've been avoiding. As you're folding laundry and deleting junk mail, you may become acutely aware of emotions that you

swept under the rug.

AQUARIUS: The Aquarius social butterfly is bursting out of the cocoon thanks to today's lunar lift in your communication corner. Since you won't have much patience for desk work, rejig your schedule so you can handle the people-oriented tasks on your to-do list. A spontaneous lunch date with a coworker could turn into an amazing brainstorming session that leaves you buzzing with inspiration. With the moon in active Aries, slip out for fresh-air breaks. Who says you can't listen in on a conference call while walking the trail of an urban park?

PISCES: Would you care to upgrade, Pisces? With the moon beaming into your sensual (but sensible) second house, you're willing to splurge on quality. Review your financials: Is there room to indulge? As long as it's practical and functional, you can consider it an investment. Funds too tight for that go-with-everything Celine bag or the cold-pressed juicer? Create a special savings account and make your first deposit today. This will motivate you to keep on hustling, even if your gratification is delayed.