



TRAINING FOR PESHKARS AND PROCESS SERVERS

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INDIA DESTROYS ITS OWN SATELLITE WITH A TEST MISSILE, STILL SAYS SPACE IS FOR PEACE

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AKSHAY KUMAR'S DAUGHTER NITARA, 6, IS GOING TO BE AS HARDCORE FIT AS HER DAD

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SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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Nothing can stop SDF from forming govt again: Chamling

ARPAN PRADHAN
KATENG [NAMTHANG],
01 APR:

Sikkim Democratic Front party president, Chief Minister Pawan Chamling, today shared that his first visit to Kateng, where he was addressing a campaign meeting today, was on foot. Today, however, he drove up to the venue in a motorcade as did the people who attended the meeting. This was a convenience they have been enjoying for some years now and this access was but one of the signs of development that needs to be sustained and then accelerated, Mr Chamling said while calling on the people to evaluate the development that the SDF Government has brought to Sikkim in the past 25 years when they decide



their votes on 11 April.

Mr Chamling was addressing the fourth SDF campaign stop in as many days. Today's meet, held at Kateng in Namthang was organized for two constituencies - Namthang-Rateypani and Melli - of South district.

He further reminded the people that the election was as much to choose their representative as it was to decide who gets the reigns of the government.

In this regard, he called on the people to vote responsibly and

also evaluate the performance of the party and its government and not just vote for individuals.

"Victory of the party is the victory of the people," he said.

That said, the Chief Minister also announced that the SDF was re-

turning to government for a sixth consecutive term and that no force could stop the party from sweeping all 32 seats.

Addressing the issues of the area, Mr Chamling assured that all the pending issues and demands

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SDF Govt has ignored developmental needs of West Sikkim: Golay

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 01 APR:

Sikkim Krantikari Morcha convened its fourth campaign meeting at Gyalshing Bazaar in West Sikkim today.

The meeting was addressed by SKM president, PS Tamang [Golay], and SKM assembly election candidates Sangay Lepcha, Bhim Hang Subba, Purna Hang Subba, LN Sharma and Lok Sabha candidate, Indra Hang Subba and received a strong turnout of people from Maneybong-Dentam, Gyalshing-Bermiok, Tashiding and Yangthang constituencies, an SKM press release informs.

In his address, the SKM president highlighted that West Sikkim has been ignored in terms of health, education and infrastructure development by the present government.

He further alleged that no development took place here even though the people of West Sikkim voted SDF into power five times.

He also alleged that SDF party conspired to decrease the number of seats in West Sikkim from nine to eight during the 2006 delimitation



process and further lashed out against the SDF government for ignoring West District and for not carrying out any developmental activities despite repeated promises.

Mr Tamang argued that the people should bring SKM into government to secure the future of Sikkim.

He also expressed confidence that West and South districts will create a history this time by giving eight seats each to SKM. He promised that after forming the government, SKM will give justice to the people and take account of the nepotism and favouritism perpetuated in the SDF government.

He claimed that SKM was a party of the under-privileged and appealed to the people to give SKM a chance to run the government for five years.

He also reiterated SKM's announcement that if voted to government, it will auction the properties of the corrupt and transfer the money to people's accounts.

The meeting was also addressed by Indra Hang Subba.

The release claims that 1,104 families aligned to the SDF from Maneybong-Dentam, Gyalshing-Bermiok, Tashiding and Yangthang constituencies joined SKM during the meeting.

31 killed, 600 injured as freak storm hits Nepal

SHIRISH B PRADHAN

KATHMANDU, APR 1 (PTI): A freak storm battered several places in Southern Nepal on Sunday, killing 31 people and injuring 600 others as high speed winds tore down houses, flipped vehicles and toppled trees and electricity poles.

Massive winds accompanied by hailstorms and rain struck Bara and the adjoining district of Parsa late on Sunday evening. According to officials, 28 people were killed in Bara, 128 kilometers south of Kathmandu, one person died in neighbouring Parsa, while two more died in other parts of Southern Nepal.

High winds flipped cars and blew one passenger bus off a highway, causing fatalities. According to police, many people were either killed after getting buried under rubbles of houses and metal roofs that flung all over the settlements, or after coming under the electric pylons and trees that were uprooted as the disaster advanced. According to Province 2 Attorney General Dipendra Jha, majority of the 600 injured are from Pheta and Bhulahi Bharwaliya areas in Bara's Pheta Rural Municipality, which have mostly been affected by the hailstorm.

Every year hundreds die in landslides and floods during Nepal's monsoon season, but storms causing such high casualties in spring are rare.

turn to pg02

SDF accuses SKM Lok Sabha candidate of communal campaigning

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 01 APR:

Sikkim Democratic Front has accused Sikkim Krantikari Morcha's Lok Sabha candidate, Indra Hang Subba, of making communal appeals in his campaign addresses and of trying to mislead the people with communally-laced scare-mongering.

Addressing a press conference here today, SDF general secretary [press & publicity], Amber Rai, alleged that Mr Subba has appealing to

members of certain communities not to vote SDF for its failure to reserve seats for them. The reference here is obviously to the Limboos and Tamangs with Mr Subba himself being a Limboo.

Mr Rai contended today that such blatantly communal appeals militated against all norms of secularism and democracy and pointed to a dangerously unethical approach SKM was taking to manipulate the people.

The SDF spokesperson, Bhim Dahal, also

rueed the desperate and immature approach of the SKM candidate for not only making such offensive appeals but also for his ignorance about how SDF institutionalized democracy in Sikkim and has consistently worked in the interest of the youth.

Other SDF leaders also maintained that SKM's frequent allusions to the community to which their Lok Sabha candidate belonged also signaled the communal strategy of their campaign.

SummitTIMES IN NEPALI

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2019 is about three parties, says Bhaichung

REBYNA RANA

GANGTOK, 01 APR:

Hamro Sikkim Party working president, Bhaichung Bhutia today said that his party's biggest achievement has been to offer people an alternative.

"It is not like the 2014 election when there were only two parties. Now people have an alternative like HSP which is giving clean and young candidates. The election this time is about three parties. We have been able to field candidates in 23 constituencies, which is a huge achievement for us," said Mr Bhutia.

He added that the party is here to play long-term politics and hopes to make a strong base in 2019.

"If we did not have the aim to continue in politics in Sikkim we would have gone for a coalition. Beyond 2019, we will keep strengthening our party in Sikkim," he shared.

According to Mr Bhutia, this time there are a lot of silent



voters who do not openly voice their support for a party but are looking for a change.

The ones who are coming out in support of SDF and SKM are hardcore supporters and it is the same bunch of people everywhere, he added.

He further said that the majority of 70-80% of the people are the real voters who are very conscious about the kind of people they want.

"HSP, on the other hand, be-

lieves in winning people's hearts rather than showing manpower, muscle power and money power. We want to change politics in Sikkim by doing clean politics with clean money. It is obviously challenging but I hope people of Sikkim realize this," said Mr Bhutia.

Mr Bhutia, who is contesting from Gangtok and Tumin-Lingee constituencies in the upcoming Assembly elections, has begun campaigning in both the constituencies.

On why he chose Gangtok, he said that Gangtok is a very important constituency because it is the Capital and people here can identify with me because of my schooling days here.

Speaking about his plans for Gangtok, Mr Bhutia said that there is a need to create better and more parking spaces in Gangtok.

"We are also hoping to form a commission to look into trade licenses. A lot of businessmen are suffering due to that. We will form a commission which will mostly have representatives of the business community to look into the matter of trade licenses, as mentioned in our election manifesto," he informed. He also talked about creating more public spaces for children.

Regarding his other constituency, Tumin-Lingee, Mr Bhutia said that a lot of young educated youth in Tumin are not satisfied with the kind of jobs they are getting.

turn to pg02

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GO North visits seven Polling Stations

MANGAN, 01 APR (IPR): General Observer, North, Dr Pratibha Singh visited seven Polling Stations under Sector-3: Kabi to Ramthang on 31 Mar. 2019. In this Sector, she found three sensitive and four normal polling stations.

Dr Singh assessed the preparedness regarding conduct of election of the following polling stations: 29/12- Ramthang Primary School (PINK), 29/13- Phodong Sr Sec School (Sensitive), 21/14- Room No. 2 (Sensitive), 29/15- Phensong Sec School (Sensitive), 29/17- Phamtam Junior High School, 29/18- Block Administrative Center, Kabi and 29/19- Tingda Primary School.

She was accompanied by Sector Magistrate, Swabhaw Gurung, Liaison Officer (LO) and Tempa Rinzing Bhutia during her visit. She interacted with the Booth Level Officers (BLOs), Static Surveillance Team (SST) and Flying Squad Team (FST) at Kabi Out Post (OP) and Tingda. She enquired about the facilities related to Person with Disability (PwD), Assured Minimum Facilities of the Polling Stations. She found all the Polling Station in voter's friendly environment.

SDF accuses SKM of misleading old settlers

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 01 APR:

Sikkim Democratic Front has lashed out against Sikkim Krantikari Morcha for what it sees as intentional misinformation the SKM was feeding the old settlers of Sikkim.

The SDF condemnation comes in the wake of SKM claims that the SDF Government was opposed to Income Tax exemption being extended to the old settlers.

Addressing a press conference here today, SDF spokesperson KT Gyaltsen informed that the SKM was misrepresenting facts connected to a case in the Supreme Court in which the State Government has also been made a respondent.

Mr Gyaltsen informed one of the petitioners in the case was an active SKM supporter and that the petition itself was making two prayers – Income Tax exemption for old settlers at par with Sikkim Subjects and in the event that this cannot be done, then striking down IT exemption already extended to the Sikkim Subjects.

Mr Gyaltsen claimed that the affidavits filed by the State Government was clear in conveying to the Supreme Court that while it was not opposed to the former demand [of IT exemption for old settlers], the State Government was opposed to the second prayer that exemption extended to Sikkim Subjects be withdrawn.

He further informed that when the State Government made its position clear, the petitioners amended their prayer and dropped the latter demand.

The case was still pending in the Supreme Court, but SKM was making selective references to it and trying to mislead the old settlers, Mr Gyaltsen added.

SDF spokesperson and Lok Sabha MP, PD Rai, further informed that an appeal by a person claiming to be a retired CBI officer was circulating in social media calling on people not to vote for SDF.

This message was from a fake id, he added while urging the people to be more vigilant against such misinformation and propaganda.

Second randomization of EVMs and VVPATs in East

GANGTOK, 01 APR (IPR): The second randomization of EVMs and VVPATs for all 13 Assembly Constituencies including Sangha and Sikkim Parliamentary Constituency as per the guidelines of Election Commission of India was conducted at the Office of District Election Officer (East)/ Returning Officer, Kapil Meena today.

The randomization was carried through EMS Software in the presence of General Observers for Assembly Constituencies and Parliamentary Constituencies, District NIC Officials, contesting candidates and representatives of Political Parties.

District Election Officer (East)/Returning Officer, Kapil Meena said that the purpose of second randomization of EVMs and VVPATs is to allocate EVMs and VVPATs randomly to Polling stations for Assembly Constituency and Parliamentary Constituency. After the alloca-



tion of EVMs and VVPATs for each Polling Station, the final list of CU, BU and VVPATs with details, identified machine numbers allocated to Assembly Constituency and Parliamentary Constituency was handed over to all the Contesting Candidates and Political Parties.

Kapil Meena also informed that the opening

of Strong Room at Biraspati Parasi Senior Secondary School, Ranipool will commence on 02 Apr at 9am which will be followed by commissioning of EVMs and VVPATs in presence of General Observers contesting candidates or their representatives to witness the opening of strong room and commissioning process.

The Commissioning process of EVMs and VVPATs belonging to Sikkim Parliamentary Constituency scheduled to be held on 02 and 03 April and for 13 Assembly Constituencies including Sangha Constituency will be held on 04 and 05 April.

During the commissioning process contesting candidates or their

representatives will be allowed to do mock poll on the machines also. The complete process of commissioning will be videographed and all security measures of 24x7 securities, CCTV coverage, fire extinguisher and frisking of all participants. Electronic devices will also be not allowed inside the commissioning halls.

BJP blames SKM for collapse of pre-poll alliance

GANGTOK, APR 1 (PTI): The BJP on Monday hit out at the Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM) for backing out the alliance between the two parties for inexplicable reasons a few days after making a firm commitment on the issue.

"We were ready to accommodate most of the demands by the SKM leadership to sew up an alliance with us for Sikkim Assembly and Lok Sabha polls, but the PS Golay-led party chickened out at the last minute without giving any reasons," a senior BJP leader, who was involved in talks with the SKM leadership, told PTI on the condition of anonymity. He said that the

SKM's withdrawal from a pre-poll alliance in Sikkim has embarrassed the BJP no end as it had gone public about it on a commitment given by Golay himself following a meeting with BJP's North-East and Sikkim incharge Ram Madhav in Delhi in the first week of March this year.

The SKM leadership, however, took an about turn after reaching Sikkim and reneged on alliance with the BJP without citing any reason, the BJP leader said.

Ruing at the missed opportunity to oust the 25 year- old Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF) from power, he said that the SKM will be held "squarely responsible" if the Pawan Chamling

government returns to power for a sixth term in Sikkim.

The BJP leader said that his party was undaunted with setback to fructify an alliance with the SKM and said that it will aim to make its presence felt in political waters of Sikkim.

He said that the BJP has put up candidates on 12 assembly seats and the lone Lok Sabha seat with an aim to open its accounts at the hustings.

Elections to the 32 Assembly seat as well as the sole Lok Sabha constituency in Sikkim will be held simultaneously on April 11 next.

Only the SKM and SDF are contesting on all 32 assembly seats.

Save Sikkim Safe Sikkim, says Lok Sabha candidate Mahendra Thapa



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 01 APR: Lok Sabha independent candidate, Mahendra Thapa has been going door-to-door with his 26-point election manifesto. He has been allotted the election symbol of laptop. He hails from Neya village under Yangang-Rangrang in South Sikkim and is a lawyer by profession.

Addressing a press conference here today, Mr Thapa stated that a Member of Parliament from any political party cannot work effectively in the interest of the people.

"Being an independent candidate, I can work freely and independently without any pressure. I have been going to the people with my slogan of 'Save Sikkim, Safe Sikkim'" he said.

Speaking on his 26-point manifesto, Mr Thapa said that his programmes include free education and health insurance to every child born in Sikkim, 30% reservation for Sikkimese students in central universities, no service extension of any government employee, no requirement of married and unmarried certificate when ap-

plying for government jobs, free sanitary pads to every female of Sikkim, proper utilisation of MP fund and CSR funds and others. He also promised political, social and economic equality amongst Sikkimese under 371F of the constitution and removal of immigrant tag for the Sikkimese Nepali community.

Responding to media queries, Mr Thapa stated that young candidates in the Assembly and Parliamentary elections this time is a positive sign of political development and political maturity in the State.

2019 is about...

"I don't think development in real sense has not happened in Tumin-Lingee in the past two decades. The area has a lot of potential to develop as an educational hub," he added.

He also alleged that development has taken place for only a few who are close to the SDF high command but the real youth have not got opportunities.

31 killed...

According to District Police Office, Parsa, the number of casualties could see a rise as rescue efforts have gained pace. The estimates of infrastructural damages incurred in the disaster are yet to be ascertained as the storm has damaged hundreds of houses, electric pylons, while uprooted trees have obstructed the roads and highways.

The storm also damaged over 12 passenger buses that were parked along the roadside during the incident, police added. The natural disaster also led to a power outage last night while the internet services have resumed in the affected districts.

Security agencies including two battalions of Nepal Army, Nepal Police and Armed Police Force of Nepal have been mobilised to carry out rescue and relief operation in the affected areas, according to Bara's Chief District Officer (CDO) Rajesh Poudel.

An emergency meeting of Province 2 Council of Ministers held Monday decided to provide Rs 300,000 to each victim's family along with relief package including tents, food items, medical supplies, among others. Further, the province government has urged the health institutions to provide free treatment to the injured. The shortage of blood supplies has been taken care of at the moment while medical supplies are also well-stocked.

Nothing can...

will be taken up on priority with drinking water supply being the first project to be taken up.

Power supply network will also be upgraded to ensure uninterrupted supply, he added.

Construction of a community auditorium, a public ground, and new link road to Linki and Donak will be sanctioned within 100 days of formation of the next government, he further assured.

Mr Chamling also remarked that the constituency, which currently has no tourist spots, will receive investments in this sector to attract some of the growing number of tourists visiting the State.

He also announced that the government will build a statue of Pem Dorjee MaeMae and the world's biggest replica of the Tamang community's traditional musical instrument, Damphu.

Every Gram Panchayat Ward will also receive a public ground in the next government, he said.

The Chief Minister also highlighted some of the more important programmes and announcements included in the party manifesto.

Mr Chamling also tore into the Opposition, accusing it of being motivated only by their dislike for him and not the interests of the people or Sikkim's need for an effective and engaged Opposition. The people, he hoped, had seen through the opportunism and selfish interests of those in the Opposition.

In the absence of a vision or understanding of what Sikkim required, the Opposition was focusing on fomenting paranoia and distrust, Mr Chamling contended, while adding that this was a dangerous path they were putting their supporters on.

It was desperation of the Opposition camp which was driving its leaders and supporters to intimidating the people with their aggression and frequent violence, he remarked.

The program was also addressed by SDF's candidate for Melli, Pharwanti Tamang, Birjan Tamang [Namthang-Rateypani], Lok Sabha candidate DB Katuwal and others.

~ SummitTIMES ~ CLASSIFIEDS

Required for Summit Times

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

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KUTSHE SHEGU

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

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank all those who stood by us in our hard time and regret our inability to thank them individually.

Wangchuk Bhutia (Husband)
& all family members.



ANTHYESTHI KRIYA

The Anthyesthi Kriya of our beloved mother, Late **SITA MAYA TRIKHATRI** (80 yrs) who left for her heavenly abode on the 23rd of March, 2019 falls on **4th April 2019**.

All relatives, family, friends and well-wishers are requested to join us in offering prayers for the departed soul at Hotel Chowtaro, Deorali Bazaar, Gangtok, East Sikkim.

We also express our gratitude to all those who stood by us during our time of bereavement.

Daughters: Champa Bardewa-9434203706, Manju Trikhtri -7407181907
Sons: Pratap Trikhatri -9064836436; Lalit Trikhatri (Son)-9775956554
Daughters-in-Law: Man Maya Trikhatri -9775405439; Ashu Trikhatri -9647686222; Mamta Trikhatri -9609115039



MISSING



Ref. Paityong PS Case FIR No. 02/2019, dated: 28.01.2019, u/s 363 IPC, 1860 one 17 yrs old girl child is missing since 22.01.2019 from Lossing, Machong, East Sikkim. The details of Missing girl are as follows:

Name: Divya Sharma
Age: 17 yrs
d/o: Chandra Prasad Sharma
Height: 4' 5" (approx)
Complexion: Fair
Wearing apparel: Blue colour jeans paint & shirt and black & pink colour Nike shoe

All are requested to share any information about the missing child in the below given Contact No.

03592-257834, 73843-49283, 97330-23817

Informant will be suitably rewarded

Training for Peshkars and Process Servers



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 01 APR:

A training programme for Peshkars and Process Servers of the Subordinate Courts was organized at Sikkim Judicial Academy, Sokeythang, Gangtok on 31 March, a press release informs.

District & Sessions Judge,

Prajwal Khatiwada, North Sikkim, was the Resource Person for the programme.

The training programme was on "General Provisions of the Civil Procedure Code, 1908 and the Criminal Procedure Code, 1973 (Practice and Procedure) and Service of Summons".

Meeting discusses Interact District Conference



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 01 APR:

A joint meeting was held between the Interact Clubs of Gangtok as well as the Rotaract Club of Gangtok Hills which was attended by The New Generation chairperson, Prakash Sundas alongside District Interact Representative, 3240 Itr., Devesh Agarwal. The basic objective for the joint

session between the Interactors and Rotaractors was the upcoming Interact District Conference 2019 "The Power of Connection", a press release informs.

The conference will be hosted by the Interact District Council 3240 in association with the Rotaract Club of Gangtok Hills and will be held on 05 May 2019, Hotel Summit, Kazi Road, Gangtok.

Training on Commissioning of EVM and VVPAT in North



MANGAN, 01 APR (IPR):

In view of General Election 2019, District Election Officer (DEO) cum Returning Officer (RO), North, Raj Yadav conducted the training on Commissioning of Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT), today here at new conference hall of District Administrative Centre (DAC), Mangan.

The training programme had the presence of General Observer (GO), North, Dr Pratibha Singh, Superintendent of Police, North, Kunzang Dorjee Bhutia and Authorized Engineers of Bharat Electronic Limited, Bengaluru.

A daylong training programme was organized for the Sector Magistrates about how

to conduct the EVM's commissioning process. On the training session, DEO/RO, Mr Yadav gave necessary suggestions to the officials about measures to be taken at the time of conducting EVM's commissioning process.

He asked the Sector Magistrates to take necessary precautionary steps during the process of linking of Control Unit, Ballot Unit and VVPATs and while displaying the list of voters after checking it thoroughly. Further, DEO/RO informed all necessary information related to commissioning of EVM/VVPAT.

The commissioning of EVM for Parliamentary Constituency and Assembly Constituency will take place on 2nd and 3rd April respectively.

Probe against Arunachal BJP nominee for assaulting magistrate

ITANAGAR, APR 1 (PTI):

The District Electoral Officer (DEO) of Kurung Kumey district in Arunachal Pradesh has ordered an inquiry against a BJP candidate and his supporters for allegedly assaulting a magistrate on duty.

Santosh Kumar Rai, in a notification issued on Saturday, ordered a magisterial inquiry into the "physical assault" of Jill Gyamar, who was on election duty near Leel village under Sangram

circle of the district.

The order has been issued against BJP candidate Lokam Tassar, his personal security officer and other supporters, who had allegedly attacked the magistrate on March 24 in presence of the circle officer and the district magistrate, officials said.

The probe shall be conducted by Sangram SDO Otem Jamoh and submitted to the DEO by April 2, the order said.

Sensitization programme for BLOs and volunteers in South

Namchi, 01 Apr (IPR): A daylong Orientation cum Sensitization programme for Booth Level Officers (BLOs) and Volunteers for Persons with Disabilities (PwD) Voters under South District was held at Community Hall, Namchi today.

Present in the program were SDM (HQ), Hemant Rai, Joint Secretary (CEO) Election, Tashi Choden and Joint Secretary (Social Welfare Division) SJE&WD, Rohini Pradhan alongside BLO's and volunteers under South District.

Addressing the gathering, SDM (HQ), Hemant Rai spoke about the significance of the orientation program which he stated was to ensure that persons with disabilities can exercise the right to vote by casting



their votes through the support of BLOs on the day of the poll. He spelt out the key roles and responsibilities of the BLOs to facilitate all accessible means of voting for PwD voters as per the guide-

lines of Election Commission of India (ECI). He also issued directives to the BLOs on distribution of Photo Voter's Slip before 06 Apr, 2019, Voter's Assistance Booths and Braille Voter's slip

alongside expounding the objective of Inclusive Elections for General Elections 2019.

Resource person for the day, Rohini Pradhan and Tashi Choden in their addresses, explained the

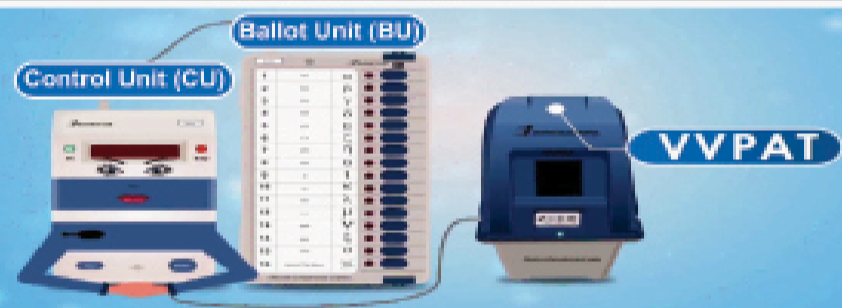
facilities in place for PwD voters such as pick-up and drop service. Based on the data, arrangements of vehicle with helpers will be made in the polling centers, stated the resource persons.

Additionally, behavioral etiquettes to be observed by the BLOs and volunteers assisting the PwD voters were also discussed in the program. It may be mentioned that there approximately 500 PwD voters in South District for which adequate arrangement has been made for them to have access to their polling stations. Likewise, there are a total of 3 model polling stations in South District namely Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Institute for Handicapped (JNMIH) Boomtar Room No I and II, Namchi Senior Secondary School I and II and CCCT Chisopani Room No I and II. Similarly, JNMIH Room No I and II have been identified as model polling stations for PwD voters in the district.

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FAQ

EVM with VVPAT Unit



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

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

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

CALL 1950 FOR ANY ELECTION RELATED QUERIES

Contact Hours : 9:00 AM to 9:00 PM

MCC IS IN EFFECT

WHAT IS
MODEL CODE OF
CONDUCT?

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



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GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM EXCISE(ABKARI) DEPARTMENT GANGTOK

No.05/Excise (Abk.)

Dated: 29th March 2019.

NOTIFICATION

In view of the provision contained in sub-section (1) of Section 135 C of the Representation of People Act, 1951 and in supersession of Notification No. 2/Excise (Abk) dated: 20/03/2019 read with Corrigendum No. 4/Excise (Abk) dated: 22/03/2019, the period of **48 hours (forty eight)** between **5 P.M. of 09/04/2019** and **5 P.M. of 11/04/2019** is hereby declared as "Dry Day" in view of the ensuring General Elections scheduled to be held on 11/04/2019.

As usual, no spirituous, fermented or intoxicating liquors or other substances of a like nature shall be sold, given or distributed at a hotel, restaurant, eating house, tavern, shop or any other place, public or private, within the State of Sikkim for the aforementioned period of **forty-eight hours**.

Any one found contravening this order shall be dealt in accordance with the provision under the Sikkim Excise Act, 1992.

By Order.

Sd/-

**Addl.Secretary-cum-Addl.Commissioner
Excise (Abk) Department.**

GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM EXCISE(ABKARI) DEPARTMENT GANGTOK

No.03/Excise (Abk.)

Dated: 20th March 2019.

CIRCULAR

In consultation with the Election Department and in supersession of Circular No. 02/Excise (Abk) Dated 11/3/2014, it is hereby informed to all Foreign Liquor Retail Shop vendors and the Public in General that the maximum limit of liquor or beer to be sold to any person/to be possessed by any individual at any one time is fixed as follows for the Election period 2019.

1. Liquor (IMFL) - 4 (four) Bottles
2. Beer - 2(Two) cases.

Anyone found selling liquor/beer beyond the above fixed quantity shall be liable for punishment under the provision of the Sikkim Excise Act. 1992.

Sd/

**Commissioner
Excise (Abk) Department
Government of Sikkim**

R.O. No. 786/IPR/Pub/Classi./18-19 Date: 30.03.2019

SummitTIMES

ON TOP OF THE NEWS

Public Domain is not Private Space

Deeper deliberations are missed because superficiality dominates

The public domain has become too easy a space to intrude. Dealing with news-starved publications, this was always an easy space to occupy, achieved with superficial observations put together as a press release, and now, with the explosion of Facebook usage in Sikkim, it has become even easier. It has also become more worrisome in that real-time access to the public domain and a general lack of depth in most claims and pronouncements has also made its usage more reckless. Even though the “public domain”, by its very name suggests openness and accessibility, the invitation should not be grabbed to make pronouncements about anything that catches the fancy or is heard on the grapevine.

Newspapers contribute a major portion of what ends up in this domain because despite the limited readerships, the fourth estate does command some amount of credibility, if for nothing else, then to at least reach statements from public representatives [as also those aspiring to become people’s representatives] to the public. It is, however, essentially a one-way traffic that the newspapers regulate because very little of the people’s response to messages addressed to them make it into the pages in follow-up. Allegations and counters are exchanged on what is printed in newspapers and rarely on how the people have responded or how they are affected. In the absence of any other platform to represent the public domain, newsprint plays the role. From time to time, newspapers too join the debate, sometimes to put things in perspective, at other times because they also want to have a say in things. Most of the times though issues remain confused because each participant in the debate opts for selective representation of facts to support individual claims. Unfortunately, because public response [or even involvement] in these debates remains un-calibrated, too many times the dialogue disintegrates to puerile levels.

The point being stressed here is that too many people are making too many unreasoned comments in the public domain. They invariably paint themselves into a corner, but no one points it out and they dance out on the wings of another combination of outlandish claims and allegations. And, the people forget easily [or maybe they just don’t care]. It would have been fine if such dialogues remained shunted to the sidelines, with leaders frequently embarrassing themselves and keeping everyone entertained. But that is not the case and every public representative, from association leaders to forum office-bearers, have a role to play and a responsibility to live up to. This responsibility multiplies manifold given the fact that most people don’t bother with details and can react emotionally to most issues following slogans instead of reasoning. While the public has the right to react the way it deems fit, it is for their elders and leaders to put things in the correct perspective so that they make intelligent decisions.

And no, don’t mistake the likes and monosyllabic responses in the comments feed of Facebook posts to constitute engagement; involvement requires deeper meditations than the keypad of smartphones allow and wider deliberations than the refresh buttons have patience for.

WRITE US:

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

Mail us at: news@summittimes.com

India destroys its own satellite with a test missile, still says space is for peace

BIN LI
theconversation.com

On March 27, India announced it had successfully conducted an anti-satellite (ASAT) missile test, called “Mission Shakti”. After the United States, Russia and China, India is now the fourth country in the world to have demonstrated this capability.

The destroyed satellite was one of India’s own. But the test has caused concerns about the space debris generated, which potentially threatens the operation of functional satellites.

There are also political and legal implications. The test’s success may be a plus for Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who is now trying to win his second term in the upcoming election.

But the test can be viewed as a loss for global security, as nations and regulatory bodies struggle to maintain a view of space as a neutral and conflict-free arena in the face of escalating technological capabilities.

According to the official press release, India destroyed its own satellite by using technology known as “kinetic kill”. This particular technology is usually termed as “hit-to-kill”.

A kinetic kill missile is not equipped with an explosive warhead. Simply put, what India did was to launch the missile, hit the target satellite and destroy it with energy purely generated by the high speed of the missile interceptor. This technology is only one of many with ASAT capabilities, and is the one used by China in its 2007 ASAT test.

POWER AND STRENGTH

Since the first satellite was launched in 1957 (the Soviet Union’s Sputnik), space has become – and will continue to be – a frontier where big powers enhance their presence by launching and operating their own satellites.

There are currently 1,957 satellites orbiting Earth. They provide crucial economic, civil and scientific benefits to the world, from generating income to a wide range of services such as navigation, communication, weather forecasts and disaster relief.

The tricky thing about satellites is that they can also be used for military and national security purposes, while still serving the civil end: one good example is GPS.

So it’s not surprising big powers are keen to develop their ASAT capabilities. The name of India’s test, Shakti, means “power, strength, capability” in Hindi.

DANGER OF SPACE DEBRIS

A direct consequence of ASAT is that it creates space debris when the original satellite breaks apart. Space debris consists of pieces of non-functional spacecraft, and can vary in size from tiny paint flecks to an entire “dead” satellite. Space debris orbits from hundreds to thousands of kilometres above Earth.

The presence of space debris increases the likelihood of operational satellites being damaged.

Although India downplayed the potential for danger by arguing that its test was conducted in the lower atmosphere, this perhaps did not take into account the creation of pieces smaller than

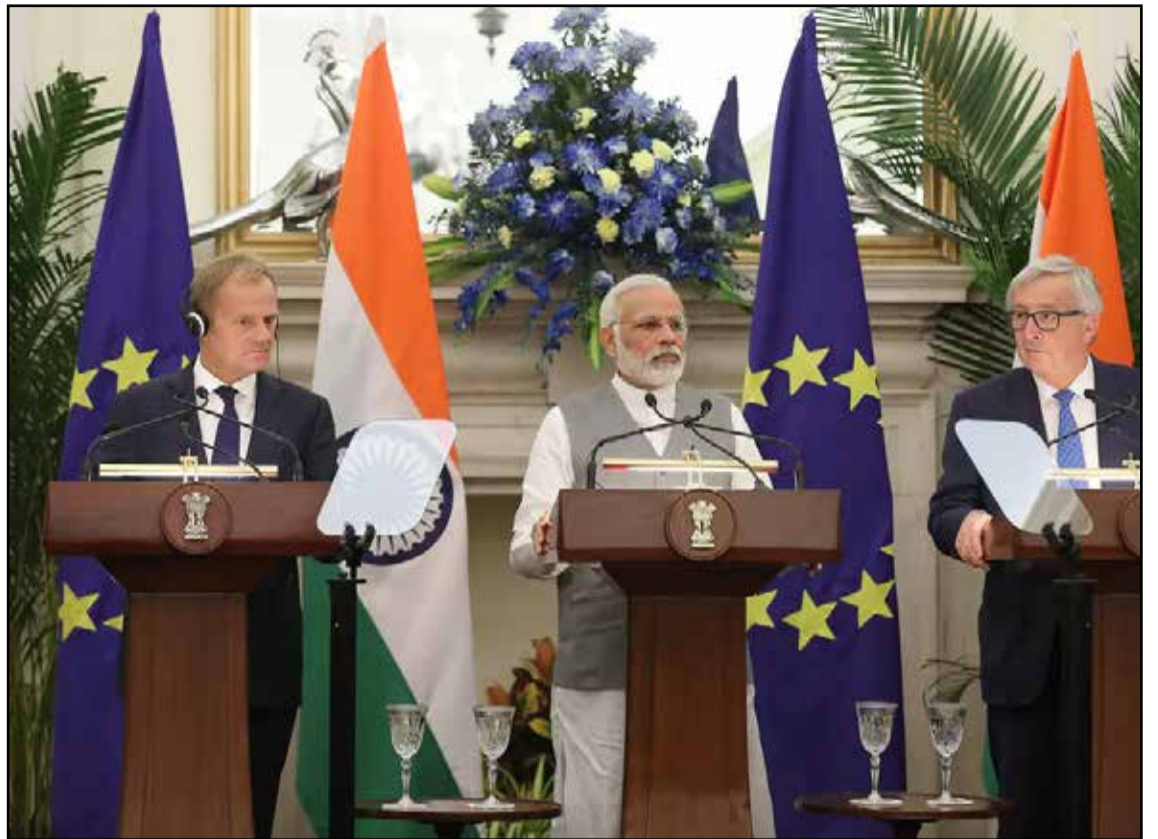
5-10 cm in diameter.

In addition, given the potential self-sustaining nature of space debris, it’s possible the amount of space debris caused by India’s ASAT will actually increase due to the collision.

Aside from the quantity, the speed of space debris is another worrying factor. Space junk can

uments, they leave many of today’s issues unregulated. For example, in terms of military space activities, the Outer Space Treaty only prohibits the deployment of weapons of mass destruction in space, not conventional weapons (including ballistic missiles, like the one used by India in Mission Shakti).

In addition, the treaty endorses that outer



travel at up to 10km per second in lower Earth orbit (where India intercepted its satellite), so even very small particles pose a realistic threat to space missions such as human spaceflight and robotic refuelling missions.

REGULATORY CATCH-UP

As we’re seeing clearly now in social media, when technology moves fast the law can struggle to keep up, and this leads to regulatory absence. This is also true of international space law.

Five fundamental global space treaties were created 35-52 years ago:

- Outer Space Treaty (1967) – governs the activities of the states in exploration and use of outer space
- Rescue Agreement (1968) – relates to the rescue and return of astronauts, and return of launched objects
- Liability Convention (1972) – governs damage caused by space objects
- Registration Convention (1967) – relates to registration of objects in space
- Moon Agreement (1984) – governs the activities of states on the Moon and other celestial bodies.

These were written when there were only a handful of spacefaring nations, and space technologies were not as sophisticated as they are now.

Although these treaties are binding legal doc-

space shall be used exclusively for peaceful purposes. However, the issue is how to interpret the term “peaceful purposes”. India claimed, after its ASAT test: “we have always maintained that space must be used only for peaceful purposes.”

When terms such as “peaceful” seem to be open to interpretation, it’s time to update laws and regulations that govern how we use space.

NEW APPROACHES, SOFT LAWS

Several international efforts aim to address the issues posed by new scenarios in space, including the development of military space technologies.

For example, McGill University in Canada has led the MILAMOS project, with the hope of clarifying the fundamental rules applicable to the military use of outer space.

A similar initiative, the Woomera Manual, has been undertaken by Adelaide Law School in Australia.

Though commendable, both projects will lead to publications of “soft laws”, which will have no legally binding force on governments.

The UN needs to work much harder to attend to space security issues – the Disarmament Commission and Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space can be encouraged to collaborate on the issues regarding space weapons.

It is in everyone’s best interests to keep space safe and peaceful.

[the writer is Lecturer, University of Newcastle]

Mali’s volatile mix of communal rivalries and a weak state is fuelling jihadism

STIG JARLE HANSEN
theconversation.com

Mali’s Mopti region has seen a drastic rise of violence since 2015. Last year at least 202 civilians were killed in 42 incidents. In March this year more than 150 were killed in attacks against two villages in this central Malian region.

The attack on the Mopti region was launched by alleged Dogon hunters. The Dogon are one of the largest ethnic groups in the region.

Most of those killed in Mopti were from the Fulani ethnic group. Also among the targets were staff involved in demobilisation, disarmament and reintegration of local “self-defence groups” stationed in one of the villages.

The killings highlight the age-old conflict between the nomadic and predominantly Muslim Fulani and the generally polytheistic and sedentary Dogon and Bambara ethnic groups, in this region. The conflict has an element of the classical pastoral-sedentary conflict and an element of religious friction built into it.

CONTRIBUTORY FACTORS

Yet, there are other factors contributing to what is an increasing tension between the ethnic groups. Pastoral-sedentary conflicts are not new. A weak Malian state prompted local ethnic communities to organise armed self-defence groups that also at times acted offensively. In a situation of mutual distrust, fear could easily lead to violence and aggressive action.

Other factors have fuelled tension and violence. Human geographer Tor Arve Benjaminsen and others suggest that agricultural expansion has limited pastoralist mobility and access to some of the Fulani’s traditional pastures. For example, rice cultivation has encroached on traditional Burgu pastures (semi-aquatic tropical grass used for food). Additionally, new dams on the Niger River have changed the flood pattern leading to the decline of the Burgu pastures.

Land disputes within communities are also fuelling conflict. This can be seen in the light of the weakening of traditional mediation structures that is less and less successful in ending such conflicts. And the influx of small arms from the 1990s and onwards has made land conflicts more deadly, leading to a cycle of retribution between ethnic groups.

To make matters worse, the central government is either unwilling or unable to punish communal violence. The central Malian government previously used local militias as agents when unable or unwilling to provide local security. This has contributed to local insecurity and led to distrust between locals and the government. In this setting local militias are easily tempted to bring in new allies – including jihadists.

Government delegation of power to local militias, combined with communities in need of allies in local conflicts and the absence of local security, present opportunities for jihadists to enter a new area and gain success,

finances and recruits.

The setting also creates difficulties for international actors trying to stem their influence. The West, for instance, almost never engages in local reconciliation and rural security. It focuses mostly on the destruction of jihadist affiliated militias.

As I argue in my new book, dynamics like these are similar to those in other areas in Africa that have provided fertile breeding grounds for jihadists in the past.

THE FULANI AND JIHADISTS

The Fulani started joining the jihadists when they gained control of the north of Mali in 2012 and 2013. For example, nomadic Fulani from the Douentza region joined Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa training camps in Gao. Others joined Ansar Dine. But many returned to Mopti from Northern Mali when the jihadists lost territorial control.

Today, the Dogon and Bambara routinely accuse the Fulani of allying with the Makina Liberation Front, also known as the Katiba Macina, which forms part of the wider al Qaeda affiliated Jama’at Nusrat al-Islam wa-l-Muslimin.

On the other hand, Fulanis claim they are stereotyped by their enemies as jihadists. But it’s important to note that the Macina Liberation Front, led by the charismatic Amadu Koufa, routinely uses pro-Fulani rhetoric. Koufa also refers to a Fulani golden age, and a reestablishment of the historic Macina caliphate. He also recently reemerged in a jihadist

video mocking France and Mali for claiming he was dead.

Further north, outside Mopti in the Menaka region, the Islamic State in greater Sahara has also injected itself in local conflicts supporting Fulani sub-tribes. Islamic State forces in Menaka, engage in cattle rustling and cattle “protection” for locals. Further south this element is also there in Ibrahim Dicko, the leader of the Burkina Faso-based Ansarul Islam. He similarly plays on the Fulani’s grievances against the central government.

This picture is further complicated by conflicts among the Fulani and by the Islamic State at times choosing allies who are rivals of the Fulani.

DOWNWARD SPIRAL

For the locals in Mopti, the jihadists are very real. Not all of them are from Macina and some sign their attacks in the name of other jihadist partners. Many attacks have no groups taking responsibility for them.

The labels are fluid and the borders between jihadism and self-defence are blurred. Ethnic groups often provide recruits to many different armed groups. These groups actively undermine the state’s already weak justice system, and the increased insecurity hinders both business, general travel and farming.

This contributes to the downward spiral by increasing the impact of the root causes of Mopti’s problems.

[the writer Associate Professor of International Relations, Norwegian University of Life Sciences]

Campaigning picks up pace in Arunachal Pradesh

ITANAGAR, APR 1 (PTI): With electioneering gaining momentum for the simultaneous Lok Sabha and assembly polls in Arunachal Pradesh, political parties are banking on star campaigners, social media platforms and door-to-door visits to woo voters in the north-eastern state.

The ruling BJP as well as the opposition Congress have invited star campaigners to hold public meetings in the state.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to speak at a rally at Pasighat in East Siang district on April 3 next.

Modi had addressed a public meeting at Aalo in West Siang district on March 30.

"Party president Amit Shah will hold another public meeting at Namsai on April 5 and Union Minister Rajnath Singh is likely to hold an election rally in the state later this week," BJP state unit executive vice president Tame Phassang said.

"We are conducting door-to-door campaigns in all the villages under the supervision of our district presidents and election campaign offic-



es have been opened in the villages," Phassang, also the chairman of BJP's campaign committee, said.

Congress president Rahul Gandhi and party general secretary Priyanka Gandhi are likely to address election rallies in the state but the dates have not yet been finalized, Arunachal Pradesh Congress Committee (APCC) general secretary Chera Taya said.

"We are canvassing for our candidates in all the constituencies and also banking on social media to drum up support for our nominees," Taya said. The National Peoples Party (NPP),

contesting for the first time in the states electoral scene, is counting on its president Conrad Sangma, who is the chief minister of Meghalaya, as its star campaigner.

The NPP is a member of the BJP-floated North East Democratic Alliance.

The Janata Dal United and the Janata Dal Secular, also making their debut in the state's assembly polls, are yet to finalize the names of their star campaigners.

Campaigning has also come of age in the state with the use of social media like Facebook and Whatsapp.

With television and radio still being used

withdrawn the move, the Congress has raked up the issue of police firing on the protestors.

The grant of permanent resident certificates (PRC) to the non-Arunachal Pradesh Scheduled Tribe (APST) communities of Namsai and Chanaglang districts, had also caused loss of public and private property. Claiming that the BJP would bring back the Citizenship Amendment Bill if it is elected, Congress president Rahul Gandhi had told an election rally on March 19 that his party would scrap the Bill, if voted to power.

The BJP is also banking on development, particularly, the implementation of the welfare programmes of the NDA government at the Centre. Arunachal Pradesh has a BJP-led government.

Elections to Arunachal Pradesh's 57 assembly seats and two parliamentary constituencies will be held simultaneously on April 11. Three BJP candidates were elected unopposed to the 60-member House, after the final date of withdrawal of candidature on March 28.

Kuki militants of Manipur to cast vote through postal ballots

IMPHAL, APR 1 (PTI): The Election Commission Monday notified that cadres of Kuki militant groups who signed Suspension of Operations (SoO) agreement with both the Centre and the Manipur government will cast their votes in postal ballots.

To exercise their franchise, the cadres also must reside in their designated camps and their names feature in the voters' list, the office of the state chief electoral officer (CEO) said in

a statement here. They would have to collect the postal ballots from assistant nodal officers or nodal officers. The Suspension of Operation (SoO) agreement - a pact to ensure peace in the Kuki dominated areas in Manipur - was first signed by the state and the Centre with two militant groups of the community in 2008. Since then, agreement is being renewed periodically.

Kuki militants are members of two major conglomerates - the Kuki

National Organisation (KNO) and the United People's Front (UPF) who were demanding a separate Kuki state out of Manipur.

Many cadres of the KNO and the UPF are currently putting up at designated camps set up by the government in different Kuki-dominated areas in the state.

Polling for two Lok Sabha seats of the state - Outer Manipur and Inner Manipur - will be held on April 11 and 18 respectively.

Bangladeshi student jailed for passing sensitive information to BSF: Report

DHAKA, APR 1 (PTI): A 23-year-old Bangladeshi student has been sentenced to two years in prison for taking photos of Border Guard Bangladesh structures and allegedly sending them to India's Border Security Force, a media report said.

The convict, identified as Mithoon Mia from Godagarhi Upazila was arrested at Saheb-nagar border and sentenced on Saturday, bd-news reported.

Mithoon, a student of Godagarhi Degree College, was carrying a mobile phone with an active SIM card of an Indian company during the arrest, Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) Battalion-1 Commander Mohammad Tajul Islam said.

"Some photos were found on his mobile. He had sent those to India via Imo (text, chat and video app)," Tajul said.

Mithoon took the photos of Saheb-nagar border outpost and other

information in his mobile phone on March 3, the BGB official said, citing information given by the convict during interrogation. The convict sent the photos to his cousin Mohidul Islam in India on March 24, Tajul said.

Mohidul had BSF links, the BGB official claimed but did not give details.

Contact numbers of BSF officials were found on Mithoon's mobile phone, according to BGB battalion's deputy commander Ashik Bulbul.

Rajshahi Executive Magistrate Arafat Aman Aziz conducted a mobile court and sentenced Mithoon, Ashik said and added that the convict was sent to Rajshahi Central Jail.

Asked why BGB opted for a mobile court instead of prosecuting Mithoon on charges of spying, the BGB official said: "This process (prosecution on charges of spying) has many levels. So he was given to a mobile court."

Kolkata's century-old club gutted in early morning fire

KOLKATA, APR 1 (PTI): A century-old athletic club in central Kolkata's maidan area was reduced to ashes after a fire broke out on Monday morning, police said. The cause of the blaze, which erupted at Wari Athletic Club (Wari AC) around 5.40 am, is yet to be ascertained, a senior officer of Kolkata Police said, adding, four fire tenders were pressed into service.

The fire was brought under control by 6.10 am, he said. "It can be a result of a short circuit. We are trying to find out the actual reason," the officer said. An attendant of the club suffered minor injuries due to the blaze and has been taken to hospital,

police said. "The fire damaged the entire club tent. The trophies, kits of players, documents, television sets... everything was gutted," Wari Athletic Club's general secretary Prabir Chakraborty told PTI.

The over 100-year-old club is considered to be the city's version of Dhaka's oldest club -- Wari Club -- in Bangladesh.

The Wari Athletic Club in Kolkata was formed after Partition by five members of the Dhaka club who settled here. Wari AC has produced iconic players like Parimal Dey, Robin Mukherjee, Arun Sinha and Achyut Banerjee.

IIT KGP to develop training module for Gopichand Academy



KOLKATA, APR 1 (PTI): Country's premier technology institute, IIT Kharagpur has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Pullela Gopichand Badminton Academy to develop research and training module for the trainees of the Hyderabad-based sports facility.

"The thrust areas of the collaboration include developing training programs by IIT Kharagpur focusing on happiness and well being for enhancing the quality of performance and resilience," a statement from IIT-KGP said.

A delegation from IIT Kharagpur led by Director Prof P P Chakrabarti

met Gopichand in New Delhi on March 30 in this regard. "Players and coaches from PGBA will benefit from these programs. Further the coaches will also be trained on how to use that knowledge while training players."

Under the collaboration, IIT-KGP will also set up a sports academy in collaboration with Gopichand.

"I am also very happy to know that a sports academy is coming up at IIT Kharagpur and looking forward to contributing to its development," Gopichand said in the statement. Prof Chakrabarti added: "The academy would promote

collaborative research related to happiness in sports in general and badminton particular and science and technology in sports training.

"The scope would also include joint monitoring and use of materials used in general and badminton in particular by IIT Kharagpur and Pullela Gopichand Badminton Academy."

The collaboration is spearheaded by S S Rekhi, US-based entrepreneur and alumnus of IIT Kharagpur, who funded the Rekhi Centre for Science of Happiness at IIT Kharagpur and his company R Systems is the sponsor of Gopichand Badminton Academy.

Mizoram civil society body call for poll boycott

AIZAWL, APR 1 (PTI): An umbrella organisation of major civil societies and student associations in Mizoram Monday decided to boycott the April 11 election to the lone Mizoram Lok Sabha seat and organise a state-wide indefinite bandh from April 8, sources in it said Monday.

The NGO Coordination Committee said that a decision was taken earlier to boycott the Parliamentary polls if special polling booths are established at Mizoram-Tripura border Kanmun village.

"The NGOCC opposed the establishment of special polling stations at Kanmun by the election department and the state government officials," a statement issued by the committee and signed by NGOCC Secretary Lalmachhuana said.

The EC is setting

up 15 exclusive polling booths in the village for Bru refugees from Mizoram who are housed in six camps in neighbouring Tripura. The step had been taken in the November 2018 Mizoram assembly polls too.

Appeals would again be made to the authorities to ensure that Bru voters housed in the relief camps in North Tripura district should exercise franchise in their respective villages where they were enrolled as voters and indefinite bandh be organised from April eight to pressurise the authorities, the statement said.

The NGOCC appealed to all the commercial and private vehicle owners requisitioned for transportation of central armed police force (CAPC) and state police personnel as also for use

by polling officials not to allow their vehicles for the election purposes.

The Bru community in the Tripura relief camps have refused to return to Mizoram for years despite several repatriation efforts.

In 2014 the NGOCC had boycotted the Lok Sabha polls on the same issue and the EC had then succumbed to the demands of the civil societies saying that the Bru voters would cast their votes only inside Mizoram and not in their relief camps.

The agitation was then called off.

The 15 polling stations are being set up at Kanmun village so that 11,941 Bru voters in the six relief camps can exercise their franchise, EC sources said.

Bru leaders have sought to casting their votes in the relief camps.

NPP will continue to oppose Citizenship Amendment Bill: Conrad

TURA, APR 1 (PTI): National People's Party supremo and Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma Monday said the party will continue to oppose the Citizenship Amendment Bill (CAB).

"Meghalaya was the first state in India to oppose the Bill and raise its objection. We took the initiative to unite different political parties of Northeast and made our voice heard in Delhi and ensured that the CAB was not introduced in the Rajya Sabha," he said while campaigning for the NPP candidate in the Lok Sabha polls in the state.

He claimed that the NPP is the only party that can unite the voice of the region and made it heard in Delhi.

Conrad asked the people to vote for the NPP as "NPP is the party of the Northeast."

The NPP chief on Monday flew to three different locations in North Garo Hills and East Garo Hills (Rongrong Abema, Mangsang and Chibonga respectively) to campaign for his sister Agatha, the NPP candidate



for the Tura Lok Sabha seat. Former Meghalaya chief minister Mukul Sangma is the Congress candidate for the Tura Lok Sabha seat while the BJP has fielded Rikman G Momin.

He alleged that the Congress party is propagating a wrong notion that NPP will partner with BJP and will ensure that the CAB is passed in the Lok Sabha.

The NPP chief said, "We will remain true to our commitment promised to the people of Northeast and will never allow any bill that would hamper the interest of our people."

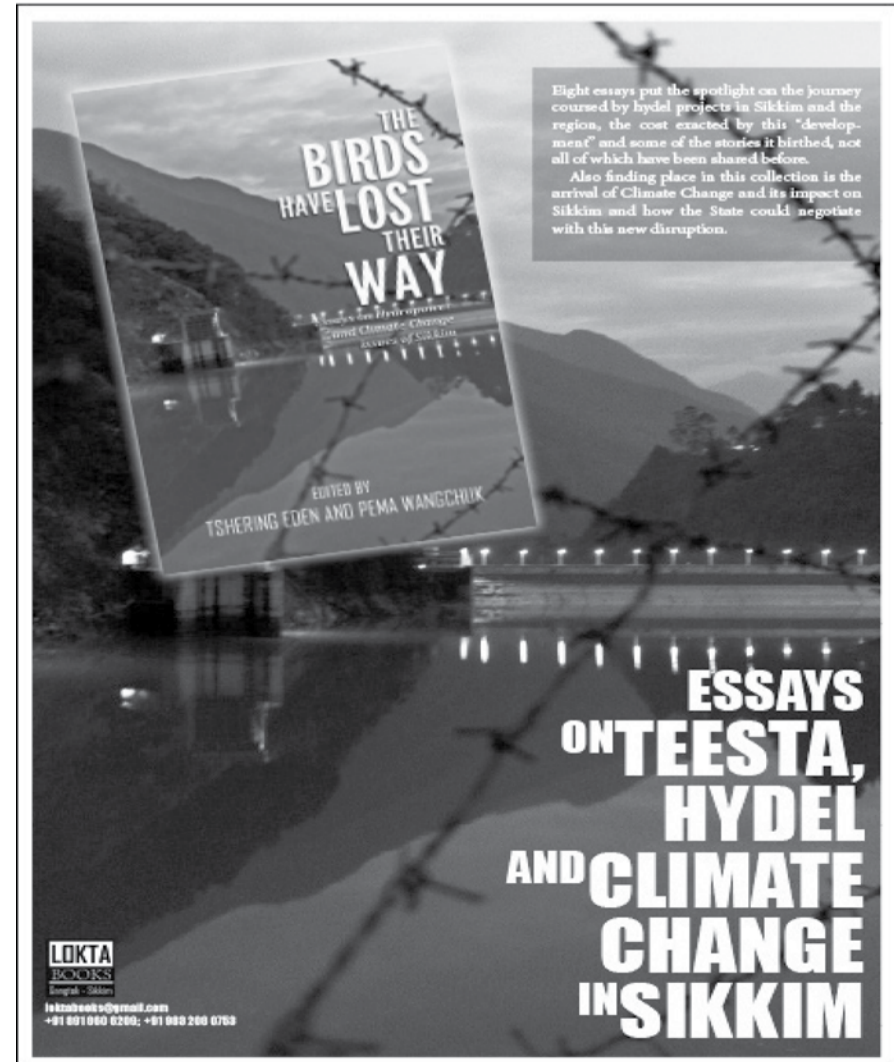
Conrad claimed that the NPP has "fulfilled" its promise made in the 2018 election with education as its top priority.

"We had promised education policy and we

brought out the policy well ahead of completion of one year. For over four decades the education department had to work without any policy or direction, we have scripted a direction to move forward to ensure better educational facilities in Meghalaya," he said.

The NPP chief said that based on the education policy, the Meghalaya government approached the Union Ministry of Tribal Affairs and was accorded 11 Eklaveya Residential Model School (ERMS), out of 50 Schools across India.

He said that if Agatha is elected as MP, she will add to the initiative started by the Meghalaya Democratic Alliance (MDA) government and will voice our concerns in the Parliament.



Benzema saves Real Madrid blushes with late Huesca winner

MADRID, APR 1 (AFP): Karim Benzema stopped Real Madrid's underwhelming La Liga season going from bad to worse on Sunday after firing a last-minute winner to hand the European champions a barely-deserved 3-2 winner over bottom club Huesca.

Humbled by Ajax in the Champions League and dumped out of the Copa Del Rey by deadly rivals Barca, third-placed Real showed little signs of improvement in Zinedine Zidane's second game in charge but Benzema, subject to rumours he may leave Madrid in the summer for Manchester United, struck with a fine curling finish the to snatch the three points at a sparsely populated Santiago Bernabeu.

"We are happy with him and I am going to count on him, now there are nine games left and then we will see what happens. He is a Real Madrid player and I don't think this will change," Zidane said.

"You have to accept it. If the people want to come to the Bernabeu to see us so much the better, but I understand that since we are not going to win anything fewer people come."

Real move to within two points of second-placed Atletico Madrid, who hammered Champions League hopefuls Alaves 4-0 on Saturday in a match that saw Diego Costa score for the first



time since November.

However, Real still lag 12 points behind leaders Barcelona, who are 10 clear of Atletico and heavy favourites to retain their La Liga after Lionel Messi fired them to their sixth league win on the bounce, 2-0 at home to local rivals Espanyol on Saturday, with a brace that took the Argentine to 31 league goals this season.

Zidane's son Luca was given

his second ever start between the sticks for Real but got off to the worst possible start, picking the ball out of his own net within three minutes after Cucho Hernandez lashed home Ezequiel Avila low cross.

Isco levelled the scores in the 25th minute when he tapped home a Brahim Diaz cross after Benzema's low shot was well saved, but it was the away side -- playing

their first ever La Liga game at the Madrid's Santiago Bernabeu stadium -- who went closer going into the break ahead.

Zidane junior had to be alert to stop Damian Musto from glancing home a header nine minutes before the break, while Avila punched the ground in frustration in first half stoppage time after flashing a power shot over from the edge of the box.

- Heartbroken Huesca -

Real continued to disappoint in the second half but took the lead just after the hour mark thanks to Dani Ceballos, who bundled home the second after Gareth Bale's beautiful cross was headed back across goal by Benzema.

Bale then missed a glorious opportunity to put the game beyond Huesca when he somehow put Alvaro Odriozola's low cross over the

bar from just yards out.

Huesca pounced on that awful miss to draw level when Xabier Etxeita powered home Moi Gomez's cross from a short corner.

However, Benzema was on hand to break Huesca hearts with his 14th league goal of the season, which gives Zidane two wins from his first two matches back in charge.

Earlier Valencia maintained their hopes of a place in next season's Champions League after Daniel Parejo's penalty on the stroke of half-time gave them a vital 1-0 victory at Sevilla.

Parejo's spot-kick, which came after Ever Banega brought down Jose Gaya, extended Valencia's unbeaten run to nine matches and moves them up to sixth, level on 43 points with Sevilla and just three back from the final Champions League spot.

That place is occupied by Getafe, who fell 2-0 at home to mid-table Leganes on Saturday and have to play the league's top three and Sevilla in their final nine games.

Despite a slightly simpler league fixture list Marcelino's Valencia however have an all-Spanish Europa League quarter-final tie with Villarreal to contend with, as well as the Copa Del Rey final against Barcelona between now and the end of the season.

India retain Test Championship for third year in a row

DUBAI, APRIL 1 (PTI): India retained the ICC Test Championship Mace and won the purse of USD one million for a third year running after a memorable season that saw them winning their maiden series in Australia.

India finished at the top of the ICC Test team rankings on the cut-off date of April 1 while New Zealand have ensured second place, the world body said in a statement on Monday. "Retaining the ICC Test Championship Mace once again is something we are all really proud of. Our team has been doing well across formats but it gives us extra pleasure to come out on top of the Test rankings," India captain Virat Kohli said reiterating his love for Test cricket.

"We all know of the importance of Test cricket and of how only the best can prosper in the format," he added.

A top place finish was never in doubt for India, while New Zealand's consistent performances over the past year saw them climb from third position, needing them to only avoid losing the home series against Bangladesh last month to finish at the same position.

The Kane Williamson-led side, who also had the satisfaction of seeing their captain get the ICC Spirit of Cricket award for 2018, earned USD 500,000 after finishing with 108 points, eight behind India. South Africa, who had finished second the previous two times, will now get a prize money of USD 200,000 for finishing third with 105 points while Australia who edged out Engalnd on decimal points at 104 points bag USD 100,000.

"Our team has a lot of depth and I am sure this will stand us in good stead once the ICC World Test Championship commences later this year. That is again something we are really looking forward to as it adds more context to Test match cricket," Kohli said.

Finch sounds World Cup warning as Australia confidence rockets

DUBAI, APR 1 (AFP): Captain Aaron Finch warned Australia will embark on their World Cup defence next month with confidence riding high after completing an ODI sweep against Pakistan on Sunday hot on the heels of a series victory in India.

Written off after a torrid 15 months which saw Australia win just three of 18 one-day internationals, Finch led the 2015 World Cup winners from 2-0 down last month to beat Virat Kohli's formidable side 3-2, Australia's first series win in India since 2009.

They then romped to a 5-0 rout of a depleted Pakistan who rested six top players for the series played in the United Arab Emirates, including regular captain Sarfraz Ahmed, ahead of the World Cup which begins on May 30.

"We'll go to the World Cup with a lot of confidence now, even after a lot of people wrote us off," said Finch who was declared man of the series for his 451 runs including two hundreds and two fifties.

"Potentially we had a real focus coming here and that was our last hit-out before the World



Cup so we wanted to go into that tournament with a lot of momentum," he said after inflicting a fourth whitewash on Pakistan in a bilateral series. Winners of 2015 World Cup at home, Australia had endured a miserable time in limited-overs cricket since last year's ball-tampering controversy in South Africa.

The scandal resulted in former captain and vice-captain Steve Smith and David Warner being banned for a year, suspensions that expired only last week, and Australia were then routed 5-0 in

England and dropped home series 2-1 to both South Africa and India.

- TOUGH SELECTION CALLS -

Finch admitted the potential return of Warner, who has been in top form in the Indian Premier League, and Smith would mean some difficult choices when the World Cup squad is named later this month. "There will be some unlucky guys," said Finch of squad that could also see the return of fast bowlers Mitchell Starc, Jos Hazlewood and Pat Cummins after injury.

"Everyone who has an

opportunity has played some great cricket. At the end of the day there will be some tough calls, but its exciting for Australia at the same time because six month back a lot of people were slamming us.

"A lot of people were writing us off, not in just the one-day cricket but in all forms of the game. It's been really positive last couple of months and we have been building nicely."

Pakistan's head coach Mickey Arthur, who has also coached South Africa and Australia, said the defending champions were in good shape.

"All the final jigsaw

pieces are coming together nicely. Australia look a very, very good side. They will be a threat at the World Cup," said Arthur.

Arthur defended leaving out key players Babar Azam, Fakhar Zaman, Hasan Ali, Shaheen Shah Afridi and Sarfraz, while Mohammad Hafeez was missing injured. "All we can do is prepare as best we can," he said.

"We got on the road in September last year for the Asia Cup and then went to South Africa and then had the Pakistan Super League so we had to rest them.

Dhoni unreal as captain, says Tahir

CHENNAI, APR 1 (PTI): Veteran spinner Imran Tahir described Chennai Super Kings skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni as "unreal," saying even without talking much he has the capability to lift the team up.

Chennai Super Kings secured a thrilling eight-run win over Rajasthan Royals in their IPL match here on Sunday night as Dhoni hit a match-winning unbeaten knock of 75 off 46 balls to guide his team to a respectable total of 175 under challenging conditions.

"The way he carries himself is just unreal. He won't say much but he knows how to lift the team up. He is a great leader and a great human being," Tahir said at the post-match press conference.

The South African also credited Dhoni for living up to his reputation of being one the best finishers in the world and a good tactician.

"You know Dhoni plays really well in these situations because like (Dwayne) Bravo he's done this so many times, and that's why he's called Mr Cool. He works hard on his game plan. Even in practice sessions, he helps his team-mates. And we respect that. "I

think as a bowling group we did really well. Even while batting, Mahi bhai played unbelievably well and set the tone for us. I'm just really happy with whatever we did as a team," he told reporters after the match.

In the opening encounter, the pitch at the MA Chidambaram stadium was criticised for being a rank turner. Tahir lamented that the conditions were not favourable for the bowlers on Sunday with dew being a factor. "We have to prepare ourselves, we were not expecting that much dew. We have to practice with the wet ball going forward in the games."

Tahir, who is now the purple cap holder with six wickets in three matches, said he had to dig deep into his reservoir of experience to counter the dew.

"I am feeling very good, very proud. It was there (dew); I tried to use my experience but the ball was really wet. It's always nerves. The first match I dropped a catch, so didn't want to repeat the mistake. Every catch is a difficult one.

"It's the passion and respect I have for the game. I don't take anything for granted. Whenever I am playing, I try to contribute to my team," he added.

China mulls to buy Russia's Su-57 stealth fighter jet

K J M VARMA

BEIJING, APR 1 (PTI): China is weighing options to buy Russia's new Sukhoi Su-57 stealth fighter jet as Moscow has identified China and India as potential customers to acquire its advanced warplane, according to a media report. Described by Russian President Vladimir Putin as "the world's best military plane", the Su-57 is a fifth-generation multi-role fighter jet capable of both aerial combat and hitting ground and naval targets. Viktor Klado, director of international cooperation and regional policy at Russia's Rostec defence industrial holding company at a briefing at the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition in Malaysia identified India and China as potential buyers, state-run Global Times reported on Monday.

The Chinese air force, which currently has a range of home grown new aircraft including the stealth fighter J-20, besides Russia's Su 35s, is keeping a close eye on India's acquisition of France's Rafale plane adding a new strategic dimension to its air assets. While

China has been developing its own new generation military aircraft, it is still heavily reliant on Russian engines for the planes as it is yet to produce a reliant engine of its own. Both China and Pakistan rely on Russian engines for their jointly produced JF-17 Thunder.

Chinese defence analyst Wang Ya'nan, the chief editor of Aerospace Knowledge, said the Russia's offer to sell Su-57 is more attractive to India as China has its stealth fighter.

Unlike China, India does not have a fifth-generation fighter, so the Su-57 is an attractive warplane to India, he told Global Times. Wang said although he is convinced of the Su-57's capabilities, he is less keen to see China buy it because China has already developed its own fifth-generation fighter jet J-20.

Klado said Su-57E, an export version of the Su-57, is expected to receive export approval from Putin in a few weeks. Naming China as a potential customer, he said, "China has recently taken delivery of 24 Su-35 aircraft, and in the next two years will

make a decision to either procure additional Su-35s, build the Su-35 in China, or buy a fifth-generation fighter aircraft, which could be another opportunity for the Su-57E."

Xu Guangyu, a senior consultant at the China Arms Control and Disarmament Association, told the Global Times that it is possible that China could make the purchase, because China needs to study from other countries' strengths whenever possible.

"Klado's remarks are also an indication of cooperation in high-end military technology under the framework of the two countries' strategic cooperation," Xu said.

Wang Yongqing, chief designer of the Shenyang Aircraft Design Institute under the state-owned Aviation Industry Corporation of China, wrote in the February 2019 issue of Aerospace Knowledge magazine that the Su-57 is designed to have strong supersonic cruise capability and super-maneuvrability, and intentionally reduces stealth, a capability said to be crucial to a fifth-generation fighter, to a secondary

priority. While US warplanes stress stealth and beyond visual range attacks, the Su-57 can evade incoming long-range missiles through its super-maneuvrability and engage enemies at close range, a situation where stealth is not so important as super-maneuvrability, Wang said.

However, Chinese defence analyst Wang said China is perfecting its own fifth-generation technology as the J-20 is on the way to being mass produced. During this period, integrating another fighter jet into the fleet could bring challenges to the integration of the Chinese military's weapons and equipment systems and disrupt development and training plans, he said.

He noted that a technical study is possible, using the Su-57 in the Chinese military is unlikely. The Su-57 could also become a strong market competitor to the Chinese FC-31 stealth fighter jet, Weihutang, a column affiliated with China Central Television (CCTV), reported on Friday, noting that the FC-31 and the US' F-35 are the only two current fifth-generation fighter jets available on the international market.

27 killed, 400 injured as massive rainstorm hits Nepal



BY SHIRISH B PRADHAN KATHMANDU, APR 1 (PTI): At least 27 people were killed and 400 others injured as a massive rainstorm hit several places in Southern Nepal on Sunday, flipping vehicles and toppling trees and electricity poles.

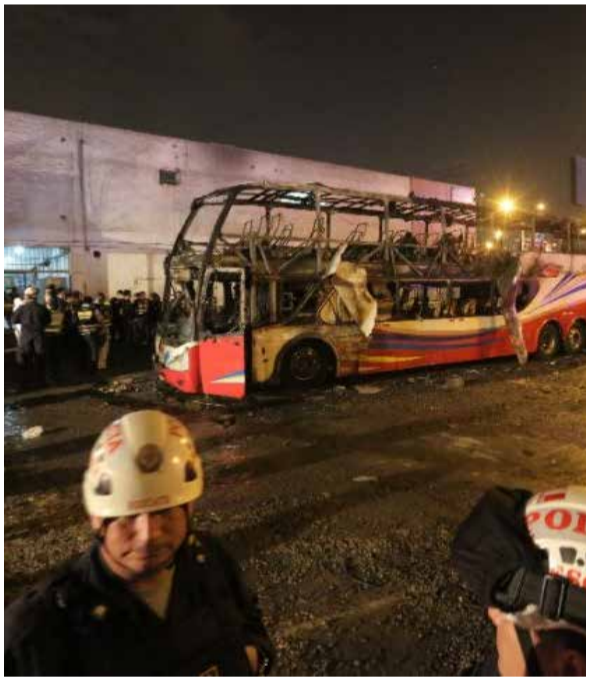
Sunday night. According to officials, 26 were killed in Bara, 128 kilometers south of Kathmandu, while one person died in neighbouring Parsa. High winds flipped cars and blew one passenger bus off a highway, causing fatalities. Police said other deaths were caused by collapsing walls and falling bricks in

homes and toppled trees and electricity poles. Around 400 people have been injured. According to the National Emergency Operation Centre, the injured are undergoing treatment at various health services. Security personnel have been deployed to the affected areas for rescue and relief operations.

Villagers are facing food scarcity following the incident. According to District Police Office, Parsa, the number of casualties could see a rise as rescue efforts have gained pace. Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli has expressed sadness over the loss of lives and extended heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families. The

prime minister also visited the storm-hit areas. An emergency meeting of the cabinet of Province No. 2, where the incident occurred, has been called to discuss the ways to tackle the situation. Prime Minister's Chief Advisor Bishnu Rimal said that army personnel have been mobilised.

At least 20 dead in Peru bus fire: emergency services



LIMA, APR 1 (AFP): At least 20 people were killed and about 10 injured Sunday night in a bus fire at an illegal transport terminal in the Peruvian capital, emergency services said. A number of the victims burned to death, trapped on the upper level of the interprovincial bus in Lima, firefighters said. Passersby described scenes of panic and cries of terror. Much of the vehicle was reduced to a skeleton, and the corpses of some victims could still be seen in the seats. Others asphyxiated on the stairway connecting the upper and lower levels. The tragedy reflected the chaos of Peru's public transport system, particularly in the capital of 10 million people where authorities are overwhelmed by transport problems. Initial reports said an electrical fault at the rear of the bus triggered the blaze just after 7:30 pm (0030 GMT). "The fire led to the deaths of at least 20 people," said Lewis Mejia, a fire department official. Authorities did not say how many people

were on board. One unidentified man, broken by grief, told local television that he had lost six family members including his wife, children and grandchildren. AFP photographed one woman weeping, her face buried in her hands, while paramedics checked her. Lima's Mayor Jorge Munoz visited the injured in hospital and announced an investigation to punish those responsible. "I am totally outraged," he said, recalling that insecurity and other problems had led to the closure of the Fiori terminal last year. The station is in Lima's populous northern San Martin de Porres district, from where the bus was to depart for the northern city of Chiclayo. Fiori was operating illegally after local authorities closed it in January 2018 for the unauthorized sale of fuel to public buses. The fire was one of the worst in Lima since December 2001, when a fireworks blast caused a market blaze that killed about 300 people.

New Zealand shooters back gun control after massacre

WELLINGTON, APR 1 (AFP): New Zealand will crack down on firearms ownership this week after the Christchurch mosques massacre that claimed 50 lives -- and the Kiwi gun lobby, for the most part, is okay with that. In stark contrast to the United States, where even the most minor curbs on gun ownership meet ferocious opposition led by the National Rifle Association, New Zealand gun owners agree action is needed. The March 15 rampage by a white supremacist gunman has been a shock to the collective system. "We want to support our government in any changes to prevent a terrorist attack from happening in New Zealand again," Nicole McKee, secretary of the Council of Licensed Firearm Owners said. Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern's government announced an immediate ban on military-style semi-automatic rifles (MSSAs) after the shooting and will put laws to parliament formalising its action on Tuesday. Finalising such legislation can often take months but Ardern says the matter is so urgent it will be done by April 11. Further curbs -- potentially including a gun register, tighter vetting and stricter gun storage rules -- are set to be passed by the end of the year. In a move that would be unthinkable in the United States, one of New Zealand's largest gun retailers, Hunting & Fishing, voluntarily stopped selling MSSAs and halted online firearms sales. "Such weapons of war have no place in our business -- or our country," chief executive Darren Jacobs said. New Zealand has its own National Rifle Association, but since the shooting, it has been at pains to point out it is a small sporting organisation, not a wealthy political lobby group like its American counterpart. "Our members shoot with single-shot bolt action rifles at paper targets," president Malcolm Dodson said. Another office holder has told media the New Zealand NRA is considering changing its name to avoid any association with the American body. On the surface, New Zealand and the United States share many historical similarities, but they have a fundamentally different attitude towards firearms. Both are former British colonies that fought bitter wars against indigenous populations and forged an individualistic frontier mentality. However, statistics highlight the difference. In 2016, New Zealand, with a population of about 4.7 million, had nine firearms-related homicides. In the United States, population approximate-

ly 327 million, there were 14,415, more than two hundred times the per capita rate as New Zealand. There are approximately 393 million guns in private hands in the United States, or 1.2 for every person, whereas New Zealand has about 1.5 million, or 0.3 per person. The New Zealand government believes there are 13,500 MSSAs in the country, while estimates put the number in the US at 15 million. Philip Alpert, a gun policy researcher at the University of Sydney, said the crucial difference between New Zealand and the United States was the US Constitution's Second Amendment, which guarantees the right to keep and bear arms. Alpert, himself a Kiwi, said countries such as New Zealand viewed gun ownership as a privilege, while in America it was seen as an inalienable right. "We have a population who, when they travelled to America would get off the plane and be absolutely horrified to see people walking around with a gun," he said, adding that safety was at the centre of New Zealand gun culture. Journalist Dawn Picken covered scores of shooting deaths in the United States and once had bullets lodged in her bedroom when a random gunman opened fire on her apartment building in Spokane, Washington state. She said she had found a different mindset since moving to New Zealand in 2011. "It was quite refreshing as an American to come here and hear Kiwis who own guns say 'I don't think they should be easy to get and it's not my right, they should check I'm not predisposed to violence or going to go off the rails,'" she said. However, like anywhere, New Zealand has a vocal fringe element. "Tyrant Prime Minister Kills Sports Shooting," screams the headline on one prominent pro-gun website. But former police minister Judith Collins had a blunt message for the US NRA and any other gun lobbyists who tried to inject themselves into New Zealand's gun control debate: "Bugger off." The difference in gun cultures has played out on social media since the Christchurch shooting. When a right-wing US website tweeted that "armed government thugs" were carrying out door-to-door gun confiscations in New Zealand, dozens of Kiwis left mocking replies. "I had a self-saucing dessert in my pantry," said one. "The cops came for it in the dead of night -- apparently we aren't allowed semi-automatic trifles."

British MPs seek new path for Brexit after deal rejected again



LONDON, APR 1 (AFP): British MPs will attempt to chart a new Brexit path on Monday after rejecting Prime Minister Theresa May's Brexit deal for a third time, leaving her strategy in tatters and the country in limbo. With less than two weeks to go until the day Britain risks crashing out of the European Union, MPs will hold a series of votes to try and find a majority-backed plan to end the current crisis. Britain voted by 52 percent to leave the EU in a 2016 referendum but the process has been mired in divisions between Brexit supporters over the terms of the divorce and what kind of future ties to seek. The government struck a deal with the EU in November but parliament has refused to ratify it, forcing the government to seek a delay to the originally planned departure date of March 29. The EU's offer of an extension until May 22 was conditional on MPs approving the deal last week. Despite May's promise to step down if they voted for the deal -- an attempt to get Brexit hardliners to vote for it -- they failed to do so. The government must now make a new request to the European Union at an extraordinary summit on April 10 or leave the bloc without a deal on April 12 with potentially chaotic economic consequences. A longer delay beyond May 22 would have the bizarre consequence of Britain having to hold European Parliament elections like other member states. Parliament seized the initiative for one day last week but failed to unite around a single option that could replace May's deal. But there appears to be momentum behind a plan to seek a deal that would see Britain stay in some kind of customs union with the European Union. While this may satisfy the pro-EU members of May's cabinet, it threatens mass rebellion among the rest of her ministers, posing a serious threat to the government's survival. Brexit-supporting minister Andrea Leadsom has organised a letter signed by 10 cabinet members demanding that there be no further extension beyond May 22, the Sunday Telegraph reported. The letter also spells out that May must stand by her party's manifesto pledge to leave the customs union in order to be able to strike post-Brexit trade deals with other countries. Agreeing to seek a customs union, if demanded by MPs, could therefore trigger a mass ministerial walkout. But so could ignoring MPs' instructions, with pro-EU ministers having already quit to vote against the government. All of which leaves a general election looking ever more likely, with May herself last week

warning after the third rejection of her deal that "I fear we are reaching the limits of this process in this House." But Conservative MPs across the board said they would block such a move, which requires two-thirds support in parliament. Polling on Sunday signalled why. The party has slipped 7 percent, according to the Sunday Mail, putting Jeremy Corbyn's Labour on course to be the largest party if an election were held. Conservative Party deputy chairman James Cleverly said on Sunday that the party was not preparing for a snap election. "I don't think an election would solve anything. Time is of the essence, we have got Brexit to deliver. We don't want to add any more unnecessary delay," he told Sophie Ridge on Sky News. The slip in support coincides with the party's failure to deliver Brexit on March 29, upsetting its supporters, who voted heavily in favour of leaving the EU. The poll also found narrow support for a second referendum. May is also facing mass calls from her own MPs to quit immediately as leader of the party -- and country -- rather than wait until the divorce phase of Brexit has been resolved, as promised. She has yet to give up on her deal despite it being rejected three times by parliament, and is reportedly considering whether to bring it back for a fourth vote, potentially this week.





THE COUPLE! Paris Jackson & Gabriel Glenn a.k.a. Soundflowers, perform at The Mint in Los Angeles.

Playback singers trio Kumar Sanu, Alka Yagnik and Udit Narayan enthrall audience in S Africa

BY FAKIR HASSEN

JOHANNESBURG, APR 1 (PTI): Renowned Indian playback singers Kumar Sanu, Alka Yagnik and Udit Narayan thrilled an audience with Bollywood numbers as they appeared together on stage for the first time ever at an event in South Africa.

Over 5,000 Bollywood music admirers attended the event in Pretoria in Gauteng province in South Africa Saturday night.

“We have been at events together in the past, but have never sung together at the same show, Yagnik said.

“It has been a special priv-

ilege to perform alongside two legends of the industry,” she added.

Narayan said he was amazed at the reaction of the audience to Bollywood music. The event was organised by local couple Osman and Shaista Osman.

“It has been very special that here, in the land of the great Nelson Mandela who preached unity of the world, and when we are celebrating the 150th birth anniversary year of Mahatma Gandhi, who did the same, we got together the three greatest singers together in South Africa,” Osman said.

Salman Khan to starts ‘Dabangg 3’



MUMBAI, APR 1 (PTI): Superstar Salman Khan and his brother, actor Arbaaz Khan, on Monday started the shooting for their film “Dabangg 3”. The duo, who landed in Indore on Sunday, took to Twitter to share the production details of the film, third in the “Dabangg” franchise.

The film, to be directed by choreographer-filmmaker Prabhudeva, will have Salman, 53, reprising his role of Chulbul Pandey, a Robin Hood-like cop.

“Arbaaz Khan and I have just landed in Indore where we were both born and we

are going to Mandleshwar and Maheshwar to shoot for ‘Dabangg 3’ where our grandfather was posted when he was in the police force,” Salman said in a video uploaded on the microblogging site.

The first part, which released in 2010, was directed by Abhinav Kashyap and actor-producer Arbaaz turned director with part two. “Dabangg 3” will also have Sonakshi Sinha reprising her role as Rajjo, Chulbul’s love interest. The film is scheduled to release in December this year.

Sonu Nigam lends voice to Narendra Modi’s Poem

MUMBAI, APR 1 (PTI): Singer Sonu Nigam has recorded a new song penned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the upcoming web series “Modi: Journey Of A Common Man”.

According to a press release, Nigam has sung the verse ‘Shyam Ke Rogan Rele’ composed by music composer duo Salim-Sulaiman, for the Eros Original series, directed by Umesh Shukla.

Shukla said in a statement that he has taken permission from the PMO to use 10 poems penned by Modi for the 10-part series. The poems will be used in the series for the end credit of each episode.

“We believed Sonu Nigam is the perfect fit to render the verse and he has taken Salim-Sulaiman’s composition a notch higher. We wrote to the PMO last June seeking permission to use his poems... and have got PM’s approval,” Shukla said.

The web series is scheduled to release in April.

Rapper Nipsey Hussle shot dead

LOS ANGELES, APR 1 (PTI): Rapper Nipsey Hussle was killed after being shot multiple times in broad daylight outside his store here on Sunday.

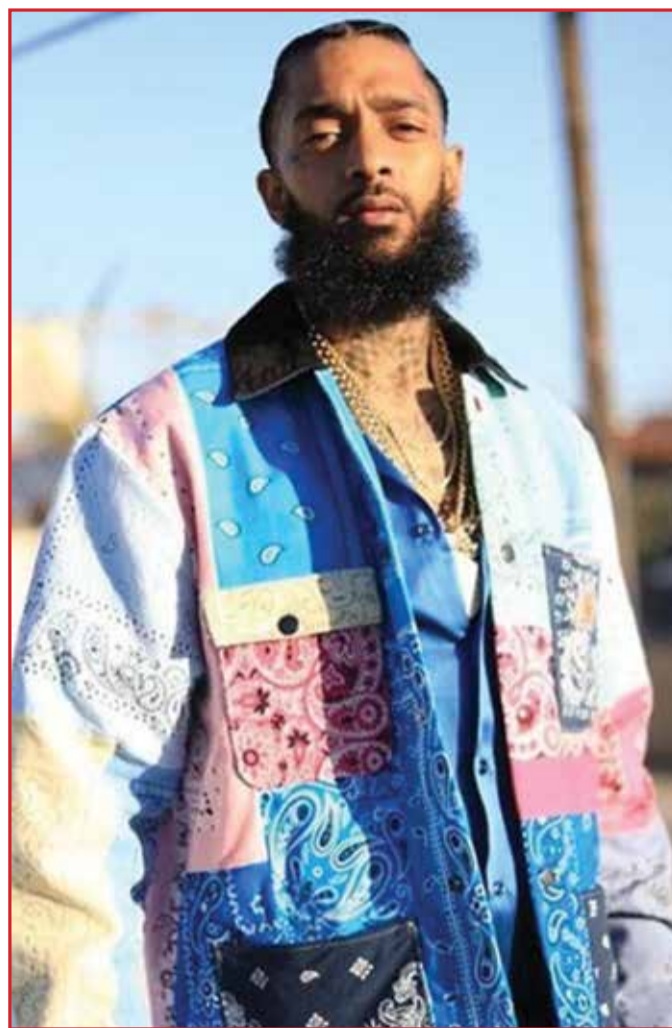
According to Los Angeles Times, the 33-year-old rapper was shot on the street where his store Marathon Clothing is located in the Hyde Park neighbourhood.

Hussle was rushed to a hospital after the incident, where he was pronounced dead. Two other person were also injured during the shooting but they are said to be in stable condition.

The LAPD said the investigation is being handled as a homicide and they are looking for one male black suspect.

“The suspect in the shooting is described as a male black & LAPD South Bureau Homicide is conducting an investigation to locate him and anyone else involved. You can expect the area of Slauson and Crenshaw to be impacted by streets closures and heavy traffic for several hours,” read a post from the official Twitter handle of the LAPD.

The rapper, whose real name was Ermias Davidson



Ashedom, hailed from Crenshaw, Los Angeles. He was nominated for a Grammy for best rap album earlier this year for his debut studio al-

bum, ‘Victory Lap’. Hussle is survived by his two children and his girlfriend, Lauren London, who just gave birth to their son Kross in 2016.

Akshay Kumar’s Daughter Nitara, 6, Is Going To Be As Hardcore Fit As Her Dad

Akshay Kumar and Twinkle Khanna’s daughter Nitara appears to be on her way to become the best combination of her parents. In a Monday motivation post shared by Akshay Kumar, we can see Nitara hanging on to the gym rings for a good half-a-minute.

Akshay Kumar wrote: “It’s always a good idea to start young, their bodies are agile and flexible...a little push now will go a long way later.” Nitara’s effort was noted by her mother Twinkle Khanna who added to Akshay’s post: “My resilient little girl - these are things I could never teach her so I am glad that there is someone who can.”

Nitara, who is all of 6, had the best coach for all her fitness inclinations - her father Akshay Kumar is arguably the top fitness enthusiast in Bollywood. From her mother Twinkle Khanna, who is a best-selling author and humour column writer, Nitara learns about books, yoga and of course, humour. Here are some posts depicting Twinkle and Akshay imparting the best of what they know to

“My resilient little girl,” Twinkle tweeted “It’s always a good idea to start young,” said Akshay Kumar

Nitara is the younger of Akshay and Twinkle’s two children

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someone who can.” Nitara, who is all of 6, had the best coach for all her fitness inclinations - her father Akshay Kumar is arguably the top fitness enthusiast in Bollywood. From her mother Twinkle Khanna, who is a best-selling author and humour column writer, Nitara learns about books, yoga and of course, humour. Here are some posts depicting Twinkle and Akshay imparting the best of what they know to Nitara:

Nitara is the younger if Akshay Kumar and Twinkle Khanna’s two children. Their son Aarav Bhatia is 16-years-old and he is currently completing school in Mumbai.

On the work front, Akshay Kumar is basking in the success of Kesari while he is currently filming Good News with Kareena Kapoor and co-starring Diljit Dosanjh and Kiara Advani. He has also signed up for Rohit Shetty’s Sooryavanshi, which releases next year.

Difficult to do sequels: Jacqueline Fernandez



MUMBAI, APR 1 (PTI): Jacqueline Fernandez, who will soon start working on Salman Khan-starrer “Kick 2”, says doing sequels is not easy as they come with huge responsibilities and expectations to live up to.

Jacqueline, who made her debut back in 2009 with “Aladin”, rose to fame with 2014 film “Kick” in which she played Salman’s love interest.

“Kick 2’ is being scripted. Moving into any sequel is not easy. I have done ‘Race’, ‘Housefull’ and have been part of ‘Judwaa 2’. It is diffi-

cult to do and there is pressure. “Sajid Nadiadwala wants to make ‘Kick 2’ more bigger and better. He is working hard on the writing,” Jacqueline told PTI.

The actor’s next release is “Drive” with Sushant Singh Rajput. The film produced by Karan Johar will arrive in theatres in June this year.

There are rumours that Jacqueline will be seen in the sequel of “Chashme Badmaash” and is also likely to star alongside Akshay Kumar in Rohit Shetty’s next, “Sooryavanshi”.

ARIES: Disrupt the status quo on Saturday, Aries, but aim for mild tremors instead of extreme shockwaves. With the Sun and moon trading friendly fire, it’s obvious to everyone that change is necessary. But leadership is sorely needed to reveal the next stage of the game. That’s where you come in: Make proactive suggestions or simply lead by example!

TAURUS: ETrue success doesn’t simply hinge on climbing tirelessly to the top. Saturday’s evocative angle between the Sun and moon points you down a more soulful path. Pause from “doing, doing, doing” and think big picture. Beyond putting food on the table, how is your work helping other people and the world at large?

GEMINI: Start your weekend on an inspired note! Pull a motivational or spiritual book off the shelf for some morning reading. Try a little “bibliomancy”: opening to a random page and letting the words be your divine directive for the day. Avoid complainers like the plague and seek “high-vibrational” groups of people to spend time with,

especially if you could use an infusion of positive energy.

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

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

VIRGO: Your routine-driven sign isn’t

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

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

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

SAGITTARIUS: Baby, it might (still) be

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

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

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

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

PISCES: Vote with your dollar on Saturday, Pisces. An auspicious Sun-moon angle sends a reminder of how loudly money talks. Perhaps you’ll choose socially responsible companies over those with murky or questionable practices. Supporting a small business owner can keep the unique character of your neighborhood thriving. This cosmic confab could inspire you to do business in different ways yourself or even earmark some of your earnings for a very specific cause you want to support.