



**RED PANDA AND JVC FC REGISTER BIG WINS AT C-DIV SIKKIM LEAGUE**  
pg 03

**THERE IS A LOT THAT IS BEYOND REPAIR, BUT SOME THINGS CAN STILL BE SALVAGED**  
pg 04

**HOPE I GET TO WORK WITH LEONARDO DICAPRIO AGAIN: BRAD PITT**  
pg 08



# SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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Meghalaya HC sets aside controversial 'Hindu country' verdict

**SHILLONG, MAY 25 (PTI):** The Meghalaya High Court has set aside a controversial judgement made by Justice S R Sen, its former judge, observing that India should have been declared a 'Hindu country' after partition.

A division bench headed by Chief Justice Mohammad Yaqoob Mir found the judgement "legally flawed" and inconsistent with the constitutional principles.

In a judgement in December last year, a single judge bench of Justice Sen had observed that India, if divided on the basis of religion, should have been declared a Hindu country.

"After bestowing our thoughtful consideration to the entire gamut of the matter we have reached to a firm conclusion that the judgment impugned dated 10.12.2018 is legally flawed and is inconsistent with constitutional principles, the observations made and directions passed therein are totally superfluous, therefore, is set aside in its entirety," the bench said in an order on Friday. While disposing of a petition by a person who was denied domicile certificate by the Meghalaya government, Justice Sen had also observed that anyone opposing Indian laws and the Constitution should not be considered a citizen of India.

The judgement faced criticism from various quarters forcing him to issue a clarification four days later, saying his judgment was neither politically motivated nor influenced by any party.

In his judgement, Justice Sen had also set aside two notifications issued by the Meghalaya government relating to issuance of permanent residence certificate/domicile certificates.

The division bench, however, observed that setting aside of the two notifications without any challenge was "impermissible" and "not sustainable".

## SKM stakes claim to form Government, wants Golay as CM

**SAGAR CHETTRI**

**GANGTOK, 25 MAY:**

A delegation of Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM) led by party president, PS Tamang [Golay] called on the Governor, Ganga Prasad here at Raj Bhawan today to stake claim to form the next government in Sikkim. The swearing-in ceremony of the SKM government will be held on 27 May at Paljor Stadium. The party has however not officially announced its Chief Minister. The legislators have reportedly named their party president PS Tamang [Golay] for the post and have reportedly submitted the same to the Governor. A formal announcement is awaited delayed perhaps by the complications surrounding Mr Tamang's inability to contest elections in the near future.

The SKM delegation comprised of 17 legislators and senior leaders of the party.



It is learnt that immediately after the meeting with the delegation, another meeting was held between the Governor and the SKM president.

On the party's Chief Minister candidate, all Mr Tamang

said was that the name of the CM will be made public very soon.

SKM will start its work in the interest of Sikkim and its people soon after forming the government, he added.

"We have made an-

nouncement in the interest of Sikkim and its people so we will strictly work on our announcements," he said.

Responding to queries on by-elections in the State, the SKM president said that the

party is fully prepared for the by-elections.

On SKM's alliance at the national level, Mr Tamang said, "We supported BJP before the election and we are NDA partners. Our MP Indra Hang Subba is al-

ready in Delhi in today's NDA meeting to again elect Narendra Modi as the leader of NDA."

The SKM president thanked the people of Sikkim for their support to the party. He also assured that there

would be no transfers or victimization of any government employee.

"We want to see every employee working freely without any political interference in our government," he said.

## Sikkim BJP congratulates SKM

**SHRAVAN CHETTRI**

**GANGTOK, 25 MAY:**

Their pre-poll parting of ways notwithstanding, the Sikkim unit of the Bharatiya Janata Party today "wholeheartedly" congratulated the Sikkim Krantikari Morcha on the double-whammy of winning the assembly and Lok Sabha elections in Sikkim and also thanked the people for their support and peaceful participation in the pre and post-election process.

The party has also underlined that the SKM fulfill all the commitments made to the people.

Addressing a press conference here today, BJP's state unit president, DB Chauhan, commented that the people have chosen their government and that the party respects



their mandate.

"We are going to work as a shadow government and will ensure that the SKM government works for the welfare of the people and everything moves on the right track," he said.

While congratulating SKM, Mr Chauhan said BJP will be observing its performance and if SKM fails to fulfill its commitments, it will speak up on behalf of the people.

He also assured that BJP will take up issues on

the basis of ideology and right and wrong and not be motivated by party affiliations or other biases.

"We would ensure that we remain as a strong opposition in the coming days," he said.

On whether the BJP MP election candidate, Laten Sherpa, was factor in SDF's loss in the Lok Sabha election, he said, "If we don't have the potential to win the election doesn't mean we can't knock someone out."

On a possible alliance

of SKM with the NDA, he said that it will be decided by the party high command.

Although BJP candidates lost the elections here across the board, in all the constituencies that the party contested, its candidates came in third. In the Parliamentary election, the party secured 4.71% of the votes, a substantial growth given that in 2014, the party could not move past even the 1% mark in vote-share.

## Poll effect: Mamata offers to quit as CM, party rejects

**KOLKATA, MAY 25 (PTI):** Trinamool Congress president Mamata Banerjee Saturday offered to quit as chief minister of West Bengal following her party's drubbing in the Lok Sabha polls, but the TMC rejected it.

Addressing her first press conference after the election results were declared, she accused the BJP of polarising people on religious lines to garner votes in West Bengal and wondered if some "sort of setting or foreign power" played a role in such a huge victory of the saffron party.

West Bengal witnessed a saffron surge on Thursday as the BJP inflicted a deadly blow to ruling Trinamool Congress by winning 18 of the total 42 Lok Sabha seats in the state. The TMC won 22 seats, down from 34 in 2014.

"I wanted to resign

from the post of chief minister. The chair is nothing for me. But, the party rejected it. I don't need the chair, but the chair needs me," said Banerjee after an hour-long meeting with all candidates and senior leaders of the party.

Claiming that her government has fulfilled all the commitments made to the people, Banerjee said she now will concentrate more on her party.

"One party that did not commit anything, won seats. I think, I have done more for people. Now I need to work for my party," she said.

"Money power and religious divide prominently came into play. The administration was taken over by ECI for last five months. How can I remain the chief minister in such a scenario? That's why I had offered to step

down," she said.

The BJP which had only two Lok Sabha seats in last general elections and hitherto not a major force in the state did better than the Left Front and the Congress after good performance in the last year's rural polls to emerge as the main challenger to the TMC in Bengal.

The 64-year-old Banerjee also raised suspicion over BJP's stellar poll performance across the country.

"This huge victory is not beyond suspicion. It is quite astonishing how opposition is completely wiped out in several states," she claimed.

She alleged that EVMs were programmed to give the BJP a lead of more than a lakh.

"Foreign hand might also be involved in this. Votes were bought spending crores of money.

## At the Rongyek State Central Jail

### In need of better facilities and security infrastructure

**TSHERING EDEN**

**GANGTOK, 25 MAY:**

The State Central Prison at Rongyek, about eight kilometers from the capital, houses convicts and undertrials from all over the State. The jail currently houses 289 inmates, a hundred more than its built-up capacity of 189. The infrastructure is clearly under stress and there was also a time when the number of inmates crossed 300.

Speaking to Summit Times, Senior Superintendent of Police [Prison] at Rongyek, KL Tenzin, confirmed that, as per the directives of the Supreme Court, this is something that the authorities should look into seriously. He agrees that, the problem of overcrowding, if not addressed in time, could be a serious problem for the jail administration in the near future.

He pointed out that, the proposal for building additional barracks for male and female inmates had been initiated and approved by the Government earlier. The same could not be completed by the Buildings & Housing department owing to the fact that, the tender for the said project is expected to be floated afresh once the election model code of conduct is over.

The growing number of inmates has also resulted in the women's cell being shifted to the block originally constructed for political prisoners.

The authorities continue to work best with what they have at an establishment which until the year 2010 did not even have a proper jail manual. About the jail manual, the nation now has an



updated version of All India Prison manual 2016, which is yet to be implemented in Sikkim.

Mr. Tenzin, who has earlier served as SP, Namchi Prison, has

been trying to provide the requisite facilities to the inmates but rues the lack of funds.

"Inmates, especially the under-trials, who are mostly young



boys, need undergarments and other kinds of essentials. In the absence of NGOS and voluntary social organizations coming forward, at times, it becomes quite a

challenging task and the burden falls on the Prison administration to cater to their much needed day-to-day requirements.

turn to pg02



# DEO-East thanks all involved in election process

**GANGTOK, 25 MAY (IPR):** The District Election Officer, East, has congratulated all the officers and staff involved in the conduct of general election 2019 in East Sikkim and expressed his gratitude for the support and co-operation rendered by each and every staff for the success of the election process.

The election process in East District was a herculean task involving twelve Assembly constituencies, another twelve polling booths for Sangha constituency and a major part of Sikkim Parliamentary Constituency which would not have been a success without the dedication and hard work of each and everyone involved in the process.

The election process in the entire country started with the declaration of election by the Election Commission of



India. With this the District Election Office, East activated the manpower required at the different level of activity and start imparting training to them. Various types of man power required for training, polling, counting, liasoning with different agencies, man power management, magisterial duties, facilitation for the duty staff, publicity

etc. were required for the success of the entire election process. The officers and staff involved in the different levels and sections performed their duty day and night for the entire period at the District Administrative Centre and at the strong room established at Brihaspati Parsai Sr Secondary School, Ranipool.

The District Election

Officer, East has also thanked the Superintendent of Police, East and the Police Administration, East who performed their duty with full enthusiasm and dedication thereby preventing any law and order situation in the district. The District Election Officer, East has also thanked the Principal, Staff and stu-

dents of Brihaspati Sr Sec School for lending their school premises for the election. He has also thanked all the Assistant Returning Officers, Nodal Officers, various line departments who were actively involved over almost three months for executing various assigned task till the conclusion of the counting process.

## SPCC congratulates SKM and SDF

### SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 25 MAY:**

Sikkim Pradesh Congress Committee has congratulated Sikkim Krantikari Morcha party and its leaders for their victory in the Assembly and Lok Sabha elections 2019. SPCC has also congratulated all its candidates for actively participating in this election and carrying forward the Congress ideology amongst the people of Sikkim.

In a press release the party has said that the

people of Sikkim have given the country another peaceful electoral verdict, and this time they have voted for change.

“It is the hope of the people that this change will be for the better,” the release states.

SPCC has also appreciated the peaceful participation of the Sikkimese people in this large democratic exercise, and wishes them the very best with their contribution towards nation building.

The party has also

congratulated the outgoing Sikkim Democratic Front government for their contributions towards the progress of Sikkim so far, and hopes that they continue to fulfill their responsibilities as a healthy opposition.

SPCC has reiterated its commitment to ensure protection of Sikkim’s interests and sincerely hopes that the new government in Sikkim will always work without compromising the interests of Sikkim and its people.



A 25-year-old government has changed, but for some, nothing much. Friday morning on MG Marg. [Shravan Chettri]

### At the Rongyek...

The State Prison is located at a considerable height and especially during the winter season, it becomes unbearable for the aged and ailing inmates to cope with the severity of cold weather with their limited rationed clothing and beddings,” he shares.

As for the convicts, they spend their time under incarceration learning the skills provided by the Prison vocational units. The inmates work voluntarily, learning the skills and spending their time under incarceration in a positive way, which ultimately helps them to rehabilitate once they are released from prison.

The concept of imparting vocational training to the inmates has been overall quite successful. Presently they are involved in traditional choktse making, wooden furnitures, cane ‘mura’, mushroom & organic farming, dairy farming, bakery, file & envelope making and tailoring. Female inmates/UTPs lodged inside are involved in soft toy making, organic farming and the Prison Administration is in the process of imparting training on tailoring to the female inmates and UTPs.

“I am making these dolls now. It takes a lot of time,” says one of the female inmates with a smile.

She asks if it is possible to sell these online and if she can do so once she is released. When Mr. Tenzin walks in, she asks him if he could get her a different size crochet hook, wool and embroidery threads. She has spent about a year in prison and has another 8-9 months to go till her release.

At the carpentry workshop, one of the inmates, a young boy, was busy carving a ‘choktse’ [a traditional wooden table]. On being asked, he says that he was a novice in the field and had started learning the skills of carving from other inmates. In a period of about one year, he has become an able craftsman.

It was observed that the workshop building where he is working is located right next to the barrack holding heinous crime convicts and that is clearly a worry. This is very dangerous. Tools like scissors, hatchets, knives, could easily be passed on to the cell holding the inmates convicted for violent crimes. The workshop needs to be shifted immediately.

An alternative area for shifting the workshop to a safer place is located, says Mr Tenzin adding that the inmates have broken boulders to use in the construction of the workshop. Proposal to the effect has been sent to the Home department and they are awaiting approval for the same, he informs.

The limited number of personnel in the prison is also a drawback, according to the Sr. SP. While things are under control at present, in case of a major incident, the lack of personnel could be a problem, he adds.

The recruitment process is on the anvil and once the election process is over, the matter shall be looked into and taken care of, informs Mr Tenzin.

The actual area belonging to the Prison extends well beyond the existing perimeter walls and the whole area needs to be thoroughly re-examined and documented properly. As understood, there exists an ongoing disagreement with the Ngor Gumpa committee regarding their area demarcation. The monastery which is located right next to the prison shares its boundaries with the Prison. Mr Tenzin believes that the problem could be resolved amicably by way of deliberations with the Gompa committee, and once it is resolved, the work for constructing perimeter walls and permanent barricading needs to be carried out on priority so as to avoid complications in the near future.

The building infrastructures/walls, sentry posts were found to be in dire need of repair and maintenance work. The road leading to the Gompa was recently repaired and constructed, but the road leading to the prison which is just about half a kilometre is untended and in a shabby state. Further, the prison also lacks an effective communication system. Moreover, most of the CCTVs installed in the prison premises have become obsolete and need to be replaced.

From punishment to reformation, the role of prison has changed over time and this also requires the facilities to be better even as the security of the prison is made more robust.

At the same time, as Michel Foucault wrote in Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison, “...it is the certainty of being punished and not the horrifying spectacle of public punishment that must discourage crime.”

ed officers and staff members will be awarded with citations and prize.

The following offi-

cers and staff members have been selected for General Election-2019 Award:-

to book advertisements in SummitTIMES call 03592-208698 9734152541, 9647102692 advertise@summittimes.com

**MUMBAI, MAY 25 (PTI):** Jet Airways founder Naresh Goyal and his wife Anita Goyal were denied permission to travel abroad Saturday by the immigration authority at Mumbai airport, an official said.

The couple was on board Emirates Airways flight EK 507 to London via Dubai.

An airport official said the aircraft was called back to

the parking bay at the time of taxiing.

“Naresh Goyal and wife Anita Goyal travelling to London on EK 507 were restricted from leaving the country,” the official said.

A source at Jet Airways said the couple was travelling with four big-sized suitcases.

“The checked-in baggage (suitcases) was in the name of Anita Goyal. The baggage was

## North District announces General Election-2019 award

**MANGAN, MAY 25 (IPR):**

Under the leadership of District Magistrate, North, Raj Yadav, District Administrative Centre, Mangan, North Sikkim has successfully conducted the General Election 2019 in the district.

On successful completion of General Election 2019, DAC, North has announced the North District General Election-2019 Award.

To conduct free and fair election is an enormous responsibility that depends on team efforts; the North District Administration has also dealt with every aspect of General Election 2019 with utmost dedication and sincerity where some officers and staff members have done a remarkable job in conduct of election.

It is pertinent to mention here that at the outset of the election, the District Administrative Centre has announced General

SL No.	Category	Name	Designation	Award
1.	Best Assistant Returning Officer	Mr. Samdup Bhutia	SDM, Mangan	Citations
		Mr. Mahesh Sharma	SDM, Kabi	Citations
2	Best Nodal Officer	Mr. K.R. Limboo	ADC(Dev), Mangan	Citations
		Mr. Buddha Hang Subba	DIO, IPR	Citations
3.	Best Sector Magistrate	Mr. Chiran Rizal	BDO, Chungthang	Citations
4.	Best Sector Police Officer	Mr. Bishan Rai	SI, Mangan PS	Citations
5.	Best FST & SST Magistrate	Mr. Yougal Kishore Pradhan	Senior Audit Officer, Cooperation Dept.	Citations
6.	Best EVM Commissioning Team	Mr. Karma Zamyang Dadul	DE, Power, Mangan Division	Citations
		Mr. Karma Dorjee Wajilingpa	Dy. Director LRDM	Citations
		Mr. H.B.Thapa	RI, LRDM	Citations & Prize
		Mr. Ongdup Lepcha	Jr. ORT SDM Office, Chungthang	Citations & Prize
7.	Best Presiding Officer	Ms. Wendy Lepcha	DCPO, SJE & WD, MNP	Citations
		Ms. Tshering Yangden	PGT, HRDD	Citations
		Mr. Abi Chandra Sharma	PGT, HRDD	Citations & Prize
8.	Best Polling Team (30/02-Pentong Polling Station)	Mr. Tek Bdr. Chettri	GT, HRDD	Citations & Prize
		Mr. Deepak Lohar	PRT, HRDD	Citations & Prize
		Mr. Dathup Bhutia	PRT, HRDD	Citations & Prize
		Mr. Karma Legpal	BLT, HRDD	Citations & Prize
		Mr. Sagar Lama	DEO, FCS & CA Mangan	Citations & Prize
		Mr. Madan Chettri	Office Attendant, SYA	Citations & Prize
		Mr. Mingma Sherpa	BLO, Lum (Djongu)	Citations & Prize
		Ms. Lyangmit Lepcha, Tingda	BLO, Tingda (Kabi Lungchuk)	Citations & Prize
9.	Best Booth Level Officer	Mr. Sonam Tshering Lachenpa	BLO, Lachung (Lachen Mangan)	Citations & Prize
		Mr. John Bhutia	HA, Election Cell	Citations & Prize
		Mr. Kuku Pakimoo	RS, LR&DMD	Citations & Prize
		Mr. Phurba Tashi Sherpa	Stenographer, LR&DMD	Citations & Prize
		Mr. Pema Yangchen Bhutia	IT Programmer, Election Cell	Citations & Prize
		Mr. Hemant Rai	Accounts Clerk, LR&DMD	Citations & Prize
		Mr. Lilan Subba	NFO, NIC	Citations & Prize
		Mr. Bisanta Niroula	JE, HRDD	Citations & Prize
		Mr. Pem Tshering Bhutia	Office Attendant, Election Cell	Citations & Prize
		Mr. Kee-Tshering Lepcha	Office Attendant, LR&DMD	Citations & Prize
		Mr. Norpa Lepcha	QRT, LR&DMD	Citations & Prize
		Mr. Pema Kinchok Lepcha	Office Attendant, BAC Chungthang.	Citations & Prize

Election-2019 Award under the guidance of Mr Yadav as to motivate the officers and

staff, North district administration.

Award ceremony will be held shortly, all select-

## Defence lawyer, Sanatan member arrested in Dabholkar murder

**PUNE/MUMBAI, MAY 25 (PTI):**

The CBI Saturday arrested a lawyer representing some of the accused in the Narendra Dabholkar murder case along with a member of the right-wing organisation Sanatan Sanstha.

Advocate Sanjeev Punalekar and Vikram Bhave, a member of the Sanatan Sanstha which came under investigators’ scanner after Dabholkar’s killing, were arrested in Mumbai, said an official of the Central Bureau of Investigation.

They will be produced before a Pune court Sunday, he said, adding that preliminary probe has revealed that Punalekar and Bhave had links with the two men who allegedly killed Dabholkar.

Dabholkar, a renowned anti-superstition activist, was shot dead while he was out on

a morning walk in Pune on August 20, 2013.

Bhave, a Sanatan Sanstha member, is a convict in the 2008 Gadkari Rangayatan blast case, and currently on bail.

After he was released on bail, Bhave penned a book in Marathi, titled ‘Malegaon Spnotamagil Adrushya Haat’ (The invisible hand behind the Malegaon blast).

So far, six people, including Sanatan Sanstha member and ENT surgeon Virendrasinh Tawde, Sachin Andure and Sharad Kalaskar have been arrested by the CBI in the Dabholkar case.

The CBI had claimed that Tawde was the “mastermind” of the conspiracy to kill Dabholkar and veteran CPI leader and rationalist Govind Pansare. Pansare was killed in Kolhapur in February 2015.

Andure and Kalaskar

were the ones who shot Dabholkar, the CBI has claimed.

The agency had also arrested Rajesh Bangera, Amol Kale and Amit Digvekar in connection with the conspiracy.

Bangera and Kale are also accused in the Gauri Lankesh murder case. Lankesh was shot dead in Bengaluru on September 5, 2017.

The Goa-headquartered Sanatan Sanstha condemned the arrests Saturday.

“The arrest of Sanjeev Punalekar, national Secretary of Hindu Vidhidnya Parishad, and Vikram Bhave, RTI activist of the Parishad, in the Narendra Dabholkar murder case is strongly protested,” the Sansta said in a press note.

The arrests, which took place when a “pro-Hindutva government is in power”, smacked of a conspiracy, it said.



## Drug Demand Reduction awareness at Lingi Payong school

### SUMMIT REPORT

**LINGI PAYONG, 25 MAY:** An awareness programme on Drug Demand Reduction was held at Lingi Payong School on Saturday.

The programme was meant for students and was also attended by teachers, SMC members and villagers.

SMC member SN Chapagai was present as a special guest for the programme which had Yog Kr Bhandari, trained teacher (DDR), explaining the aims and objectives of the programme and urged the students to refrain from falling victims of drug abuse.

Other trained teachers from the school shared their inputs on various topics including



adolescent issues, legal aspects of drug abuse, and Childline Services in Sikkim.

A resource person from Health department, counsellors and coordinator of Red Ribbon Club were present on the occasion.

Bikash Pradhan counselled the students on moral values and ethics while Kishore Baniya, Coordinator RRC (South West), spoke on drug abuse, teen pregnancy and HIV-AIDS.

He also announced the launch of a Red Ribbon

Club in the school with Pradeep Gurung and Anusha Subba as Nodal Teachers and Mickey Doma Lepcha and Sanjay Tamang as Peer Educators.

Medical personnel Chandrajit Chhetri from Lingi PHSC informed

the gathering about the effects of drugs on health and society and suggested necessary measures to avoid and prevent it.

Students presented a skit titled "Aatmabodh".

Prior to this, various activities were conducted for students to raise awareness on drug abuse from 15 till 24 May. The winners of different competitions were awarded certificates and prizes.

Drug Demand Reduction programme is an initiative of SCERT, HRDD, in collaboration with National Institute of Social Defense, New Delhi, and Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India.

## CS and other officials call on CM

**GANGTOK, 25 MAY (IPR):** The Chief Secretary, AK Shrivastava, Government of Sikkim along with the ACS, Pr Secretaries, HoDs, DC (East) and officials called on the caretaker Chief Minister of Sikkim, Pawan Chamling and extended best wishes at Mintokgang, today.

Mr Chamling, in his brief address, said that in democracy we should all uphold the mandate of the people and work towards constructive development of the state. Stating that we should all cooperate and work in unison for implementation of policies efficiently and honestly, he made a strong commitment to act as a constructive opposition leader and to set an example about what opposition is and its re-

sponsibilities.

Further, he added that the administration should be democratized and systematized to ensure equality that will boost society towards democratic setup. He affirmed that the state government ruled under his leadership for last twenty five years will be considered as golden era in the history of Sikkim.

He also shared his experiences of being associated with the bureaucracy for last 25 years and anticipated sense of gratitude for the security, respect, cooperation and non interference for their work and policies.

He also underlined achievements made by the state government under his leadership and pointed out notable

accomplishments which have transformed Sikkim into the most progressive state in the country.

The Chief Secretary, AK Shrivastava on behalf of the bureaucrats, expressed deep gratitude to Mr Chamling for his contributions and extended best wishes for his future endeavours. The Chief Secretary said that we should all respect the mandate and will of the people and said that in a democratic set-up, players may change but the game continues.

At the end he thanked Mr Chamling and stated that the state has progressed by leaps and bounds and the state today prides itself in the success and progress it has achieved over the decades.

## Red Panda and JVC FC register big wins at C-Div Sikkim League



### SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 25 MAY:** Red Panda Football Club, Namchi, and JVC Football Club, Singtam, registered easy victories today at the ongoing Sikkim Football Association [SFA] C-Division Sikkim League here at Paljor Stadium.

In the first match, Red Panda FC thrashed Queen Valley FC of Penlong 9-0.

Noel Rai scored a

hattrick while his teammates Raj Kumar and Kunzaman Thapa contributed a brace each towards the team's victory. Bijay Rai and Ruben Gurung also scored a goal each.

Secretary, Sports & Youth Affairs Department, Dr RK Tamang, was present as the chief guest for the first game.

In the second match, JVC FC humbled Ranipool FC 5-1 to collect three points from the match.

Sikkim's ISL player, Robin Gurung was present as the chief guest.

Shabu Haldar scored a brace for JVC FC, while his teammates Bibek Chhetri, Aman Rai and Binay Rai scored a goal each.

The only goal for Ranipool FC was scored by Umesh Rai.

As per information received from SFA, there will be no matches on 26 to 28 May and the league will resume on 29 April.

## Two Assam Rifles personnel killed in encounter along Indo-Myanmar border



**NEW DELHI, MAY 25 (PTI):** Two Assam Rifles personnel were killed and four others injured during a gunfight with a group of militants in Mon area along the Indo-Myanmar border in Nagaland on Saturday, military sources said.

A column of Assam Rifles jawans on two vehicles encountered an IED (Improvised Explosive Device) blast in the area around 1:30 pm, they said.

The blast was followed by exchange of fire between the Assam

Rifles personnel and militants in which two soldiers were killed.

They said four other Assam Rifles personnel were injured in the gunfight and they were given immediate medical treatment, sources said, adding they are stable now.

The two Assam Rifles personnel killed included one junior commissioned officer (JCO).

The incident took place near border pillars 147 and 148 along the Indo-Myanmar border, sources said.

## School-toppers felicitated in Rangpo



### SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 25 MAY:** Rastriya Kavi Sangam Sikkim has felicitated four school-topper of the area with the organisation's Indrakil Samman during the 8th episode of the monthly literary program organised at Rangpo Taxi Drivers Hall.

RKS-Sikkim felicitat-

ed CBSE Class X and XII toppers from the Rangpo area: Srijan Sharma of Rangpo who secured 93% in class X, Ashish Dangal of Rangpo Sr Sec School 89.9% in Class X, Adarsh Sharma of Majhitar Sec School 78.8% in class X and Chetan Kumar Prasad of Rangpo Sr Sec School

with 86% in Class XII.

Director, Sunrise Academy Duga, DB Chhetri, attended the event as chief guest along with poet Shiv Darnal (Rangpo), Lokesh Mukhia (Singtam), retd BO CB Gurung, BK Sharma, and RKS State General Secretary, Bhim Sharma.

## Bengal governor appeals for peace

Kolkata, May 25 (PTI): West Bengal Governor Keshari Nath Tripathi Saturday appealed to the people to maintain peace in accordance with the rich culture of the state.

This comes after incidents of violence in several districts were reported after Lok Sabha election results were declared, leaving many injured and a person dead.



In a statement, the governor also thanked the people for their participation in the polls and

urged them to unitedly work for the prosperity and progress of the state and the nation.

## Predictably unpredictable, Pakistan head to World Cup after chaotic build-up

### BHARAT SHARMA

**NEW DELHI, MAY 25 (PTI):** Their brand of cricket often oscillates between brilliance and hara-kiri but the ability to win games purely on natural talent and chutzpah certainly makes Pakistan a fascinating team to follow during the ICC World Cup.

The 1992 World champions have lost 10 ODIs in a row and a reverse against Afghanistan in a World Cup warm-up have added to their woes but no opposition can take them lightly when the tournament proper begins on May 30.

With Pakistan arriving in England a month ago, it was supposed to be an ideal build-up for the 50-over mega event. But a 0-4 result in the ODI series against World hosts England has compounded their worries.

The Sarfaraz Ahmed-led squad was also blanked by Australia in a five-match series in the UAE and its last ODI win came against South Africa in January when it eventually lost the rubber. A parallel of Pakistan's winless run can be drawn with their poor start in the 1992 edition which they eventually won under Imran Khan's inspiration



leadership.

Not to forget that they are winners of the 2017 Champions Trophy which was also staged in England.

Though it would be pre-mature to write them off at this stage, Pakistan have very little time to fix the flaws in the bowling and fielding department, something that has been acknowledged by their coach Mickey Arthur.

They posted 358 and 340 in the third and fourth ODIs against England earlier this month but the bowlers were unable to defend them and fielding too let them down. In the other two games, the bowlers ended up conceding more than 350 runs.

On the contrary, the batsmen piled on the runs and are in good frame of mind ahead of

the World Cup.

"I thought our batting has gone to another level. Our bowling has been average at best and our fielding has been average at best but we have batted really well. People, coming to England, said we were a 280 team. We have dispelled that and that's given our batting unit a massive amount of confidence," Arthur had said.

The inconsistencies in the team selection has also been a talking point with Pakistan making three changes in their provisional squad of 15, recalling Wahab Riaz who has not played an ODI in two years.

Mohammad Amir who has been unable to take wickets of late and middle-order batsman Asif Ali, who is grieving the loss of his 19-month-old daughter

who succumbed to cancer earlier this week.

Captain Sarfaraz's batting position is also a subject of intense discussion with experts wanting him to bat higher up the order. However, this crisis-like situation is not new in Pakistan cricket and when they open their tournament campaign against the West Indies on May 31, one can expect them to be at the top of their game.

They have another warm-up game to play, against Bangladesh, on Sunday and following the loss against Afghanistan, Sarfaraz insisted the morale in the dressing room remains high.

"If you see all these matches, we were close. We made a few mistakes that's why we lost. We will need just one win and we will be back," said the skipper.

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## Three women candidates win Arunachal Pradesh Assembly election

**ITANAGAR, MAY 25 (PTI):** In Arunachal Pradesh, women outnumber male voters, but only three women could make it to the 60-member Assembly this time.

The border state has a total electorate of 7,94,162 with 4,01,601 women voters and 3,92,561 men, an election official said.

The number of women contestants in Arunachal Pradesh Assembly election this year was 11. In 2014 election the number of women who contested the state polls was seven.

The three women candidates who won the Assembly elections this year are all from the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) with two of them retaining their seats.

Of the 11 women candidates, the Congress had fielded five, the ruling BJP three, while the People's Party of Arunachal (PPA) and the JD(U) one each.

While sitting MLA Gum Tayang (BJP) retained the Dambuk seat in Lower Dibang Valley district by defeating her nearest rival Tony Pertin of the National People's Party (NPP) by 852 votes. Dasanglu Pul, wife

of former Chief Minister Kalikho Pul won from the Hayuliang seat in remote Anjaw district by defeating her lone rival Lupalum Kri of the Congress by a margin of 1,332 votes.

BJP's new comer women candidate Jummum Ete Deori turned to be a giant killer for the party as she defeated Arunachal Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) president Takam Sanjoy from Lekang constituency in Namsai district by a margin of 5,493 votes in a multi-cornered contest.

Jummum is the daughter-in-law of former Rajya Sabha member from the state Omem Moyong Deori.

Gum Tayang was elected unopposed as a Congress nominee from Dambuk in a by-election in 2013 following the death of her husband - then sitting MLA Jomin Tayang. She also retained the seat in 2014 Assembly polls as a Congress nominee.

Dasanglu Pul had won the by-election from Hayuliang assembly seat as a BJP candidate during 2016 following her husband committing suicide on August 9, 2016.

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## Urban Woes

*There is a lot that is beyond repair, but some things can still be salvaged*

For a town that has been a capital for little over a century but has 'developed' (read expanded) only in the past three decades, Gangtok is a frightfully ill-planned hill top. Monsoons invariably leave behind calling cards ranging from the disastrous 1997 slides to routine reminders in the form of a flooded highway, scratched hillsides, slipping foundation walls and storm-drain grills exploding out of their fitments and barreling down the highway. Living in a region that signs in at Zone IV on the earthquake expectancy chart and then clocks in rainfall that can leave Cherapunji blushing at times, Gangtok residents knew what they were aspiring for when they chased files to get sites allotted and offered sheepish explanations when the construction concrete digressed extensively from the original blueprint. There is no way that nature can be made to behave any differently from the way it wants to, but better planning and effective monitoring can keep human indulgence in check and even succeed in keeping even a safety-challenged town like Gangtok safe.

If Gangtok habitations are unsafe, they are so as much because of the weather conditions here as they are because of the short-sighted decisions that the eighties and nineties are littered with. Few other places carry the ignominy of a building collapsing in an area marked out as a 'Development Area' or live with national highways which narrow into single-lane passages and lose blacktop with the briefest of showers. For a town that expanded much after ideas of town-planning had become the norm, Gangtok is frightfully littered with habitations, which, while they are most exposed to risk, are also most inaccessible to rescue and evacuation.

Unfortunately, there is very little that can be done for Gangtok anymore except sending up prayers to keep disasters at bay; fortunately, other towns in Sikkim that are 'expanding' even as the monsoons advance still have a fighting chance. District towns like Namchi, Gyalshing, even Rabongla and Singtam, are, however, replicating the Gangtok curve of development. These towns have already reported frightful stories of buildings growing into High Tension cables and continuing with excavations even though the slopes have announced they won't tolerate any more 'cutting', but there is still hope for them. Most of these growing towns now have Nagar Panchayats and municipal councils for themselves. One hopes that these bodies will eventually become about more than just situation-required [politically-correct and aid agency-friendly] receptacles for development funds. One hopes that these urban bodies are run by people who understand urbanisation and respect the virtues of planning. One hopes that the elected members of these bodies don't forever remain busy playing chief guests and also spend some sessions brainstorming on how to develop their areas as safe zones for habitation.

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# Narendra Modi has won the largest election in the world. What will this mean for India?

AMITABH MATTOO

[theconversation.com](http://theconversation.com)

The resounding victory of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) coalition in India's federal election represents a key marker in the modern history of India. It was the most extensive and probably most expensive election campaign in the country's history, with 900 million voters casting their votes in one million polling stations over 38 days. Some 83 million Indians were first-time voters, with 15 million of them aged 18 and 19.

The great Indian festival of democracy - as the elections are often called - is seen as the most challenging exercise in making all Indians feel they have a say in the running of the government.

And the return of Narendra Modi as prime minister is both an opportunity and challenge for the country.

The 2019 parliamentary elections were the most "presidential" since the era of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi four decades ago, with a focus more on the personality of one leader (and his track record) than the candidates standing for office and their respective parties.

I travelled across India to the hustings in as many as 50 parliamentary constituencies and witnessed firsthand the "Modi phenomenon." In constituency after constituency, BJP candidates evoked Modi's name and displayed his image every opportunity they could.

### MODI'S LARGER-THAN-LIFE PRESENCE

Modi was projected as the only leader who would revive the great Indian civilization and save the country from the powerful elites and corrupt politicians who made up what the BJP deemed the "anti-national" opposition.

At times in the campaign, his personality assumed almost mythological proportions. The defining image was of the Indian leader shedding his regal robes and retreating to a bare cave in the Himalayas, close to one of the important centres of Hindu pilgrimage, where he meditated in a monastic saffron shawl. This reinforced his popular image as a puritanical and incorruptible leader whose first choice in life was to be a monk.

In contrast to this imagery, the opposition parties ran lazy, tired campaigns that failed to have much impact.

The Congress Party, the country's once-dominant political party, did not improve much on its devastating results from the 2014 election. Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, the sister of Congress President Rahul Gandhi, tried hard to mobilise voters with rousing speeches and campaign events, but these were just brief moments in the longest campaign in Indian electoral history.

The Congress Party's traditional hubris showed little signs of abating as it abandoned any chance of building potentially winning coalitions that could



have countered the Modi juggernaut.

The only real resistance to the BJP-led coalition came from India's largest state of Uttar Pradesh, where two strong regional parties suspended their traditional rivalry to establish an alliance, but even that coalition did not live up to its initial promise.

The Modi campaign succeeded not just in appealing to nostalgia for India's greatness or in the ultra-nationalism that peaked after airstrikes against what India viewed as terrorist camps in Pakistan in February. It was actual delivery on the ground.

The social welfare schemes built around providing lavatories, cooking gas and direct cash transfers to India's poorest have had tremendous impact across the country. Surprisingly, even the more woolly-headed schemes of the Modi government, such as his chaotic demonetisation decision in 2016 and a poorly implemented introduction of GST, were perceived by many voters as policies that were well-intentioned, but badly executed by the toxic bureaucracy seeking to undermine Modi.

In part due to these social welfare schemes, the BJP expanded its presence in states where it has traditionally had little previous success, including Bengal, Odisha and many parts of southern India.

### WHAT MODI'S WIN MEANS FOR INDIA

So, what can Indians expect from a BJP-led government for the next five years? Based on what we have seen since 2014, the government will be centralised and driven primarily from Modi's office. Fortunately, the messiness of Indian democracy and the strengths of the constitution will prevent

the country from leaning towards authoritarianism, so that should not be a concern.

The previous Modi government has shown it was possible to take a pragmatic approach to social and economic policies.

There are many key challenges that will require a fine balancing act. These include a further liberalising of the economy, with the structural changes needed to make it easier to do business in India and attract more foreign investment. Creating jobs and skills training for the vast numbers of young Indians remains a formidable challenge, as does India's struggling agrarian sector, which has reached a crisis point.

It remains to be seen if the activism of the BJP's rank-and-file members, as well as the party's supporters in the Hindu nationalist movement, can be managed without compromising on key policies that India needs for social cohesion and to continue growing the economy. It will also fall to Modi to reassure ethnic and religious minorities - many of whom have fallen victim to Hindu mob attacks - that they are part of an inclusive vision for the country.

In terms of foreign policy, Modi has demonstrated deftness in New Delhi's relations with powers like China and the US, as well as other countries in the region. There are sure to be new challenges with Pakistan, in particular, as well as an increasingly belligerent China, but Modi has already shown he has a unique ability to build a personal rapport with other leaders.

*[the writer is Honorary Professor of International Relations, University of Melbourne]*

# Theresa May resigns as British prime minister – here's where it all went wrong

NICHOLAS ALLEN

[theconversation.com](http://theconversation.com)

Europe has claimed the career of yet another Conservative prime minister. After less than three years in office, Theresa May has suffered a catastrophic loss of confidence in her leadership among MPs and cabinet ministers. She has finally faced up to the demands from within her party and announced her resignation.

Indicating her intention to step down, May said she had tried her best to deliver Brexit but accepted that she had not managed to get MPs to agree. She said she was leaving with no ill will, only "gratitude".

She will stand down as Conservative Party leader on June 7 and the competition to replace her will formally begin the following week - though in reality, it has been underway for some time.

Indeed, May's departure has been a long time coming. Many speculated that she couldn't remain long in office after losing her party's majority in the 2017 general election. In December, when facing a vote of no confidence among her MPs, she promised not to lead her party into the next general election. In March this year, in a bid to persuade more MPs to back the Brexit withdrawal agreement, she promised to leave sooner rather than later.

May's resilience has been remarkable. But it is also finite. Leaders can only lead when they have followers and too few Tories are now prepared to follow May any longer.

May's premiership was brief but eventful. She fought a general election, faced down an internal party vote of no confidence and won a parliamentary vote of no confidence. She also lost the services of more than 30 ministers, many of whom resigned over Brexit disagreements.

### BREXIT MEANS...

Much of the drama of course has been fuelled by Brexit. It launched May's premiership in July 2016, when she succeeded David Cameron. It has been the source of most of her woes. And it has finally wrecked her premiership.

May was elected Tory leader in part because she seemed to offer a safe pair of hands for delivering the referendum result after Cameron jumped ship. Brexit would mean Brexit, she told her party;



and if no one was clear on what she meant, most thought she would deliver.

So where did it go wrong? Three points in time are worth considering, if only because they focus attention on the challenges she has faced.

The first is of course the decision that ultimately forced May's hand. This came shortly before her resignation, when she presented a new set of "compromises" on her Brexit plans that would please precisely no one. She had been planning to present them for a parliamentary vote, despite already having lost three votes on her deal. The deal was now utterly toxic, and May's intention to persist suggested a loss of judgement. Her stubbornness, once valued, was now a significant liability. Her party told her enough was enough.

But while this was the immediate trigger for her announcement, the seeds were sown long ago. The second point at which it all went wrong was the 2017 general election. The Conservatives gained votes but lost their parliamentary majority. May lost much of her personal authority as a result.

At the start of that election campaign, May had looked set to win a commanding majority. But even if she had won big, securing support for a withdrawal agreement would not have been simple. Her authority would have been greater, to be sure, and she would have had more MPs to support her, but it is unlikely that the withdrawal agreement would have looked much different. Many of the

fundamentalist Brexiteers in her party could well have opposed it.

Which perhaps suggests that her demise was written into her story from the very moment she decided to run for the leadership in June 2016.

It was always going to be a monumental task to keep her party united as she sought to deliver on the Brexit referendum. Moderates in her party would have opposed a very hard Brexit. Anything less than a very hard Brexit would have been resisted by fundamentalists on the Tory benches.

May has made many mistakes along the way. Her suggestion early on that "no deal is better than a bad deal" was always a hostage to fortune. She might also have offered reassurance to Remainers and talked of the need for compromise, even as she pursued her vision. But this assumes that people in her party and parliament would have been willing to accept compromise.

Brexit has rapidly become a touchstone issue for political identity, akin to abortion and gun control in the US. In the circumstances the window for compromise was always small and fleeting.

As she confirmed that she was giving up, May sent a signal to potential successors, speaking once again about compromise, revealing that the late British humanitarian Nicholas Winton once told her: "Never forget that compromise is not a dirty word. Life depends on compromise."

*[the writer is Reader in Politics, Royal Holloway]*



FIELDWORK REFLECTIONS

The Footprints

RONGNYOO LEPCHA

As we climbed uphill through the dense pine trees, a clearing appeared to reveal a slim pucca road leading to the Monastery. As we looked around the serene landscape around the monastery, we were informed about an interesting personal Guru Tunsuk Lingpa.

Before travelling to Gangyap, West Sikkim, for fieldwork I had finished reading, “A Step Away from Paradise” by Thomas K Shor, so it was an exciting firsthand experience seeing the novel come to life. The novel introduces Guru Tunsuk Lingpa as an extraordinary monk who travelled from Tibet to Sikkim to open the gates of Beyul Demazong. It would have been a redemption for all the people who decided to follow him to Sikkim in hopes of going to Beyul. As he travelled to Sikkim he was asked to prove his divinity and as a result he left an imprint of his left foot on a stone in front of a huge audience. The footprint exists till date serving as an evidence of events that occurred in the past. Unfortunately, Guru Tunsuk Lingpa’s expedition was laid waste to an avalanche at the brink of success and the gates of Beyul were sealed again, or so the story goes.

The phenomenon of footprints appearing upon stones have always existed around us. We have all heard of stories of how holy people have left footprints at different places. These stories tend to come up frequently and people have laid their faith in the stories surrounding these mysterious footprints.

My first ever encounter with a footprint was at Gangyap. The second and third encounters were at Dzongu, in the two villages of Safo and Gor. The footprints in both these villages are believed to belong to Guru Padmasambhawa, left behind as he travelled to Sikkim introducing his version of Buddhism. Both villages repose great faith in their stories and in the footprints.

According to the stories at Safo, Guru Padmasambhawa came there spreading his teachings and left his footprints on a huge rock. Today, the rock is a sacred place and annual Param (a ritual for the wellbeing of the village) is performed there. This prayer requires a pig to be sacrificed upon the rock. This may have started not only as a ritual but also a feast for the village. We often tend to ignore the situations in which these practices actually emerged in the past. In most small “tribal” societies these ritual sacrifices served also as a day of feasting when communal bonds were solidified as were their belief systems. This role, ecological anthropologist like Julian Steward and Roy Rappaport have also mentioned in their works.

In some ways, it can be seen similar to what Rappaport mentions in his “Pigs for the Ancestors” in which he states that the ritual of sacrificing pigs “operates as a homeostatic mechanism regulating the size of the pig population, acreage in cultivation, fallow periods, energy expenditure in sub-



sistence activities, protein ingestion, man-land rations, etc.” (Rappaport, 1984).

Well, the ritual at Safo can be seen in this light as it also involves a pig to be sacrificed for the ancestors and for the wellbeing of the people in the village. The pigs are however not sacrificed on a large scale as the Tsem-baga in New Guinea recorded by Rappaport.

The third encounter with a footprint was at Gor, a similar imprint on stone believed to be Guru Padmasambhawa’s according to the people of Gor. As per their belief, the footprint was left behind when Guru Padmasambhawa was standing atop a hill looking at where to go next and saw a huge Parilbu (a snake most probably a python by its descriptions) sleeping at Gor so he came and cut the snake into three killing it. The stone on which the snake was sleeping was also cut in three. When he arrived, he left an imprint of his foot on the stone. Today, the stones are covered in thick vegetation but the stories have lived on with the people. Along with the stone and the snake there were other stories of huge stones shaped as pillars acting as places to tie Guru Padmasambhawa’s horses. The stones were later broken down and used for building houses by those unaware of the stories, but eye witnesses of the pillars still exist and continue to tell the stories.

Though there are many such footprints if we searched, there is no evidence of who it actually belonged to or whether they are just abstract shapes created in time by the

elements of erosion. One cannot positively claim of these being actual footprints or not. And no one can actually explain why only footprints seem to appear most frequently and not a handprint or a face print.

Answering all these questions is not easy but it is interesting to see how these imprints are molded into the socio-religious scenarios and how people ascribe layer upon layer of meanings to it. How societies connect to these imprints through stories and a bond of faith is constructed. As religion and historical portraits painted in these landscapes also are a part of the society and one must really observe in order to understand how people and their faith works in regulating the society.

What is important is to observe the belief system of the people, their faiths which give meaning to these inanimate structures and bring them to life through their stories. This also connects their landscape to a certain religious or historical significance while looking at a larger picture. These places are often declared a pilgrimage sites and are considered sacred thus elevating the status of the place.

Not only footprints but there are lots of others structures that are connected with the people through their oral histories and it becomes important to study these in order to truly understand their social structures, belief systems and their worldview rather than just labelling them as fabricated stories.

Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh planning to set up permanent bases in eastern states: MHA

AGARTALA, MAY 25

(PTI):

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has sounded an alert about plans of terrorist outfit Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) making permanent bases within 10 kilometres of the India-Bangladesh border in the eastern states of Tripura, As-

sam and West Bengal. A gazette notification, issued by the MHA Joint Secretary Piyush Goyal on Thursday, said the terror outfit has also plans of “spreading its network in south India with an overarching motive to establish Caliphate in the Indian subcontinent.”

The notification said the Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh or Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Indian or Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Hindustan are in the list of 41 terror organisations, already banned under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.

The JMB and its sister formations such as the Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Hindustan have committed acts of terrorism, promoted

acts of terrorism and have been engaged in radicalisation and recruitment of youths for terrorist activities in India, the notification said.

The terror outfit was also found involved in recruitment and raising funds for terrorist activities, procurement of explosives, chemicals and assembling of Improvised Explosive Devices (IED), it said.

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) had earlier confirmed involvement of JMB cadre in Burdwan bomb blast on October 2, 2014 and Bodh Gaya blasts on January 19, 2018.

The Assam police also found involvement of the JMB in five cases and arrested 565 JMB suspects, it said.

In January, the MHA added Al-Qaida in Indian Subcontinent (AQIS), Islamic State in Khorasan Province (ISKP), ISIS Wilayat Khorasan, Islamic State of Iraq, Sham-Khorasan (ISIS-K) and the Khalistan Liberation Force among the list of terrorist organisations



banned under the UAPA.

In March, a suspected terrorist belonging to the JMB was arrested by the Tripura police from a rented house at Arundhatinagar here.

Director General of Tripura Police Akhil Kumar Shukla had earlier said the suspected JMB terrorist, identified as Nazir Sheikh, hailed from Murshidabad district of West Bengal and had links with many other terror outfits in India.

He was interrogated by a joint team of NIA, military intelligence and officials of the special branch of the Tripura police.

India and Bangladesh share 4,156-km-long border with Bangladesh, that passes through five states -- West Bengal (2,217 km), Tripura (856 km), Meghalaya (443 km), Assam (262 km) and Mizoram (180 km).

Odisha voters go for split voting while electing MPs and MLAs

BHUBANESWAR, MAY 25

(PTI):

The Lok Sabha and Odisha Assembly elections were held simultaneously, but in many constituencies people have voted in favour of one party in the Parliamentary poll and for another in the state election.

Odisha has 21 Lok Sabha seats and 147 Assembly constituencies.

The Biju Janata Dal won 12 Lok Sabha seats while the BJP got eight and the Congress one but in the state Assembly election the BJD bagged 112 seats while the BJP won 23 and the Congress only nine.

In the prestigious Bhubaneswar Lok Sabha seat, former IAS officer Aparajita Sarangi, who contested as a BJP candidate, got the benefit of split votes.

She was elected to Lok Sabha by defeating her BJD rival and former Mumbai Police Commissioner Arup Patnaik by 23,939 votes though none of the saffron party candidates won in any of the seven Assembly seats under the Bhubaneswar Lok Sabha constituency.

Bhubaneswar Lok Sabha seat consists of seven Assembly segments

-- Bhubaneswar-Central, Bhubaneswar-North, Eka-mra-Bhubaneswar, Jatni, Jaydev, Khurda and Begunia.

Sarangi received 4,86,991 votes (48.45 per cent) while all the seven BJP assembly candidates under the Bhubaneswar Lok Sabha seat together polled only 2,90,607 votes.

There has been a difference of 19.15 per cent vote between a Lok Sabha candidate and Assembly nominees polled.

While Sarangi bagged 48.45 per cent of votes, the Assembly candidates together got 29.3 per cent of votes.

Similarly, in Koraput Lok Sabha seat, Congress candidate Saptagiri Ullaka was elected though most of the Assembly segments under its jurisdiction went in favour of ruling BJD.

There are seven assembly segments like Gubupour(BJD), Bissam Cuttack (BJD), Laxmipur (BJD), Koraput (BJD), Pottangi (BJD), Rayagada (Indpt) and Jeypore (Congress). Of the seven segments, Congress won in one seat even as Ullaka got 3,71,129 votes against his BJD rival Kausalya Hikka’s 3,67,516 votes.

Arunachal Assembly will have 20 first time MLAs



ITANAGAR, MAY 25

(PTI):

As many as 20 first timers won the Assembly elections in Arunachal Pradesh this time with a majority of them belonging to the ruling BJP.

Arunachal Pradesh has a 60-member Assembly.

Eleven of the first timers are from the BJP, six from Janata Dal (United), two from National People’s Party (NPP) and one Independent.

The JD(U) and the NPP contested the Arunachal Pradesh Assembly elections for the first time.

The border state has a legacy of electing first timers.

In 2014 Assembly polls, altogether 19 new comers were elected in this remote northeastern state while in the 2009 polls 17 new entrants tasted luck.

The figure was encouraging in the 2004 Assembly elections where 24 new faces were elected.

Among the new comers in this election are BJP candi-

datees from Bameng seat Goruk Pordung and from Lekang constituency Jummum Ete Deori along with JD(U) candidate from Kalaktang constituency Dor-

jee Wangdi Kharma. They emerged as giant killers as they defeated three senior leaders of the state. While Pordung defeated sitting Home Minister Kumar Waii (NPP) from Bameng seat, Jummum Ete Deori defeated Arunachal Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) president Takam Sanjoy and Kharma defeated outgoing Assembly speaker Tenzing Norbu Thongdok of the BJP.

Waii seeking re-election from the constituency as a NPP candidate after he was denied BJP ticket, had represented the constituency for three consecutive terms as Congress candidate.

While Thongdok represented the constituency for two consecutive terms as Congress candidate, Sanjoy was contesting from Lekang for the first time though he had represented Palin constituency in Kurung Kumey district for several terms and was also a Lok Sabha MP for one term.

Another first timer Nakap Nalo of the BJP defeated former Home Minister Tanga Byal-ing who was seeking re-election from the Nacho constituency on a Congress ticket af-

ter retaining it for five consecutive terms.

JD(U) first timers Talem Taboh from Rumgong seat and Dongree Siongju (Bomdila) could prove their mettle as they defeated Power Minister Tamiyo Taga and senior BJP leader Japu Deru in a tough contest.

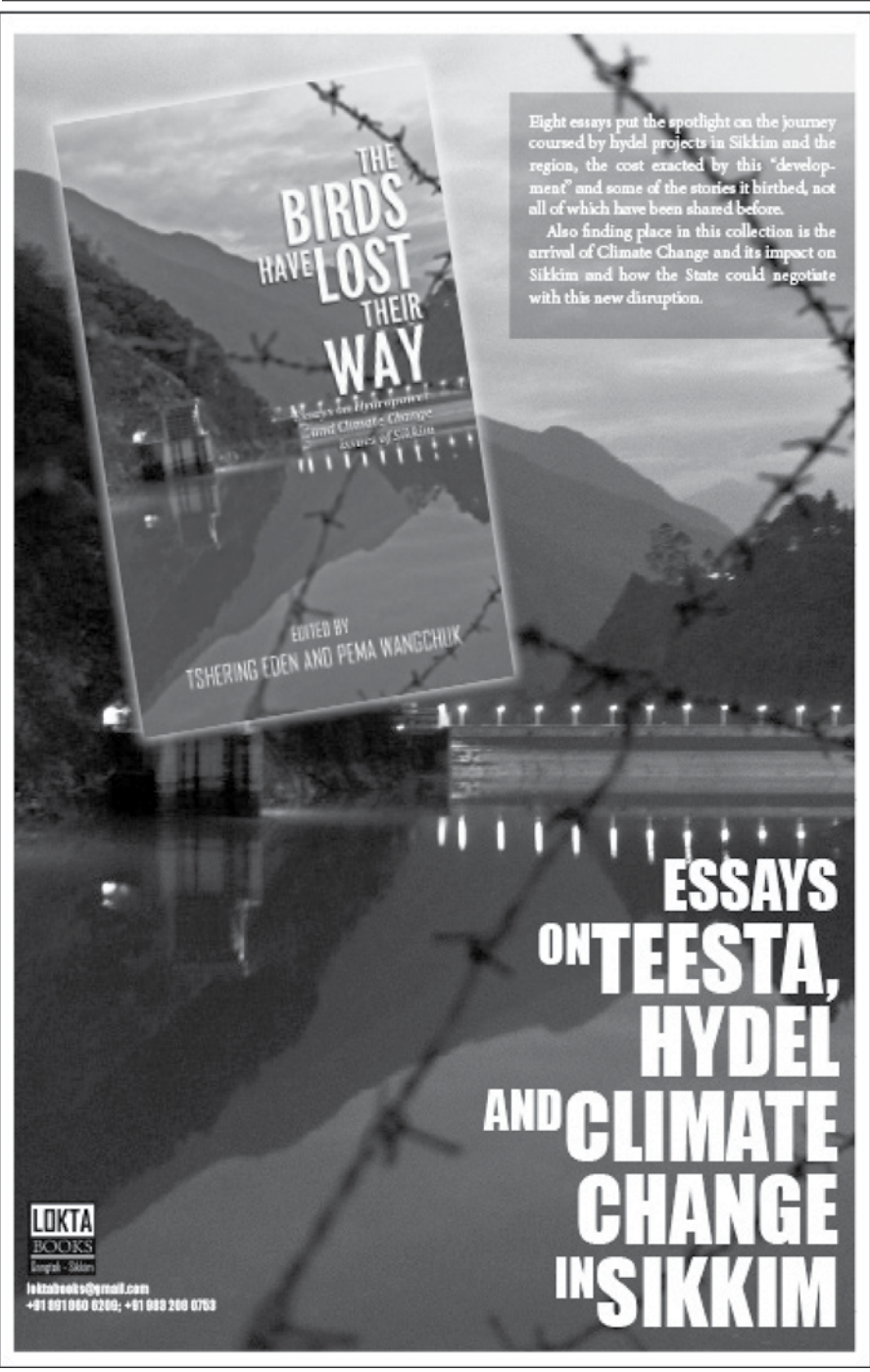
Two first timers of the BJP including Taba Tedir from Yachuli constituency and Kento Jini Along East constituency set a record of winning the seats unopposed.

Other first timers of the saffron party includes, Tana Hali Tara (Doinmukh), Mopi Mihi (Anini), Ojing Tashing, Tanpho Wangnaw (Longding-Pumao), Taniya Soki (Daporijo) and Rode Bui from Dimporijo constituency.

Among the JD(U) first timers, Kanggong Taku won from Mariyang-Geku seat, Jikke Taku (Tali) and Hayeng Mangfi from Chayang-tajo constituency.

The NPP first timers include Gokar Basar from Basar constituency and Tarin Dakpe from Raga seat.

Independent candidate Somlung Mosang who won from the un-reserved Bordumsa-Diyun seat, is a first timer.





# Federer, Nadal threaten Djokovic bid for historic Slam

**PARIS, MAY 25 (AFP):** Novak Djokovic can become only the second man in history to have twice held all four Grand Slam titles at the same time with victory at the French Open.

However, a returning Roger Federer and rejuvenated Rafael Nadal will once again stand in his way.

World number one Djokovic completed his first private stranglehold of all four Slams with victory at Roland Garros in 2016.

Having clinched the 2018 Wimbledon and US Open titles and then a seventh Australian Open crown in January this year, the Serb is tantalisingly close to another 'Djoko Slam'.

Federer and Nadal, with 20 and 17 career Grand Slam titles each respectively, may be ahead of 15-time major

winner Djokovic in total hauls.

However, they have never managed to hold all four of the sport's greatest prizes at the same time.

It is such a rare feat that only Don Budge (1938) and Rod Laver (1962 and 1969) -- all calendar Grand Slams -- have pulled off the sweep in the sport's history.

Djokovic, who turned 32 on Wednesday, is playing down his potential date with destiny.

After losing to Nadal in the Italian Open final last weekend, the Serb was in no doubt that it was the Spaniard who would likely be celebrating a 12th Roland Garros title in a little over two weeks' time.

"Nadal, number one favourite, without a doubt -- then everyone else," he said.

However, he admits



his Paris triumph of 2016 which gave him his first sweep, is fuelling his bid for more history.

"There is an extra motivation and incentive to win Roland Garros because of the opportunity to hold all four Slams, something I did three years ago, and that gives me obviously enough reason to believe I can do it again."

Twelve months ago, such confidence would have appeared reckless when he was shocked by Italian journeyman Marco Cecchinato in the quarter-finals, a defeat which sent him crashing out of the top 20 for the first time in over a decade.

This time around he starts his campaign against Poland's Hubert Hurkacz, the world number 43 with a potential quarter-final against

Germany's Alexander Zverev who has still to get past the last eight at a Slam.

Federer is returning to Roland Garros for the first time since 2015 having turned his back on clay court tennis to focus on Wimbledon.

- 10TH ANNIVERSARY -

This year marks the 10th anniversary of his one and only Paris triumph and should the

37-year-old defy the odds and clinch the 2019 title he would become the oldest Grand Slam champion of all time.

However, Federer admits his hopes of seeing off Nadal and Djokovic are slim.

"I feel like I'm playing good tennis, but is it enough against the absolute top guys when it really comes to the crunch? I'm not sure if it's in my racquet," he said Friday.

The Swiss star faces Italy's Lorenzo Sonego, ranked at 73 in the first round on Sunday and could meet Nadal in the semi-finals.

Nadal, whose record at Roland Garros stands at a staggering 11 titles and a win-loss record of 86-2, claimed a ninth Italian Open title and a record 34th Masters last week.

"I don't care if I'm the favourite," said Nadal

who starts against German qualifier Yannick Hanfmann, the world 184 who has never won a Grand Slam match.

"I care about feeling well and playing well." Nadal's three-set win over Djokovic in Rome was timely as it was his first title of 2019 and had followed three successive semi-final losses at Monte Carlo, Barcelona and Madrid.

The last two of those were against Dominic Thiem and Stefanos Tsitsipas, both of whom play with a one-handed backhand, just like Federer.

Thiem, the 2018 runner-up to Nadal at Roland Garros, has defeated the Spaniard four times on clay.

"There is a new wave coming through with the one-handed backhand that can counter some of Rafa's spins and lefty play," said Federer.

## Monaco stays up despite final-day defeat at Nice

**PARIS, MAY 25 (AP):** Monaco retained its top-flight status despite losing 2-0 at Riviera rival Nice on the final day of the French league campaign.

Two years after making it to the Champions League semifinals, the Principality team slumped to an 18th defeat in 38 matches on Friday to end up fourth from bottom.

Monaco, champions in 2017, finished two points above Dijon, which needs to win a playoff to remain among the elite next season after beating Toulouse 2-1.

Caen's slim hopes of staying up were dashed by a goal from Younousse Sankhare, who sealed a 1-0 win for visiting Bordeaux. Caen is relegated alongside bottom club Guingamp, which was already down and lost 2-1 at Amiens.

Runner-up to Paris Saint-Germain last term, Monaco suffered a woe-ful season highlighted by the firing and re-hiring of coach Leonardo Jardim, who returned after Thierry Henry failed in his first managerial post.

"The most important thing was to stay up," striker Radamel Falcao said. "Unfortunately we did not win, but we created many chances." PSG LOSES

Already crowned champion, Paris Saint-Germain finished with a 3-1 defeat at Reims despite a goal from Kylian Mbappe, the league's top scorer with 33.

PSG sealed a sixth league title in seven years but failed to retain its French Cup and League Cup crowns this season. The Qatari-backed club was also eliminated in the Champions League last-16 for the third straight year.

The capital club finished with five league defeats, its worst total since 2012-13.

Runner-up Lille will join PSG in the Champions League group stages next season.

Third-place Lyon should start the competition in the qualifying round but will go directly into the groups if Chelsea, which has already qualified, wins the Europa League final against Arsenal on Wednesday.

Saint-Etienne finished fourth and will play in the Europa League.

# Border picks Kohli, Morgan, Finch as 3 skippers to watch out for in WC

**MELBOURNE, MAY 25 (PTI):** Cricket legend Allan Border has hand-picked Virat Kohli, Eoin Morgan and Aaron Finch as the three skippers to watch out for in the ICC ODI World Cup, starting May 30 in the United Kingdom.

Border, who led Australia to World Cup triumph in 1987, said Kohli's aggressive and "in-your-face" style of captaincy makes him a different kind of a leader than Morgan and Finch.

"Virat Kohli, I think he's a different type of captain. He's a bit more of a boisterous-type player and wears his heart on his sleeve," Border told cricket.com.au.

"So the players know if they've stuffed up because he's one of



those really in-your-face-type skippers."

Border, who captained Australia in 178 ODIs, however refused to rank the trio in any order but is mighty impressed with Morgan under whose leadership England have reached the pinnacle of ODI cricket.

"England, I think they're doing excep-

tionally well. They've brought a different game plan to the table which is going to be interesting to see how it pans out in the World Cup. They're a dangerous side because of it and you know as the bowling group you're under pressure," he said.

"The way it looks to me, they might

drop the odd game but they're going to win enough games to get through to the semi-finals and that's what it's all about.

"That game plan under Trevor Bayliss as coach and Eoin Morgan, I think he's a seriously good one-day cricketer, and he's as good a captain as there is going around.

Tactically he's very good and their game plan at the moment is a dangerous game plan to play against."

The 63-year-old former left-handed batsman was also impressed with compatriot Finch's leadership qualities, especially under difficult circumstances.

"Aaron Finch is doing a great job. He's got a good feel around the group, I think that's what he brings to his captaincy," Border said.

"Everyone knows their responsibilities and it's a good environment to play in.

So that's a good start as a captain. He's done a very good job.

"Tactically, I think they (Kohli, Morgan and Finch) all do very well.

## Kyrgios out of Roland Garros, tournament that 'sucks'



**PARIS, MAY 24 (AFP):** Firebrand Nick Kyrgios pulled out of Roland Garros on Friday, just days after saying the French Open "sucks".

Organisers confirmed the Australian's withdrawal from the second Grand Slam tournament of the season and he will be replaced by a lucky loser from qualifying.

The 24-year-old was due to have faced Britain's Cameron Norrie in the first round.

Last week, Kyrgios was disqualified from the Italian Open in Rome and headed straight to

London to practice with Andy Murray at Wimbledon.

"I think this is the best tournament in the world, look at this perfect green surface," Kyrgios wrote on Instagram alongside a picture of him sitting on the grass courts.

"Get rid of the clay, man. Who likes the clay, it is so bad.

"The French Open sucks compared to this place. Sucks. Absolute sucks." Kyrgios also withdrew from the French Open last year and has never reached the second week in Paris.

## Uncertainty over Serena fitness, Osaka form at Roland Garros

Paris, May 25 (AFP): Serena Williams heads into this year's French Open as an outsider for a Grand Slam title for possibly the first time in 20 years, with questions surrounding her fitness after a poor start to the season, while Naomi Osaka looks to solidify her position at the top of the women's game with a third straight major crown.

The 37-year-old Williams is still waiting for a record-equalling 24th Grand Slam triumph, with her last victory coming at the 2017 Australian Open shortly before taking a break from the sport due to pregnancy.

She impressed initially after returning, but last year twice fell just short of drawing level with Margaret Court's mark, losing in the Wimbledon final to Angelique Kerber before her infamous meltdown en route to another final defeat by Osaka at Flushing Meadows.

Williams' 2019 campaign has not gone to plan so far, with a series of injuries seeing her manage just four matches since her Australian Open quarter-final exit to Karolina Pliskova.

But she is confident her work off the court can help her find her best

game in the biggest tournaments.

"I actually haven't been able to train or practise a lot. I was out much longer than I expected," admitted the three-time French Open champion last week in Rome, before pulling out of the tournament ahead of a second-round tie with sister Venus.

"But I did everything I could to stay fit. I knew that I love the clay season and I wanted to be a part of it.

"It's not about today or tomorrow. For me obviously it's about playing well at all the big moments... Obviously the Slams, etc, just getting ready for those events."

Williams will face Russian world number 82 Vitalia Diatchenko in the first round, with the draw also throwing up a mouthwatering potential quarter-final against Osaka.

- OSAKA FULL OF CONFIDENCE -

World number one Osaka has not been overly struggling since surprisingly splitting with coach Sascha Bajin in the wake of her Australian Open title.

But the Japanese star has not won a title since, and like Williams, withdrew from the Ital-



ian Open through injury before her quarter-final against Kiki Bertens.

It has still been the 21-year-old's best-ever clay-court campaign, having also reached the last eight in Madrid and the semi-finals in Stuttgart, and she feels her big-hitting game is now ready to dominate on all surfaces.

"Roland Garros, that's what I'm dreaming about right now," Osaka, who has never reached the second week in Paris, said.

"If you're talking about longer goals, of course I haven't won Wimbledon yet and it would be really cool to win everything in one year."

She also does not feel that her lack of a title since Melbourne will have a large bearing on her Roland Garros

prospects ahead of her opening match against Slovakia's Anna Karolina Schmiedlova.

"I can't necessarily say it's been ups and downs because if I think about it, it's definitely been going up," she said.

- HALEP THE FAVORITE -

Reigning champion Simona Halep will enter the tournament somewhat under the radar with much of the focus on Williams and Osaka, but the Romanian remains the world's most consistent player on clay.

The three-time French Open finalist is the bookmakers' favourite for the title, despite having lost both her finals so far this year and being knocked out in her first match in Rome by Czech youngster Marketa Vondrousova.

But she is the third

seed in Paris and a name everyone will want to avoid later in the tournament, although she opens her title defence against Australian Ajla Tomljanovic, who reached the last 16 in 2014.

"(It's) much better and much easier, because I have the title already," said Halep, who won her maiden major trophy 12 months ago in her fourth final.

The women's game remains far more open than the men's, with a host of other players holding serious hopes of coming out on top, like Italian Open champion and second seed Pliskova and the in-form Petra Kvitova.

Anything can happen in the French capital, as shown by unheralded Latvian Jelena Ostapenko's shock victory only two years ago.

bed tea very late so I woke up very late," she said.

Babul Supriyo, the singer-turned politician who was made a minister of state by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2014, also had his fair share of controversies during the campaign.

He had a run-in with the Election Commission over a controversial song for the campaign that he had composed and sung and was involved in a number of stand-offs with the TMC workers and police.

The singer got the better of the 65-year old actor, who is known for her sensuous acting in both Bollywood and Bengali films, trouncing her by nearly two lakh votes.

A disappointed Sen left Asansol in a huff midway through the counting process on May 23, saying "you will not get me anymore."

Mamata Banerjee, who seems to have a penchant for the film world, fielded four other cine stars in the fray, with two being greenhorns. All of them had better luck in the hustings.

The two new entrants emerged victorious with huge margins, while the two other sitting MPs also retained their seats by comfortable margins.

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French President Macron congratulates PM Modi on poll win; pledges to work together on security



**PARIS, MAY 25 (PTI):** French President Emmanuel Macron has congratulated Prime Minister Narendra Modi on his election win and pledged to continue to work together to consolidate the security of the two nations as well that of the world and promote sustainable development.

He said that the immense voter participation in the electoral process illustrates the “vibrancy of the largest democracy in the world”.

In a first back-to-back majority in the Lok Sabha polls for a single party in over three decades, the Modi-led BJP won 303 seats out of 542 in the Lok Sabha polls, handing out a crushing defeat to the Congress and many other political opponents.

The Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs spokesperson said France congratulates the authorities and the people of India for the successful completion of the general elections whose results have just been declared.

The immense voter participation in the electoral process illustrates the vibrancy of the largest democracy in the world, it said in a statement.

President Emmanuel Macron called Prime Minister Modi to congratulate him.

France and India have a steadfast partnership.

“We will continue to work together to consolidate the security of our nations, secure stability in the world, and promote sustainable development as well as exchanges between our youth,” the statement said.

India can rely on France’s continued friendship, it added.

India and France last year signed a pact to deepen their cooperation in the field of environment and affirmed their commitment to lead the fight against the climate change.

The two countries have also vowed to work together for the successful implementation of the landmark 2015 Paris climate agreement and fight the challenge posed by terrorism.

The 2015 Paris accord (COP21) aims to reverse temperature increase, mainly caused by carbon emissions. It sets a target to hold the global average rise in temperature below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, and preferably below 1.5 degrees.

## 4 countries vote in high-stakes European Parliament election

Brussels, May 25 (AP): Voters in Slovakia, Malta, Latvia and the Czech Republic are casting ballots in European Parliament elections.

The stakes for the European Union are especially high in this year’s elections, which are taking place over four days and involve all 28 EU nations.

Many predict nationalists and far-right groups will gain ground. They would try to use a larger presence in the legislature to claw back power from

the EU for their national governments.

More moderate parties want to cement closer ties among countries in the EU.

Britain, Ireland and the Netherlands have already voted. The Czech Republic started voting Friday and continues Saturday. Slovakia, Malta and Latvia are holding their European Parliament elections Saturday and all the other nations vote Sunday.

Results are expected Sunday night.

## Pope: Abortion is never OK, equates it to ‘hiring a hitman’



**VATICAN CITY, MAY 25 (AP):** Pope Francis says abortion can never be condoned, even when the fetus is gravely sick or malformed. He is urging doctors and priests to support families to carry such pregnancies to term.

During an audience Saturday with participants of a Vatican-sponsored anti-abortion conference, Francis said opposition to abortion isn’t a religious issue but

a human one: “Is it licit to throw away a life to resolve a problem? Is it licit to hire a hitman to resolve a problem?”

Francis denounced decisions to abort based on prenatal testing, saying a human being is “never incompatible with life.” Francis has spoken out strongly against abortion, though he has also expressed sympathy for women who have had them and made it easier for them to be forgiven.

# Ramaphosa takes oath as South Africa’s president

**FAKIR HASSEN**

**JOHANNESBURG, MAY 25 (PTI):** Cyril Ramaphosa, the head of the African National Congress, was sworn in for a five-year term as South Africa’s president on Saturday after being elected unopposed by Parliament following the sixth general elections this month.

Ramaphosa, 66, swore allegiance to the Constitution in the presence of thousands of dignitaries and citizens at Loftus Versfeld Stadium in the capital, Pretoria - after being voted unopposed in a process overseen by Chief Justice Mogoeng Mogoeng as the country’s leader in the National Assembly this week.

Several heads of state, former heads of state and heads of international and regional organisation attended the swearing in ceremony. It is the first time that a President’s inauguration was open to the public and not just invited guests.

The ANC, facing fac-



tionism and public outcries about inaction against senior officials accused of corruption, won the May 8 general election but its share of the vote fell.

The ANC secured 57.5 per cent of the parliamentary vote, while the main opposition party, the Democratic Alliance (DA), also saw its vote share fall.

The ANC’s seats in the 400-member parliament fell to 230 from 249. The

main opposition DA also saw its number of seats fall to 84 from 89, while the leftist Economic Freedom Fighters gained 19 seats to 44.

The South Africa Constitution requires voters to choose a party, which then selects members to go to the National Assembly, where they choose the President.

It was the sixth general elections since anti-apartheid icon Nelson Mandela was elected the

first democratic president of the country.

Ramaphosa first took office last year after former president Jacob Zuma resigned amid corruption scandals.

After taking the oath of office, Ramaphosa said, “Today, we reaffirm our determination to work with our sisters and brothers across the continent to realise the African Union’s vision of Agenda 2063. To build the Africa that we all Af-

ricans want.”

He called for an efficient, capable and ethical state, a state that is free from corruption, for companies that generate social value and propel human development, for elected officials and public servants who faithfully serve no other cause than that of the public.

He called for building a “truly non-racial society, one that belongs to all South Africans, and in which all South Africans belong.”

“Africa is poised once again to rise, to assume its place among the free and equal nations of the world. We must use that innovative talent that originated in Africa to embrace and use the fourth Industrial Revolution to develop Africa and create jobs for the youth and empower the women of our continent,” he said.

Ramaphosa, a former trade union leader, played an instrumental role in negotiations which led to a transition

of power from the white minority apartheid government that ruled the country for decades.

He was a successful businessman before re-entering the political arena.

Ramaphosa is expected to announce his new Cabinet on Sunday, with great expectations that it will not include a number of long-serving ministers in the previous Cabinet who are facing serious allegations of corruption.

Two of those ministers -- Nomvula Mokonyane and Malusi Gigaba -- decided to withdraw from being named as Members of Parliament by the African National Congress (ANC) shortly before all members were sworn in before voting for the President.

Ahead of the election, Ramaphosa apologised to South Africans for the political turmoil. He also vowed to continue the fight against graft that has hurt the country’s economy.

## US envoy calls for Beijing ‘dialogue’ with Dalai Lama

**BEIJING, MAY 25 (AFP):**

The US ambassador to China has called on Beijing to open a “substantive dialogue” with the Dalai Lama in remarks made this week during a rare visit to Tibet, his embassy said Saturday.

Terry Branstad visited northwest China’s Qinghai province -- home to many Tibetans -- as well as the Tibet Autonomous Region, where access is restricted for diplomats and journalists.

“He encouraged the Chinese government to engage in substantive dialogue with the Dalai Lama or his representatives, without preconditions, to seek a settlement that resolves differences,” an embassy spokesman told AFP via email.

China is accused by human rights groups of repressing Tibet’s religion and culture, and cracking down on separatism.

Beijing says it protects religious freedom and has invested heavily to modernise the region and raise living standards.

During his visit to Lhasa, Branstad visited the Potala Palace -- the former residence of the Dalai Lama -- as well as Tibetan Buddhism’s holi-



Since fleeing to India in 1959 following a failed uprising in the Tibetan capital Lhasa, the Dalai Lama has been trying to reach a compromise with the Chinese government over the fate of his people.

Having initially called for Tibet’s independence, the Buddhist leader is now campaigning for greater autonomy. But negotiations with Beijing have stalled since 2010.

Observers accuse China of running down the clock until the death of the 83-year-old religious leader.

During his visit to Lhasa, Branstad visited the Potala Palace -- the former residence of the Dalai Lama -- as well as Tibetan Buddhism’s holi-

est temple, the more than 1,300-year-old Jokhang.

He met with senior Tibetan religious and cultural leaders.

“He also expressed concerns regarding the Chinese government’s interference in Tibetan Buddhists’ freedom to organise and practice their religion,” the embassy spokeswoman said.

“The Ambassador raised our long-standing concerns about lack of consistent access to the Tibetan Autonomous Region,” she added.

In order to visit Tibet, foreigners require a special permit. For tourists it is usually relative easy to obtain, but for diplomats and in particular journalists it is more difficult.

## At least 29 inmates killed in clashes at Venezuela jail

**CARACAS, MAY 25 (AFP):**

At least 29 prisoners were killed and 19 police wounded in clashes at a jail in western Venezuela Friday, authorities said.

The incident at the police station jail in the town of Acarigua, in Portuguesa state, occurred when police special forces (FAES) tried to stop a “massive prison break” which resulted in the deaths of 29 inmates, according to Portuguesa public security secretary Oscar Valero.

The prisoners received the officers with “a hail of gunfire” while detonating three grenades, which injured 19 police, Valero told reporters.

The Una Ventana a la Libertad NGO, which defends prisoner rights, gave a preliminary toll of 25 dead.

NGO director Carlos Nieto said the clashes

broke out when the FAES attempted to rescue visitors who had been taken hostage Thursday by the “pran” -- the leader of the inmates -- at the jail.

“This morning (authorities) sent the FAES and there was a clash. The detainees had weapons, they shot at the police. Apparently they also detonated two grenades,” Nieto told AFP.

The inmates’ leader, Wilfredo Ramos, was one of those killed, according to an internal police report.

The report, quoted by the NGO, said several officers were wounded by “shrapnel and explosives.” The prisons ministry did not comment on the incident, saying police station jails are not under its control.

A video shared on social media shows an inmate -- believed to be Ramos -- with his face

partly covered while brandishing a pistol and what appears to be grenades, and threatening two women.

“It’s our lives (on the line) and those of the visitors here,” he says, as a woman pleads for help, while warning the police to stay out because “I’m prepared to die.” Nieto said the inmates were demanding “food and to be transferred to prisons,” and had denounced police “abuses.” No information was given about the fate of the hostages.

Violence is a problem in such detention facilities, where inmates are supposed to be held for a maximum of 48 hours, Una Ventana a la Libertad said.

There are around 500 of them in the country, holding 55,000 people even though their total capacity is just 8,000, the NGO added.

## UK PM frontrunner wants ‘even closer’ partnership with India

**ADITI KHANNA**

**LONDON, MAY 25 (PTI):**

Britain’s frontrunner in the prime ministerial race, Boris Johnson, wants an “even closer” partnership between India and the UK after Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s “emphatic” victory.

Johnson is the former foreign secretary in the Cabinet led by Theresa May, who is set to formally resign on June 7 triggering a leadership contest for the new Conservative Party leader who will take over from her as British prime minister.

The 54-year-old pro-Brexiteer is seen as leading the race for his decisive within the influential Brexit wing of the party and has often spoken out in favour of closer India-UK trade relations once the UK has left the European Union (EU).

“Congratulations Narendra Modi on your emphatic victory in Indian Election results 2019. A strong endorse-



ment for your optimistic vision of New India,” Johnson said in his message for Modi soon after the results of the NDA’s landslide victory on Thursday.

“Let’s look forward to an even closer partnership between UK-India in the years ahead,” he said.

The Indian elections continue to resonate in the UK, with senior politicians and entrepreneurs effusive in their praise for the world’s largest democratic exercise.

“Narendra Modi’s victory in the Indian elections this week is not only the biggest democratic mandate of any leader in the world, in a subcontinent with more than 900 million eligible voters it’s also a vindication of the relation-

ship that successive British prime ministers, led by David Cameron, have built up with the fastest growing country in the G20, said Lord Jitesh Gadhia, an Indian-origin peer in the House of Lords.

Leading NRI entrepreneur Gopichand P Hinduja welcomed the “momentous and resounding election victory” and called on the re-elected Indian government to connect more with the non-resident Indian community.

The Co-Chairman of the multi-billion transnational Hinduja Group valued at over 22 billion pounds in this year’s ‘Sunday Times Rich List’, said: “This is a vote for economic stability, aspiration for young India and vindication of his strong leadership in his first term in office.”

“India’s global NRI community are an integral part of this growth story they are India’s unpaid Ambassadors and should be able to invest on par with resident Indians.





# Hope I get to work with Leonardo DiCaprio again: Brad Pitt

**CANNES, MAY 23 (PTI):** Brad Pitt says he would love to work with his “Once Upon a Time in Hollywood” co-star Leonardo DiCaprio again.

The Quentin Tarantino directorial is the first collaboration between the two Hollywood stars and Pitt, 55, said they had a “fun” time working on the film.

“It was great, great ease, fun. I had a great laugh with him. And it’s that thing of knowing you got the best of the best on the opposite side of the table holding up the scene with you.

“There’s a great relief in that. We kept the same reference points, we came on (the sets) at the same time, had similar experience to laugh about. I hope I get to do it again,” he told reporters.

According to Variety, the actor was speaking at a press conference at the ongoing Cannes Film Festival.

DiCaprio, 44, echoed Pitt’s sentiments, calling him “a terrific actor” and “a professional”.

He said the fact that Tarantino worked thoroughly on the backstories of the characters they play in the film helped them settle in as co-stars more easily.

“We kind of grew up in the same generation, got our start around the same time. Quentin gave us an incredible back story for our characters. He literally came to us with a bible that they had worked to put together about the friendship that they shared. What they have been through in the industry, they are now on the outskirts.

“There’s sort of a new era in Hollywood and they are out-



siders. That sort of fed into this immediate ease and comfort that he and I had with another and look. So when Quentin puts you in these improvised scenarios, we have a good foothold on the history of our characters. I think we together forged a great cinematic bond in a film about our industry together,” the actor said.

The film, which had its world premiere at Cannes, is billed as Tarantino’s ode to the Hollywood of his childhood and explores how the Golden Age of the industry came to an end with the murder of actor Sharon Tate at the hands of the Manson Family cult in 1969.

It features DiCaprio as Rick Dalton, an ageing, out-of-work actor, with Pitt playing his longtime stunt double named Cliff Booth. The two characters happen to be the neighbours of Tate, essayed by Margot Robbie in the film.

The film releases in July.

**Xavier Dolan calls out Hollywood’s double standards for films about homosexual love stories**



**CANNES, MAY 24 (PTI):** Canadian filmmaker Xavier Dolan has questioned the double standards of Hollywood for its definition of a love story.

According to IndieWire, Dolan, known for films such as “Mommy”, “It’s Only the End of the World” and “The Death and Life of John F. Donovan”, is presenting his latest feature “Matthias & Maxime” at the Cannes Film Festival.

At a press conference, the 30-year-old director said Hollywood calls films about same-sex love stories “gay films” or “queer films” but such labels are missing from movies dealing with relationships between men and women.

“We never talk about heterosexual films. ‘Oh, I saw this great heterosexual love story. For me, it’s not a story of homosexuality or gay love. Ultimately, I don’t think that the two protagonists are aware that it is gay love. It’s love,” Dolan said.

The filmmaker made it clear that “Matthias & Maxime” is not “gay, its life”.

## Important to keep Salman’s persona in mind while working with him: Atul Agnihotri

**MUMBAI, MAY 23 (PTI):** Filmmaker Atul Agnihotri says working with superstar Salman Khan on their upcoming film “Bharat” is both overwhelming and stressful as there are high expectations.

Atul worked with Salman in his directorial debut “Dil Ne Jise Apna Kahaa” (2004) and produced 2011 hit “Bodyguard”. The two are now looking forward to the release of their much-awaited movie “Bharat”.

“Having a superstar like him (Salman) you are both relieved and worried. With him comes the responsibility as well. There are huge challenges and expectations from his films.

“He has so much love, adulation and support from everyone. He has such a big fan base. With ‘Bharat’ we are consciously catering to his fans. He is iconic in many ways. He has larger than life persona and people like that. We have to keep this in mind while working with him,” Atul told PTI.

Atul is married to Salman’s sister Alvi-ra, but the filmmaker said when it comes to making movies things are completely professional between them.

“He is busy and over-committed and so you can’t be impractical about your demands and have to respect his work and time. There is a personal relationship (that we share) but the work discipline is different. Work has to be done in different spirit and emotions are different,” he added.

Atul said the team, including director Ali Abbas Zafar, faced a lot of challenges while making “Bharat”, an official adaptation of Korean film “Ode to My Father”.

“We are adapting the film in Indi-



an set-up so we had to get all right elements, right story, emotions, right team, etc. They have set the story on a man and their Korean history. The setting of the story (referring to partition) was similar but we replaced it with events that were related to India.

“In this film we have added flavours like drama, emotion, conflict, song-dance, action, etc through the character Bharat.”

After Salman’s last two films “Tubelight” and “Race 3” did not impressed the actor’s fans, Atul said the team was very particular about how they present Salman in “Bharat”.

“We looked for a story that we felt allows us to incorporate elements of commercialism and at the same time has a beautiful story, filled with emotions and has other elements as well. We have been very conscious of his audience. Also, the director-actor combination is hit, the story is great so we are hoping people like it,” he added.

The film also starring Disha Patani, Jackie Shroff, Sunil Grover, Sonali Kulkarni and Tabu will release on June 5.



**LONDON LOVE! The actress, Jessica Chastain steps out with a hot beverage before making her way into the Late Late Show with James Corden in the UK.**

## John Abraham injured during ‘Pagalpanti’ shoot



**MUMBAI, MAY 25 (PTI):** John Abraham was injured while shooting for an action scene for his upcoming film “Pagalpanti”.

A source close to the development said the actor has suffered a muscle injury and will be unable to shoot for the next few days.

“It is a muscle injury on his left bicep. It’s a tear so he has to take rest for few days. He is currently undergoing treatment and won’t be shooting for the film for the next few days,” the source said.

The film, directed by Anees Bazmee, also stars Anil Kapoor, Arshad Warsi, Pulkit Samrat, Ileana D’Cruz and Kriti Kharbanda.

It is slated to release on November 22.

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**gangtok@jettwings.com**

**Opp. Kanchan Bhog Near The Regal Hotel Tadong-737102 East Sikkim**

**ARIES:** Lunge out of your comfort zone on Saturday, Aries! Under a boundary-busting trine between amorous Venus in your adventurous ninth house and transformative Uranus in your sign, love knows no limits. Keep an open mind and see where that leads you. If you’re single, you could be attracted to someone radically dissimilar to your usual type or be amenable to a long-distance relationship.

**TAURUS:** Your sex appeal is off the charts this Saturday as voluptuous Venus in your erotic eighth house hooks up with unpredictable Uranus in your fantasy zone. You won’t be able to keep a lid on your blazing sensuality. You could be minding your own business when out of the blue, a sultry lightning bolt strikes. With spontaneous Uranus in the picture, this person could have serious soulmate potential.

**GEMINI:** If you find yourself at a cross-roads with a key relationship on Saturday, Gemini, don’t panic. You’ll know which way to turn without a GPS. Diplomatic Venus in your partnership house teams up with game-changer Uranus, bringing on a make-

it-or-break-it moment. Suddenly the fog lifts, and you’ll have the clarity to decide whether or not to ink the deal, move in together or whatever next step you’re deliberating.

**CANCER:** Set some new goals and commit to making the kind of positive changes that will give you even more energy and clarity, like swapping out that second coffee with a green juice and renew your yoga pass. On Sunday, vixen Venus heads into Capricorn and charges up your partnership sector until March 1. This could make you think a bit more seriously about your own relationship status.

**LEO:** Ready for a style upgrade? On Saturday, fashionista Venus in your glamorous fifth house shoots a supportive beam to changemaker Uranus, turning your attention to your overflowing closet. To make room for some seasonal arrivals, you’ll need to clear out space—and Uranus says there’s no time like the present!

**VIRGO:** PMystery is the spice of life, and things could get muy picante on Saturday as a zesty trine between amorous Venus and transformative Uranus in your clandestine

eighth house arouses desires you didn’t even realize you had. With the love planet lighting up your home zone, Chez Virgo could become the setting for some sexy escapades.

**LIBRA:** Got a heart brimming with love? Shout it from the rooftops on Saturday, Libra! As devoted Venus in your expressive third house forms a supportive angle with transformative Uranus in your relationship corner, communicating your feelings to that special someone could be a game-changer. Even a simple declaration of your admiration to a friend will deepen the bond.

**SCORPIO:** Saturday’s harmonious angle between fair-minded Venus in your money house and game-changer Uranus in your sixth house of details can help reset your balance sheet. Whether you’ve been picking up the slack for a coworker (or they for you) or the idea of reciprocity has been lost on a certain entitled friend, take a step toward parity. Surprise someone who’s been wildly generous to you by sending flowers or taking them out to lunch just because!

**SAGITTARIUS:** Expect the unexpected

this Saturday as amorous Venus in your sign buddies up with unpredictable Uranus in your passionate fifth house. If you’re inspired to do something completely out of character, just go with it without judging it or worrying about the consequences. Take the initiative with someone new, weeding out the tepid types and drawing in people who can keep up with your sizzling energy!

**CAPRICORN:** You’re in for a surprise this Saturday, Capricorn—if you can drop your guard enough to let the magic in. A harmonizing trine between affectionate Venus in your unconscious corner and radical Uranus could dredge up some deeply buried emotions—you know, the pesky kind you hate to deal with. While you’re great at the stiff-upper-lip thing, people who know you best realize that under that cool exterior lives a super-sensitive soul.

**AQUARIUS:** Scan local listings and find the most fun and out-there activities. Then grab some fellow adventurers to join your escapades. On the romantic front, if you’re single, don’t restrict yourself to one person. Life’s a buffet, Water Bearer, so fill your plate! Attached? This day

is perfect for that double (or group) date you’ve been talking about. On Sunday, as creative Venus glides into Capricorn and your quixotic twelfth house until March 1, mix it up! Pull clothes out of your closet that haven’t seen daylight in a while. Rock some bling you might normally think is too much. If you’ve been secretly crushing on someone, take a bold leap and invite THEM out. At least you’ll find out if you’ve got a fighting chance!

**PISCES:** Before you head out for brunch or a night of dancing, stop and gaze into your metaphorical crystal ball. Saturday’s helpful hookup of lucky Venus in your career sector and transformative Uranus in your money house provides the perfect opportunity to hit pause and evaluate some of your loftiest professional ambitions. Are your dreams the same as last year? Do they need some updating? And the million-dollar question: What are you doing to steer things in that direction? Make a list of what you think you can or should do to take a giant leap forward, and schedule a few of these things into your calendar for next week. On Sunday, affable Venus swings into Capricorn and fires up your collaborative eleventh house.