



MEETING WITH CONTESTING CANDIDATES AND POLITICAL PARTIES IN EAST

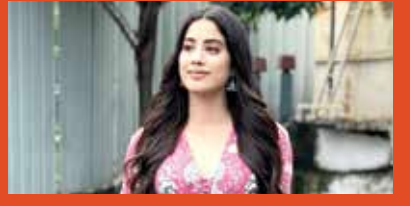
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CHINA'S 'SILK ROAD URBANISM' IS CHANGING CITIES FROM LONDON TO KAMPALA – CAN LOCALS KEEP CONTROL?

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SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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Prosecute those who don't implement manifesto promises: Freedom fighter

JAIPUR, MAR 29 (PTI): A 93-year-old freedom fighter, who took part in the Quit India movement, suggested on Friday that those who fail to fulfil promises made in the party manifestos should be prosecuted.

"There is no option but to prosecute those who make promises and forget them without any consequences," Pandit Ramkishan, former parliamentarian and four-time MLA, said at an interaction on 'Elections Now and Then' here on Friday.

"People do not vote on the basis of manifestos nor on development. That is why it is all the more important that the promises brought in black and white carry a legal binding," Ramkishan said. The nonagenarian, who has witnessed elections since the first one in 1952, said the courts had been avoiding interfering in this matter and the political process was avoiding making manifesto a legal binding.

Ramkishan feels another issue that is damaging democratic values is the massive expenditure in elections, which is making it impossible for a candidate like him and the poor to contest elections. Over-expenditure is corrupting all parties and the policies announced by them are only a lip-service to the poor, resulting into India featuring among the highest on inequality, he said.

Ramkishan is the only surviving founder member of the Socialist Party, formed post Independence. He was also a member of the Congress Socialist Party, a body within the Congress.

He favoured changing parties being made a criminal act. "The Speaker of an assembly should not be allowed to adjudicate on the issue of defection as he is partisan. Rather, a new non-partisan apparatus has to emerge." Democracy and the people's will can become central to development only when a steadfast and long commitment is respected, he said.

"Commitments have to be long term, as ideas we talked in the sixties and seventies are now being implemented even by those parties that opposed them. I am happy that all political parties now accept a lot of their programmes we talked about even at the cost of losing elections," the freedom fighter said.

Recalling his days of modest means at the time of elections, he recalled borrowing deposits of three MLA candidates from the then district Congress committee treasurer, who was an opponent.

CHAMLING KICKS OFF SDF'S VIJAY SANKALP RALLY FROM CHAKHUNG

Youth are a priority, says Chamling as he releases party manifesto

ARPAN PRADHAN CHAKHUNG, 29 MAR:

Sikkim Democratic Front president, Chief Minister Pawan Chamling, launched his party's election campaign from Chakhung here in West Sikkim today with the release of the party's election manifesto. The significance of the venue cannot be ignored given that SDF officially started its Election 2019 campaign from the hometown of the SKM president, PS Tamang [Golay].

Addressing the gathering, Mr Chamling, kicking off the campaign pegged as "Vijay Sankalp Rally," highlighted the various promises and programs included in the 88-page SDF manifesto.

Mr Chamling focused extensively on the youth, stressing, "Our policy has always been youth first. They are the priority."

Announcing that the One Family, One Job initiative will be taken to the next level with 'One Person, One Profession' scheme in the next term, Mr Chamling shared that the next government will work towards helping every eligible individual with a profession.

He also announced the establishment of a Youth Forum which will work towards making youth partners in policy-making of his next government.

The focus on the youth continued

with Mr Chamling hinting that this could be the last election he contests. He has alluded to it in the past as well and explained that he was convinced to contest this election with the sole purpose of "saving" Sikkim



and sustaining the peace and development here.

"Over the next five years, a good leader may come up as an alternative and this could be the last time I am contesting elections. For now, I am contesting elections to save Sikkim and to pass the State on to the safest hands," he said.

Mr Chamling also pointed out that this time SDF has fielded 17 new

SDF MANIFESTO HIGHLIGHTS

- Soreng to be announced 5th district of the State
- Every Saturday Government Holiday
- Occupied government sites will be regularized
- Start-up loan amount to increase to Rs 30 lakhs from Rs 20 lakhs
- Rs 5 lakh one time grant for those who do not avail of start-up scheme and want to start their own business without loan
- Rs 10000 grant for Advocates practicing law
- Organic farmers to be provided Rs 60,000 cash and technical assistance of Rs 40,000
- Organic farmer loans will be borne by the government
- 15 years and above Home Guards will be regularized
- One Person One Profession
- Gaon ko kaam Gaon lai
- Minimum wage to be increased to Rs 400 from Rs 300
- All districts will be connected via underground roads
- All government grant amounts to be hiked
- Family of driver who lost life in accident will be provided Rs 7 lakh and Government Job (MR) will be provided to next of kin

and young faces in a natural progression of its commitment to groom the youth for bigger challenges and sup-



port their growth into bigger and more responsible leaders.

Addressing the gathering, Mr Chamling slammed the opposition for misleading the people of Sikkim with false promises and announcements in their manifesto.

He urged leaders of the opposition to provide facts and plans to back their announcements.

SDF never makes fake promises or indulges in negative politics, he added.

The sixth SDF Government will fulfill all the announcements and promises that are included in the manifesto and this time the government will be formed to work as per the people's agenda, said Mr Chamling.

He urged people of Sikkim not

to support political leaders who are not only misleading people but also engaging in communal and caste politics.

Sikkim has seen an overall development of 5154 percent as per Government of India records and this was possible because of the effort of every Sikkimese, he said, while calling on them to continue with their support.

Mr Chamling also highlighted the various achievements and developments achieved by the SDF government and urged people to believe only what they see and not get carried away with what they hear.

He also urged everyone to become more responsible and wiser and save Sikkim and vote for the Umbrella.

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Lok Sabha IND candidate Passang Sherpa releases manifesto



SAGAR CHHETRI GANGTOK, 29 MAR:

Independent candidate for the Lok Sabha election, Passang Sherpa released his eleven-point election manifesto here today and announced that he will be going to the people of Sikkim with these eleven issues. The Election Commission has allotted him the symbol of 'microphone' for this election.

On the occasion, he stated that Member of Parliament of different political parties from Sikkim have not been able to speak freely in the interest of the people of Sikkim due to the pressure of their respective parties. He further alleged that MPs from Sikkim have never delivered their duties and responsibilities in the Parliament due to such pressures.

"So to break this trend and to take the people's issues effectively to the Centre and the Parliament without any pressure I have decided to contest the election as an independent candidate," he expressed.

Speaking on his ongoing Sambhav Chha campaign, Mr Sherpa stated that this campaign is mainly to motivate people and give them new hope. He has appealed to the people to connect with this campaign on social media.

The election manifesto of Mr Sherpa includes restoration of lost Sikkimese Nepali seats in the State Assembly as per clause (f) of Article 371F and seat reservation for Limboo and Tamang in the State Assembly as per the provision of the Article 371F. The manifesto also promises to resolve issues related to political and legal problems in the State, to protest any distortion and dilution of the rights and interest of Bhutia-Lepcha community in Sikkim, to ensure unification of Scheduled Caste Kami, Damai and

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Give SKM a chance and enjoy clean governance: Golay

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 29 MAR:

Sikkim Krantikari Morcha president, PS Tamang [Golay], today stressed that his party was taking the upcoming election as very important to save Sikkim and its people. He appealed to the people to give SKM five years to rid Sikkim of corruption and prove to the people that a clean and efficient government was possible.

Mr Tamang was addressing people from different constituencies of South District at a public meeting here at the Namchi Veterinary Ground today. The meeting was attended by people from Namchi-Singhihang, Poklok-Kamrang, Namthang-Rateypani and



Melli constituencies of South Sikkim.

He also assured the people that all the promises made in the SKM manifesto will be delivered on and alleged that

the SDF, in contrast, limits itself to just making announcements and not delivering on ground.

He assured to provide a corruption-free, transparent and clean govern-

ment and administration to the people.

He accused that the SDF has been trying to lure people with money and urged the people to

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Will prove loyalty to supporters now: Ashis Rai

REBYNA RANA GANGTOK, 29 MAR:

Independent Candidate, Ashis Rai, contesting from Arithang constituency released his symbol of 'Torch Light' today which is his electoral symbol allocated by the Election authorities.

Addressing a press conference today, Mr Rai said, "It was the support and demand from the voters of Arithang that I decided to contest the assembly



election from Arithang constituency as an independent candidate."

He informed that he

has resigned from all posts in Sikkim Democratic Front in order to contest as an independent candidate.

"I was very loyal to SDF and its leadership discharging my duties

sincerely as asked for by the leader but now I am out of the party and instead of being loyal to a party will prove, showcase my loyalty to the people, supporters of my constituency," said Mr Rai.

He further said that being a 'Samasthi Putra' he is aware of all the problems of the constituency which other contenders might not know.

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Pope mandates reporting of sex abuse claims in Vatican City

VATICAN CITY, MAR 29 (AP): Pope Francis on Friday issued sweeping new sex abuse legislation for Vatican personnel and Holy See diplomats that requires the immediate reporting of abuse allegations to Vatican prosecutors, a policy shift aimed at being a model for the Catholic Church worldwide.

The mandatory reporting provision of the legislation marks the first time the Vatican has put into law requirements for Catholic officials to report allegations of sex crimes to police or face fines and possible jail time.

Francis also issued child protection guidelines for Vatican City State and its youth seminary,

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BJP's Amar Lohar joins HSP

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 29 MAR:**

A Bharatiya Janata Party Sikkim Pradesh functionary, Amar Lohar, joined Hamro Sikkim Party today. He was warmly welcomed into the party by HSP president, Dr Bina Basnett, and working president, Bhaichung Bhutia.

“Hamro Sikkim Party is glad to welcome Amar Lohar into our Party,” an HSP press release states.

The release informs that Mr Lohar was further appointed vice president of the party in-charge of East District.

Jai Maha Bharath Party promises better infrastructure



**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 29 MAR:**

Two women candidates of Jai Maha Bharath Party are contesting the upcoming Assembly and Parliamentary election 2019 in Sikkim. Sunmaya Gurung from Gangtok is contesting the Lok Sabha election and Usha Gurung is contesting the Assembly election from Namthang-Rateypani constituency. The party has appealed to the people to support the party in the election for better infrastructure in the State and to safeguard and strengthen Article 371F.

Addressing a press conference here today, JMBP founder national president, Bhagawan Shri Ananthavishnu Deva Prabhu informed that the party is contesting in more than 500 parliamentary seats in the Country and gave the party ticket to two women candidates in Sikkim as promised.

He stated that the party will work for better infrastructure and will take issues of the State to the Parliament.

Likewise, the Lok Sabha candidate, Sunmaya Gurung stated that the people of Sikkim should support women candidates in the election and assured to work for the upliftment and welfare of women.

Youth are a...

Election is not as much a challenge for political parties as it is challenge for the people to make the right choice, he remarked.

Speaking on the LT seat he slammed SIBLAC and said that this organization was majorly responsible for holding up the LT seats.

The function was also addressed by SDF's MP candidate, DB Katuwal, and others.

Also on the day, around 1,000 people aligned with various parties joined the SDF.

The campaign was attended by all eight SDF candidates from West district, party leaders and supporters.

ICAR-NOFRI organizes training on Quality Organic Seed Production



GANGTOK, 29 MAR (PIB): A four-day Training program on “Quality Organic Seed Production in Agricultural and Horticultural Crops” was organized for the officers of Agriculture and Horticulture Departments, Government of Sikkim at ICAR-NOFRI, Tadong from 25–28 Mar, 2019.

A group of 14 participants from all the four districts participated in the training program and were imparted training on various aspects of organic seed and planting material production, its testing, seed certification and legislation, crop and nutrient management, pest and disease manage-

ment and other topics related to seed production.

The training was inaugurated by Secretary, Khorlo Bhutia, FS&ADD, Govt. of Sikkim, chief guest of the function and graced by Dean, Dr PP Dabral, CAEPHT, CAU, Ranipool as the guest of honour.

Speaking on the occasion, the Secretary stressed on the need to produce quality organic seeds of various crops in the state and take measures to attain self sufficiency in certified seeds.

Dr Dabral emphasized on the need to strengthen post-harvesting operations for maintaining seed health and

safe storage of seeds for quality seed to reach the farmers. Course Director & Joint Director, Dr RK Avasthe, ICAR-NOFRI said that issue of quality organic seed production should be addressed on priority basis and there is an urgent need to strengthen seed system in the state to bridge the gap between seed availability and requirement. He also stressed on the need to have seed certification agency in the state to produce certified organic seed.

The subject experts from various departments delivered lectures on various topics viz., Agro-biodiversity of Sik-

kim by Dr RK Avasthe; Seed testing and Organic Seed production by Dr I Meghachandra Singh on Organic seed production of various cereals, pulses and oilseeds by Dr Chandan Kapoor; Improved agronomic practices for seed production by Dr Raghavendra Singh; Production of quality planting material of spice crops by Dr Matber Singh; Improved horticultural practices for raising quality organic seed by Dr Ashish Yadav; Production of quality planting material of fruit crops by Dr Sudip Kr Dutta; Soil nutrient management by Shaon Kr Das; Pest and disease management by

Dr Chandrmani Raj and Quality spawn production by Dr Shweta Singh. The trainees also made a field visit to research farm of ICAR-NOFRI and were demonstrated various technologies developed by the institute.

The valedictory program was chaired by Commissioner, Dr P Senthil Kumar, RMDD, Govt. of Sikkim. Guest of honour, Director, Padam Subba, Horticulture, Govt. of Sikkim advised the trainees and farmers to implement the knowledge gained in the training program at field level to strengthen our seed system.

Joint Director (I/C), Dr I Meghachandra Singh, ICAR, Manipur centre briefed about various activities undertaken under seed project in NEH region.

A training manual on “Quality Organic Seed Production in Agricultural and Horticultural Crops” was also released by the chief guest on the occasion and training certificates were distributed to the participants. The program ended with vote of thanks by Dr Chandan Kapoor, Scientist, ICAR-NOFRI, Tadong.

Meeting on expenditure by candidates held in South



NAMCHI, 29 MAR (IPR): A meeting with regards to the expenditure of the contesting candidates was held at the conference hall at DAC, today. The meeting was chaired by Returning Officer (South), Ragul K, present amongst others were General Observer, Shrish Chandra Verma, Expenditure Observers, BG Krishnan and Inder Solanki, Assistant Returning Officer (ARO), Satyen K Pradhan and nodal officer for expenditure monitoring, Sunil Sharma.

It may be mentioned here that BG Krishnan

will be looking after four assembly constituencies which are 09 Barfung, 10 Poklok-Kaang, 11 Namchi-Singhithang and 12 Melli constituencies. Similarly, Inder Solanki will be in charge of four constituencies namely 13 Namthang-Rateypani, 14 Temi-Namphing, 15 Rangang-Yangang and 16 Tumin-Lingi constituencies.

During the course of the meeting, Mr Sharma informed that the contesting candidates are required to maintain day-to-day accounts in order for better transparency of their spending on the

election campaign.

He also explained in brief the dos and don'ts of election expenditure and informed that the expenditure observers will supervise and monitor the expenses incurred by the contesting candidates along with the various political parties. He also updated that adequate number of flying squads, static surveillance team, video surveillance and viewing team are functional in the field to monitor the expenditure carried by the candidates and the political parties.

Meeting with contesting candidates and political parties in East



GANGTOK, 29 MAR (IPR): A meeting with the contesting candidates and representatives of the Political parties with the General Observers of Assembly Constituencies and Parliamentary Constituencies was held today at the Conference Hall of District Administration Centre, Sichey. The meeting also had the presence of District Election Officer (East), Kapil Meena, ADC (East), Bharani Kumar, Assistant Collector, Rohan Agawane, SDM (Rangpo), PK Rai and other officials.

During the meeting Assistant Collector, Rohan Agawane gave a power point presentation on Monitoring of Public meetings and rallies, Monitoring of media- print/ electronic/ Social, Travel expenses of star campaigners, Monitoring of use of vehicles, account mismatch and cash withdrawal from banks etc. SDM (Rangpo), PK Rai in his power point presentation briefed the contesting candidates and representatives of political parties about the guidelines of Model Code of Conduct (MCC) and Do's and Don'ts of MCC so as to ensure free and fair elections.

SP(East), Hem Raj Rai informed the gathering about the arrangements made by East District police for the upcoming General Elections 2019. He said that 3 battalion of SSB and 2 battalion of SAP have been deputed in various places of East District. He further stated that the flag marches are being done and check point has been kept so that the contesting candidates can campaign safely and freely. For vehicle rally, foot rally and Mike permission the candidates should take permission from the office of DC East 2 to 7 days before the event, informed Rai. He urged the candidates to cooperate with the police for free and fair election.

The District Election Officer, Kapil Meena informed the political parties that there can be no campaigning in the last 48 hours before polling. He also talked about the various issues like issuance of permission for public meetings, hoardings and also talked about flag size in election campaign vehicles so that there is no violation of the Model Code of Conduct. He also requested the various political parties to abide by the campaigning time so that there is proper

maintenance of law and order. Meena also informed them about the various field teams who are already discharging their duties round the clock and said that any complaints/queries can be put forward to them or they can always contact the District Control Room which is operational 24/7 at 03592-284026. At the end the DEO informed everyone present about the security arrangements of the Strong Room at Biraspati Parsai Senior Secondary Room, Ranipool and apprised them about the Commissioning of EVMs and VVPATs scheduled on 02 April 2019 and about the dispatch of polling materials which will be done on 10 April 2019.

General Observer for Assembly Constituency (Sr.No 23 to 28), B Ram Shastri spoke about the legal provision of Model Code of Conduct and Expenditure Monitoring. General Observer for Assembly Constituency (Sr. No 17 to 22), Mousumi Chattaraj Chaudhuri said that she would be visiting almost all the polling booths under her Constituency to check the smooth functioning of Election process. General Observer for Parliamentary Constituency (East and West), Pankaj Agarwal informed about the legal provision of polling agents. He asked the candidates to train their polling agents properly about the election process. General Observer for Parliamentary Constituency (North and South), Ameya Abhyankar urged the candidates to refrain from the violation of MCC and cooperate them for the conduct of free and fair election. The Police Observer for the entire State, Naveen Arora asked the candidates present to maintain peaceful law and order. The Observers told the candidates that they were free to meet them at Circuit House where they are residing and asked the candidates to contact them in their local numbers for any election related queries.

Earlier, ADC (East), Bharani Kumar placed the welcome address. Later in the evening all General Observers and Police Observer reviewed the poll preparedness in a meeting with all the Nodal Officers of major election activities of east district. All Nodal Officers briefed the Observers about the activities undertaken till now and those planned till the polling days.

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Will focus on overall development and jobs for youth: Dhungel



REBYNA RANA
GANGTOK, 29 MAR: "The focus will not be on petty issues but on providing a bread earner in every household. We will work on human development and generating employment for our youth and that will be my main agenda," said GT Dhungel, SDF candidate from Upper Tadong.

Since he was declared as the SDF candidate, the 59-year-old Tadong resident has been campaigning hard with the public

from across the constituency flocking to his residence in Greendale senior secondary school premises here.

"I have to make time for those visiting my home as well as door-to-door campaigning. Water supply scarcity is one of the big problems of Tadong constituency. Since the constituency shares water with the more populated Gangtok and Arithang constituencies, this is a problem that has to be looked

into," said Mr Dhungel.

Mr Dhungel was former Principal Chief Engineer cum Secretary with the Roads and Bridges department. He took voluntary retirement on 08 Mar, 2019.

"We will work out a systematic approach in countering the water scarcity problem. It begins with setting up a perennial source, monitoring overflow, etc. We will try to ensure equitable distribution," said Mr Dhungel.

Born to Augustine Dhungel popularly known as Dhungel OC, GT Dhungel hails from Rumbuk, West Sikkim with family in Namthang as well, but he has spent most of his life in Tadong. One of his biggest contributions to the community has been the setting up of Greendale Senior Secondary School which was run by his late wife Sabita Dhungel and later by his son Late Alexius Dhungel. "The school has been one of the best ways for

us as a family to be in tune with the youth of the State. The school has devoted itself more towards the creative development of the students rather than making them merely competitive. With the introduction of a range of new features, even the youth have felt their development taking the right direction," stated Mr Dhungel.

He also said that he will ensure that roads are built before houses.

"The mushrooming of houses in our constituency is one of the major issues. Such activities will be avoided from here on. We will make sure roads reach first, following which allotment of lands for housing will be made. We will try to connect every cluster with approach road connectivity and thereafter sewerage connectivity as well," said the SDF candidate.

Mr Dhungel also stressed on creation of open spaces and recreational spaces, the work for which has already begun near Greendale School, an initiative he has taken up in his individual capacity.

10 women polling stations in South



NAMCHI, 29 MAR (IPR): The second randomization of polling personnel for South district was held at the conference hall at DAC, Namchi today. Present during the randomization was Returning Officer (South), Ragul K, General Observer, Shrish Chandra Verma alongside Assistant Returning Officer, Satyen Kr Pradhan, SDM (HQ), Hemant Rai and contesting candidates, representatives of various political parties.

Addressing the gathering RO, Ragul K spoke in detail about the second randomization of polling personnel's. The process of randomization has been done through software prepared by NIC,

Sikkim. The RO also updated that in this general election South district will have 10 women polling stations.

It may be mentioned here that there are a total of 160 polling stations located in the South District out of which 10 polling stations will be handled by women polling teams. These women polling stations are located namely at CCCT, Chisopani Room No II, Nandugaon Senior Secondary School Room No II, Salghari Secondary School Room No II, Assangthang Secondary School Room No II, Namchi Senior Secondary School Room No I and III, Namchi Old Primary School Room No I, Namchi New Secondary

School Room No II, JH-MIH Boomtar Room No II, Namthang Senior Secondary School Room No I.

During the second randomization process, polling teams were formed with one presiding officer and five polling officers. The Assembly Constituency in which they will be posted on poll day is also done randomly.

The final round of training to polling personnel will be done in groups of teams formed during this second randomization process. The third randomization of polling personnel will be done one day before the poll day to assign polling stations to the various teams formed now.

Zero Waste Himalaya seeks public support for EU grant

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 29 MAR: European Outdoor Conservation Association has shortlisted the proposal for Himalayan Cleanup, 2020 submitted by Integrated Mountain Initiative [IMI] and Zero Waste Himalaya. The project has now reached the voting round in the Mountain category wherein votes from the public will decide whether they get the grant of around Rs 20 lakh.

In a press release, the two organizations have requested for the public's support in securing the grant. The voting period is from 28 Mar to 11 Apr 2019 and the link for voting is <http://www.outdoorconservation.eu/project-voting-category.cfm?catid=5>

The activities that will be supported under the grant are workshops in the 12 mountain states on waste, training for peer educators from the mountain states and the Himalayan Cleanup.

"The Himalayan Cleanup (THC) 2018 was a resounding success binding together people across the Himalayan states for a common cause to bring focus on the issue of plastic pollution and solid waste across the IHR. THC generated stewardship in cleaning-up our waste, and many initiatives continued beyond the clean-up," the release states.

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HSP to support Ashis Rai in Arithang



SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 29 MAR: Hamro Sikkim Party, which has not fielded a candidate for Arithang constituency, will be supporting independent candidate, Ashis Rai, in the upcoming polls.

HSP working president, Bhaichung Bhutia, called on Mr Rai today and extended his party's support to him for the elections. He also extended his best wishes to Independent candidate by offering kha-

das here this afternoon.

In his short address, HSP working president stated that the party has been in favour of clean politics in the state and has always been supporting leaders with a clean image and high principles. Mr Rai, he said, carried such an image.

Mr Bhutia said that it was an honour for him and HSP to support a clean leader like Ashis Rai who is principled and commands credibility.

HAVE A STORY TO SHARE?

email us: news@summittimes.com

PLOT FOR SALE:

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

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, Kessang 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.

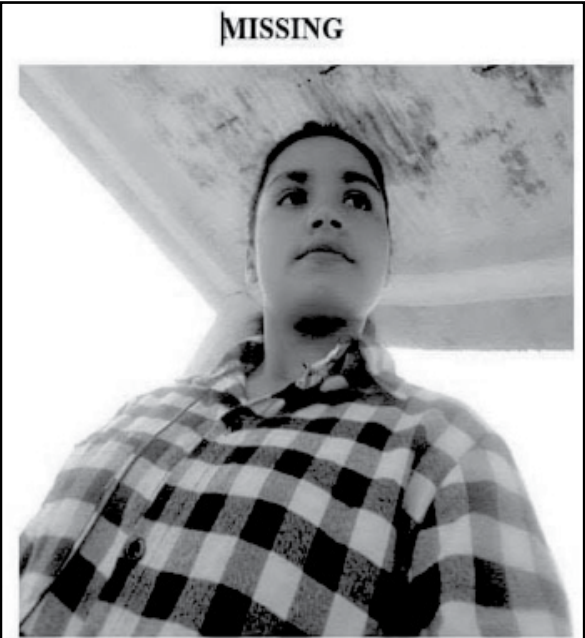
Daughters: Champa Bardewa-9434203706, Manju Trikhatri -7407181907
Sons: Pratap Trikhatri -9064836436; Lalit Trikhatri (Son)-9775956554
Daughters-in-Law: Man Maya Trikhatri -9775405439; Ashu Trikhatri -9647686222; Mamta Trikhatri -9609115039

~ 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:

Summit Times office
Church Road, Gangtok
03592-208698



Ref. Pakyong 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.

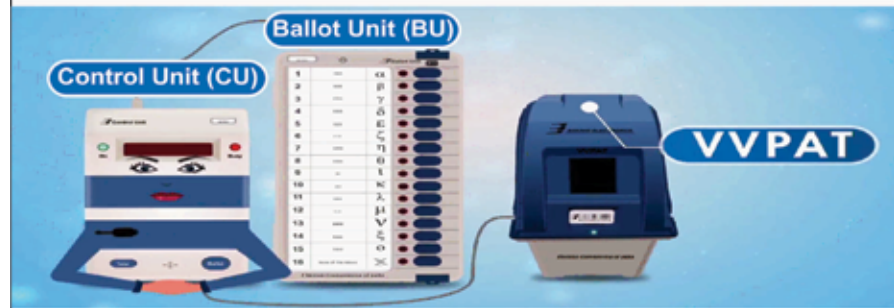
03592-257834, 73843-49283, 97330-23817

Informant will be suitably rewarded

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.

Visit the website: eci.gov.in

SummitTIMES

Catch 22

*Painting ourselves into corners
due to disinterest*

Now that election manifestos are dropping into the public domain, expect scoffs and sniggers not just from the opponents, but also the lay people who are also reveling in the experience of having become relevant and important again. That said, most people have reservations about how politicians function. The first reaction to a politician's statement is to look for the "hidden agenda" behind it, unless, of course, it ties in neatly with one's own hidden agendas. People who are expected to decide on policy matters, drawing their decisions from years spent honing statecraft in the public domain, are rarely taken at face value any more. Every decision, move and promise is slotted to fit an ulterior political motive. This doubting is not without reason— it is what we deduce from the dubious deals made by the politicians and their aides. The doubting, however, has grown so acute that the word politics has come to mean "nothing serious". Of course, this is not a recent notion, but, and specially in our country, a notion that has gained ground with the workings, or rather 'mis-working', of certain stalwarts of the political arena: the love-hate relationship of widely differing parties, or for that matter, the coming together of opposing forces, who forget their differences and ideals to forge alliances for mutual benefit. Leaders who preferred privacy for four years launch into frenetic outreach programmes which does not work even as a fig leaf given the timing. So we say, "bad politics, worse politicians."

But who are we?

Where is our voice?

We wait and see; see and criticise; criticise and do little else. If our politicians are unreliable and unsatisfactory, it is perhaps because we are incompetent too. We ignore issues that confront us. What should concern us from the very start only begins to interest us when mud starts flinging and situations turn dire. Issues get so enmeshed and entangled by the time the various politicians have played their politics through them that all perspective is lost. And this is almost always the point when the public wakes up. No matter how much we scream against sensationalism, we have to admit that only when issues are sensationalized or over-sentimentalised do we begin to raise our eyebrows and ask questions – sometimes even take to the streets. Then, can we blame the politicians for overstating and overreacting? After all, they are only playing to the gallery.

Taking Sikkim's case, the public has seldom taken the initiative in solving contentious issues. It waits for the politicians to do it for the people and the leaders desist because they don't want to take a strong stand and risk losing a vote-bank. So we dither. From all sides. And continue doing so until we have painted ourselves into a corner and the only way out is by stamping all over fresh paint. An ugly, ungainly, avoidable sight.

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

China's 'Silk Road urbanism' is changing cities from London to Kampala – can locals keep control?

JONATHAN SILVER & ALAN WIIIG
theconversation.com

A massive redevelopment of the old Royal Albert Dock in East London is transforming the derelict waterfront to a gleaming business district. The project, which started in June 2017, will create 325,000 square metres of prime office space – a "city within a city", as it has been dubbed – for Asian finance and tech firms. Then, in 2018, authorities in Kampala, Uganda celebrated as a ferry on Lake Victoria was unloaded with goods from the Indian Ocean, onto a rail service into the city. This transport hub was the final part of the Central Corridor project, aimed at connecting landlocked Uganda to Dar es Salaam and the Indian Ocean.

Both of these huge projects are part of the US\$1 trillion global infrastructure investment that is China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). China's ambition to reshape the world economy has sparked massive infrastructure projects spanning all the way from Western Europe to East Africa, and beyond. The nation is engaging in what we, in our research, call "Silk Road urbanism" – reimagining the historic transcontinental trade route as a global project, to bring the cities of South Asia, East Africa, Europe and South America into the orbit of the Chinese economy.

By forging infrastructure within and between key cities, China is changing the everyday lives of millions across the world. The initiative has kicked off a new development race between the US and China, to connect the planet by financing large-scale infrastructure projects.

SILK ROAD URBANISM

Amid this geopolitical competition, Silk Road urbanism will exert significant influence over how cities develop into the 21st century. As the transcontinental trade established by the ancient Silk Road once led to the rise of cities such as Herat (in modern-day Afghanistan) and Samarkand (Uz-

bekistan), so the BRI will bring new investment, technology, infrastructure and trade relations to certain cities around the globe.

The BRI is still in its early stages – and much remains to be understood about the impact it will have on the urban landscape. What is known, however, is that the project will transform the world system of cities on a scale not witnessed since the end of the Cold War.

Silk Road urbanism is highly selective in its deployment across urban space. It prioritises the far over the near and is orientated toward global trade and the connections and circulations of finance, materials, goods and knowledge. Because of this, the BRI should not only be considered in terms of its investment in infrastructure.

It will also have significance for city dwellers – and urban authorities must recognise the challenges of the BRI and navigate the need to secure investment for infrastructure while ensuring that citizens maintain their right to the city, and their power to shape their own future.

LONDON CALLING

Developments in both London and Kampala highlight these challenges. In London, Chinese developer Advanced Business Park is rebuilding Royal Albert Dock – now named the Asian Business Port – on a site it acquired for £1 billion in 2013 in a much-criticised deal by former London mayor Boris Johnson. The development is projected to be worth £6 billion to the city's economy by completion.

But the development stands in sharp contrast with the surrounding East London communities, which still suffer poverty and deprivation. The challenge will be for authorities and developers to establish trusting relations through open dialogue with locals, in a context where large urban redevelopments such as the 2012 Olympic Park have historically brought few benefits.

The creation of a third financial district, along-

side Canary Wharf and the City of London, may benefit the economy. But it remains to be seen if this project will provide opportunities for, and investment in, the surrounding neighbourhoods.

KAMPALA'S CORRIDOR

The Ugandan capital Kampala is part of the Central Corridor project to improve transport and infrastructure links across five countries including Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda. The project is financed through the government of Tanzania via a US\$7.6 billion loan from the Chinese bank Exim.

The growth of the new transport and cargo hub at Port Bell, on the outskirts of Kampala, with standardised technologies and facilities for international trade, is the crucial underlying component for Uganda's Vision2040.

This national plan alone encompasses a further ten new cities, four international airports, national high speed rail and a multi-lane road network. But as these urban transformations unfold, residents already living precariously in Kampala have faced further uncertainty over their livelihoods, shelter and place in the city.

During fieldwork for our ongoing research into Silk Road urbanism in 2017, we witnessed the demolition of hundreds of informal homes and businesses in the popular Namuwongo district, as a zone was cleared 30 metres either side of a rehabilitated railway track for the Central Corridor required.

As Silk Road urbanism proceeds to reshape global infrastructure and city spaces, existing populations will experience displacement in ways that are likely to reinforce existing inequalities. It is vital people are given democratic involvement in shaping the outcomes.

[Jonathan Silver is Senior Research Fellow, University of Sheffield; Alan Wiig is Assistant Professor of Urban Planning and Community Development, University of Massachusetts Boston]



How single women are driving gentrification in Hong Kong and elsewhere

IGOR VOJNOVIC & MINTING YE
theconversation.com

Gentrification is reshaping urban areas all around the world, displacing large segments of the population and making cities increasingly unaffordable.

In San Francisco, only 12 percent of households can afford a median priced home, which is over US\$1.5 million. In Hong Kong, the world's most unaffordable city alongside Singapore and Paris, there are currently some 90,000 families living in inadequate housing conditions.

We study urban development and its social, physical and environmental impacts. We recently examined two decades of cultural transitions in Hong Kong with a focus on how the changing status of women and attitudes toward marriage have altered the real estate market.

What we found is that single women in Hong Kong have played a surprising and little-studied role in gentrification.

MARRYING LATER

Women have been marrying later in life around the world for many years. The extent of this trend has varied globally, though, reflecting different levels of cultural change and resulting in different regional economic impacts.

Throughout the second half of the 20th century, East and Southeast Asia, in particular, witnessed

a growing number of single men and women. From 1950 to 1990, the number of young single women across Asia – China excluded – increased almost fourfold, from 22 million to 82 million.

One reason this trend has happened outside of China is cultural. If you're a woman and you're single on the mainland, it's viewed negatively. Unmarried women over the age of 27 are called "sheng nu," or "leftover women." But in Hong Kong it's seen in a more positive light. There, they're known as "xing nu," or "blooming women."

This trend has produced a ripple effect throughout the economy, including the property market and local redevelopment, as the increased number of single women – who are also attaining higher-paid jobs – boosts demand for housing.

GENTRIFYING NEIGHBORHOODS

We analyzed standardized census data from 1986 to 2006 across all of Hong Kong, with a focus on exploring the impact of women on neighborhoods that were gentrifying. The analysis, which took four years to complete, identified about 34 percent of Hong Kong as experiencing gentrification.

The process of gentrification involves capital reinvestment into neighborhoods that encourages their physical upgrading, along with the displacement of groups of lower incomes who have traditionally occu-

pled these communities.

A telltale sign of gentrification is the shift from rentals to owner-occupied housing. The share of units with owners living in them in these areas climbed from 45.5 percent in 1986 to 64.2 percent two decades later.

During the same time period, the number of people employed in traditional, working-class sectors like manufacturing more than halved, from 177,917 in 1986 to 73,870 in 2006. At the same time, the number of residents employed in finance, insurance, real estate and business services tripled, from 49,276 in 1986 to 150,237 in 2006.

But it is not only the occupational structure that is changing within these neighborhoods. These gentrifying areas have been increasingly dominated by single women.

Single women increased by 53.2 percent over the two decades, compared with a rise of just 15.2 percent among single men. Similarly, the number of divorced and separated women in these neighborhoods rose at twice the pace of divorced and separated men.

As a result, the share of households led by single women, whether never-married or divorced, jumped to 47.1 percent in 2006 from just 25.8 percent two decades earlier.

GLOBAL TRENDS

Overall, not only are single women emerging as a growing and critical aspect of Hong Kong's economy, they

are also driving the city's increasingly unaffordable real estate market.

While our study focused on Hong Kong, we believe there is reason to think the same thing is happening in cities across the world, such as New York, London, Vancouver and Singapore. That's because these cultural trends – a rising number of single women in high-paying jobs and a delay in tying the knot – have been happening elsewhere for many years.

For example, in the U.S., Pew projects that when today's young adults reach their mid-40s to mid-50s, a quarter of them will never have married, compared with less than 10 percent a few decades ago. And in Iceland, some 70 percent of children were born to single mothers in 2016, more than double the share in 1970.

This is not to say that we should blame women for gentrification. We believe their growing representation and success in the workforce in Hong Kong and elsewhere is something to be celebrated. And women at the other end of the income spectrum, particularly single mothers, bear the brunt of gentrification.

[Igor Vojnovic is Professor and Editor-in-Chief, Journal of Urban Affairs, Michigan State University; Minting Ye is Visiting Adjunct Scholar of Global Urban Studies, Michigan State University]

Meeting with candidates and political parties in South



NAMCHI, 29 MAR (IPR): A detailed preparedness meeting with the candidates and their election representatives was held at the conference hall of DAC, Namchi today. The meeting was chaired by Returning Officer (South), Ragul K, in presence of General Observer, Shrish Chandra Verma alongside various election officials.

Speaking, during the meeting RO informed

that all the necessary arrangements and activities for the conduct of General Elections 2019 are being carried out by the District Administration. He informed that all the Polling parties for conduct of election have been appointed and necessary training has been imparted to presiding and polling officers. Mr Ragul updated that the Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and Voter

Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPATs) to be used during the upcoming elections are kept in the strong room at Government Senior Secondary School Namchi.

These machines have been kept according to each Assembly constituency, Assembly segment of Parliamentary constituency including Sangha and for reserve EVMs as well. He brought to notice that 24x7 adequate secu-

urity measures has been made for the Strong Room where the machines are kept and is guarded by armed forces and fire emergency vehicles is also stationed at the Strong Room premises to avoid any untoward incidents.

Additionally, CCTV cameras have been installed at different locations to monitor the movements. The RO emphasized that the second round of randomization

will be done on 30th March and commissioning of the machines starts from 01 April onwards.

He also notified the gathering that according to Section 126 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, prohibits displaying any election matter by mean, of television or similar apparatus, during the period of 48 hours before the hour fixed for conclusion of poll in a constituency and violation of the aforesaid provisions is punishable by law. The RO spelt-out that any form of advertisement carried by the candidates or the political parties should be certified by Media Certification and Monitoring Committee (MCMC) and that they should abide the rules of ECI.

The RO urged the contesting candidates to be familiar with all the instructions and guidelines of ECI to guarantee clarity and also urged one and all to ensure fair, ethical and transparent election process in the south district.

Meeting with candidates and political parties held in North



MANGAN, 29 MAR (IPR): District Election Officer (DEO) cum Returning Officer (RO), North, Raj Yadav, chaired a meeting with all the contesting candidates and representatives of all the political parties of North district, today here at the chamber of District Magistrate, North. The meeting was attended amongst others by the General Observer (GO), North, Dr Pratibha Singh, Superintendent of Police, North, Kunzang Dorjee Bhutia and SDM (HQ), Samdup Bhutia.

During the meeting, representatives of all the political parties were informed about various aspects of election process including the Model Code of Conduct (MCC), Electronic Voting Machine (EVM), Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) awareness, Paid News, Electronic and Social Media or Media Certification and Monitoring Committee (MCMC) and other allied issues related to the election campaigning.

Speaking to the representatives GO, Dr Singh said that since Model Code of Conduct has come into force and every individual must be adhered to the guidelines of MCC with all spirit. All the political parties must ensure that the MCC should not be violated in any manner to ensure peace and fair conduct of election, she said. Mentioning about the publication and display of the election related posters, banners and pamphlets appealing candidates must have the name of

printers and publishers, if found violating the guidelines shall be punished, she informed.

She said that the permission of vehicles for election rally must be obtained from the competent authority and an original copy of permission should be pasted in the front mirror of vehicle as to rule out the use of duplicate permission. The Government properties or civic amenities must not be harmed or damaged during the course of election campaign, she insisted. Talking on worry list and vulnerability mapping she asked the representatives to inform to the concerned authority about any critical situations and raising vulnerability of any constituency or polling station.

GO urged to all the political representatives to extend their support for inclusive vote cast and awareness on using EVM and to ensure the proper distribution of voter slips to general public by Booth Level Officers (BLOs).

DEO/RO, Raj Yadav informed that all the political candidates must maintain register for account of expenditure properly. They have been told to duly incur the expenditure of print, electronic and social media on their expenditure account.

RO informed to the representatives about Form 26 Affidavit and stated that Form 26 of candidate may be checked on ECI website or DAC notice board. Talking on mock poll

certification during poll day he asked to the political agents to reach the Polling Station at 6am, so that the mock poll would be done at stipulated time. He also informed that the casting of vote will start at 7 a.m and stop at 5 p.m.

Talking on Election Agent, RO informed that the specimen of the contesting candidates should reach to the concerned authority at time, so that the polling agents could be appointed. The second randomization of EVM/VVPAT for Parliamentary Constituency will be held on 02 April and 03 April randomization of Assembly Constituencies will be done. In this context he urged to the representatives to ensure attendance of respective parties positively.

During the meeting, Superintendent of Police, North, asked all the political parties to adhere to the guidelines of MCC for free and fair election and suggested to the political parties to obtain any election related permissions prior a day of any event to be held.

At the outset of the meeting the representatives of the political parties were handed over Identification card of the contesting candidates, Accounts of Monitoring Registers, Handbook of Election, EVM/VVPAT presentation book, MCC Manual, Phone directory, Notice of Contesting Candidates, Election Agent Form, Rate chart related to election and a copy of CEO's minutes of meeting.

SLSA organizes sensitization programme on mental illness



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 29 MAR:

Sikkim State Legal Services Authority organized a Sensitization Programme under NALSA (Legal Services to the Mentally Ill and Mentally Disabled Persons) Scheme, 201, today, a press release informs.

The programme was chaired by Justice Vijai Kumar Bist, Chief Justice, High Court of Sikkim and Patron-in-Chief, Sikkim SLSA as chief guest with Justice Meenakshi Madan Rai, Executive Chairperson, Sikkim SLSA and Justice Bhaskar Raj Pradhan, Judge, High Court of Sikkim as guests of honour. The Resource persons for the programme were Dr. C. S. Sharma [HOD, Department of Psychiatry, STNM Hospital] and Dr. Siddhartha Sinha [MBBS, DOM, Psychiatrist, Ranchi].

The Chief Justice in his inaugural address informed that suicides, drug abuse and sexual assault on minors appear to be major issues in the State and efforts should be made to curb these problems.

That parents and teachers play an important role in moulding children and urged parents to spend quality time with their children, encourage outdoor activities rather than confining themselves to mobile phones. Employers ought to look into the mental well-being of their employees and subordinates. Society at large should be aware

of the implications of the disease.

Justice Meenakshi Madan Rai in her keynote address stated that silence around mental illness in society is indeed deafening and that the programme by the SLSA was an effort to educate and enable all to understand the seriousness of mental illness and how the afflicted individual requires family and societal support and professional help which otherwise can have tragic consequences.

Dr. Siddhartha Sinha, spoke on "Stigma & Mental Disorders" its related myths and facts and Drug Abuse in the Youth while Dr. C.S. Sharma spoke on Common Mental Illness, which was followed by vibrant interaction amongst the Resource Persons and participants.

Also present during the programme were Registrar General, High Court of Sikkim, Member Secretary, Sikkim SLSA, Judicial Officers from all the Districts, Senior Advocates, Special Secretary, Sikkim SLSA and officials from the Social Welfare, Health and Police Departments, Counselors of Rehabilitation Centres, NGOs, Teachers and students from Colleges and Schools from East Sikkim, Panel Advocates and PLVs from all the Districts, Press and Media and staff of Sikkim SLSA. Approximately 400 participants attended the said programme, the release mentions.

Training of candidates on expenditure and MCC in West



GYALSHING, 29 MAR (IPR):

A 'Training of Contesting Candidates on Expenditure and MCC' was conducted at the Conference Hall of Zilla Panchayat Hall. The meeting was chaired by Karma R. Bonpo, DC-cum-RO (W) along with General Observer (GO), West, Faisal Aftab; Expenditure Observers, Anil Kumar Bhardwaj and Alok Malviya; SP, West, Tenzing L. Lepcha; ADC (W), Karma L. Lepcha and SDM (HQ), Tushar G Nikhare.

During the meeting, representatives of all the political parties were informed about various aspects of election process including the Model Code of Conduct (MCC).

GO in his address to the trainees he instructed them keep the expenditure up to date and make sure that the candidate doesn't exceed their election expenses as per the norms of ECI. For the

ease of accounting team he assured them of giving all possible assistance to them so as there will be no errors.

Karma R. Bonpo expressed his views about the training stating it to be the most important exercise for proper and error free election process, which he feels that it can be achieved through extensively adhering the ECI guidelines. Further, he instructed all to follow MCC Guidelines and not to violate under any circumstances. He even informed about all mandatory arrangements which has been made for the smooth, free and fair elections.

The SP, West, asked all the political parties to get fully aware of the guidelines of MCC as well as Handbook provided to them. He suggested that the political parties need to obtain any election related permissions prior

to refrain from any last minute hassles. He also informed about all the rates of various election related materials and services which is fixed by the commission and is mandatory to be followed. While addressing to the Account Team he told them to be well acquainted with VSTs (Video Surveillance Team) and to work in co-operation.

SDM (HQ) informed about the First Level help from the respective AEO of their designated station and also informs about complains that can be re-addressed at the same. At last he wished all luck and expressed his desire of Peaceful election process.

CPAO, K B Subba also instructed on the various filling of forms and proper guidelines on working ethics and encouraged to clear their doubts via telecommunication.

Will never allow NRC in Bengal: TMC

KOLKATA, MAR 29 (PTI): The Trinamool Congress on Friday rebuffed BJP president Amit Shah's claim to replicate the National Register of Citizens (NRC) exercise in West Bengal if the saffron party returns to power at the Centre.

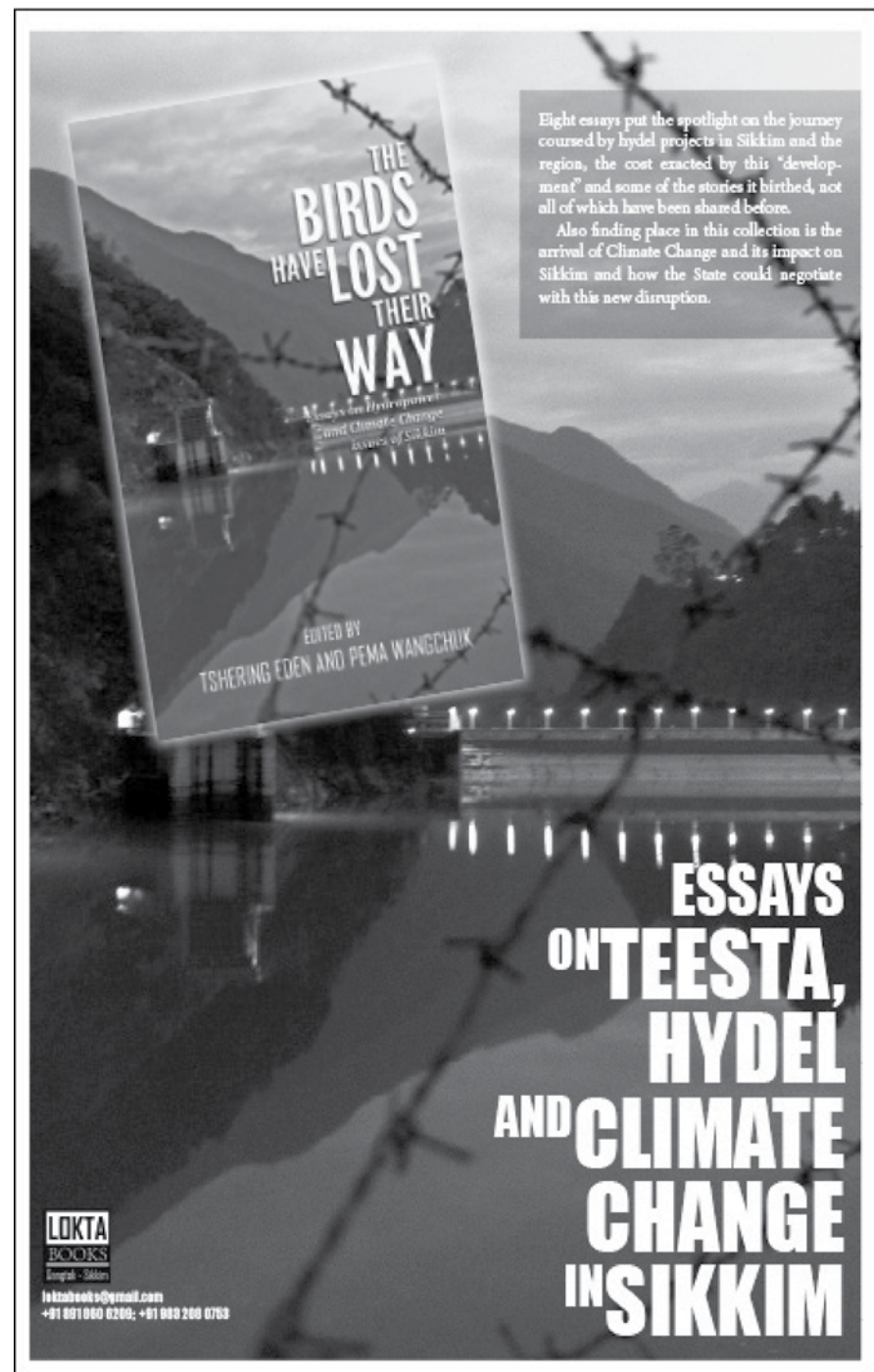
"We will never allow any NRC exercise in Bengal. They (BJP) want to divide the people on religious and communal lines. We will never allow that to happen," TMC secretary general Partha Chatterjee said.

Chatterjee's comments come after Shah, at a rally in Alipurduar, said: "We will also bring in NRC in Bengal and throw out all infiltrators. We will also ensure that the Hindu refugees are not touched. They are very much a part of our country."

The NRC is a document containing names of all genuine Indian citizens in Assam. It, however, became a hugely contentious issue after the complete draft, released last year, omitted the names of lakhs of

people who have been residing in the state for several decades.

Chatterjee challenged Shah to win a single seat in the state in the general election. "We challenge the BJP to win even a single seat in Bengal. I can assure you all that the BJP will neither win a seat in Bengal, nor return to power at the Centre... The people of this country and Bengal have made up their minds to oust (Prime Minister Narendra) Modi," he said.



I try to control the controllables, says Bumrah; Krunal Pandya calls him legend

BENGALURU, MAR 29 (PTI): Called a legend by his Mumbai Indians teammate Krunal Pandya, India pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah says he backs himself to deliver no matter what the situation is and always focusses on his strengths. Bumrah's 3/20 in four overs against Royal Challengers Bangalore was crucial to Mumbai Indians' six-run triumph in an IPL clash here on Thursday.

"You go ball by ball and you try to control the controllables. You try to back yourself in the situation," the man of the match winner said in the presentation ceremony.

"You don't go too far behind, I was just focusing on my plan and trying to back my strengths. I always try to back myself in any situation and execute the plan to perfection. I have always taken care of my body," added the pacer, who had hurt his shoulder in the previous match but got fit just in time for this game.

All-rounder Krunal Pandya was gushing in his praise for the bowler, who is ranked No.1 in the ICC world rankings.

"It was a great game. We were in-out throughout the second innings. The way Bumrah bowled, he is a legend. The way he's giving consistent performances whether he is playing for India or Mumbai Indians; he is outstanding," he said.

Pandya also lauded his brother, Hardik Pandya for the 14-ball unbeaten 32 on Thursday.

"Whatever I have seen of Hardik this year, he's striking the ball very well. For me, it was excepted, what he did," he said.

"He's in a good mind space. I'm pretty sure he'll be delivering for MI consistently. It's important to get a win in the second game only, sets the momentum for the team," he said.

Nepal's PM calls for foreign investment; seeks major economy boost in next 5 years

Shirish B Pradhan Kathmandu, Mar 29 (PTI): Nepal's Prime Minister K P Oli on Friday urged foreign investors, including from India and China, to invest in the Himalayan nation, saying it required around USD 88 billion business in the next five years to graduate from the category of Least Developed Countries to the Lower Middle Income country.

Inaugurating the two-day Nepal Investment Summit, 2019 here, Oli said that Nepal was committed to improve investment climate through enactment of new investment laws and pursuing a consistent foreign investment policies. "Nepal aims to graduate from the Least Developed Countries' list in the short term and this requires around 88 billion US dollar investments in the next five years period," Oli said during the inauguration ceremony.

Man City, Liverpool eye home straight as Solskjaer plots top-four finish

LONDON, MAR 29 (AFP): Manchester City and Liverpool enter the Premier League home straight this weekend as Ole Gunnar Solskjaer takes his position in the Manchester United dugout for the first time as permanent boss.

With the international break over, City have eight games to retain their title but should they slip up, Liverpool are poised to pounce and become English champions for the first time since 1990 by winning their seven matches to come.

Pep Guardiola's City, trailing Liverpool by two points, can crank up the pressure on Jurgen Klopp's side by winning at Championship-bound Fulham on Saturday.

Liverpool have the far harder task of hosting Tottenham on Sunday but know that a win will be a huge step towards the title with a relatively kind fixture list to come, barring a home game against Chelsea.

"A season is like that, you constantly prepare a basis for the final weeks," Klopp told Liverpool's official website.

"We are now in the final weeks and there



will be no interruption anymore, there will only be game after game after game and they all are very, very important."

Klopp has no injury concerns and plenty of reasons for optimism with Spurs mired in a slump and in danger of crashing out of the top four.

Mauricio Pochettino's men have taken just one point from their last four league games and could see their three-point

cushion over fifth-placed Manchester United cancelled out by the time they kick-off at Anfield.

TOP-FOUR RACE

Tottenham's slide means Arsenal, Manchester United and Chelsea are involved in a four-way battle for the two Champions League places behind Liverpool and City.

Unai Emery's Arsenal are the form team in that group and go into their match at home to New-

castle on Monday buoyed by their win against Manchester United before the international break.

"In these next eight matches, we need to play with a lot of personality like we did against Manchester United," Emery told Arsenal's website.

"We know it's going to be difficult because we are surrounded by other big teams but I think we are working very well and we are taking confidence to have chances in

the last matches."

United will be looking for a bounce after Solskjaer was appointed on a full-time basis on Thursday.

They take on Watford at home on Saturday licking their wounds after defeat to Arsenal was followed by an FA Cup exit to Wolves, which has taken the shine off the Norwegian's flying start to life at Old Trafford.

"We are now in a great position to get into

the Champions League but that is not decided until May 12 (the final day of the season) probably," Solskjaer said.

"Eight games to go and two, so a quarter of what is left, against two fantastically improved teams in Watford and Wolves, best of the rest at the moment, so our focus and mine is on those two games," he added.

Chelsea have stumbled in recent weeks with manager Maurizio

Sarri facing multiple problems including a misfiring attack and pedestrian midfield. Sarri hasn't considered teenage winger Callum Hudson-Odoi ready for a Premier League start by Sarri, but made his full debut for England against Montenegro earlier this week to pile pressure on the Italian to unleash him when Chelsea visit Cardiff on Sunday.

RELEGATION SCRAP

Another Chelsea slip up, though, could also have serious ramifications at the bottom of the table.

Cardiff are third from bottom, two points behind Burnley and Southampton with Brighton, Crystal Palace and Newcastle all within seven points of the drop zone.

Brighton and Southampton have a huge chance to gain some breathing space when they face off at the Amex on Saturday.

Huddersfield, rooted to the bottom 16 points from safety, appear doomed while Fulham also look headed for the drop unless they can shock City and eat into the 13-point gap that separates them from survival.

I felt like Broad when Yuvi walloped me for three successive sixes: Chahal



BENGALURU, MAR 29 (PTI): Royal Challengers Bangalore spinner Yuzvendra Chahal said he felt like Stuart Broad when Mumbai Indians' veteran swashbuckler Yuvraj Singh smashed three sixes in one of his overs.

Yuvraj struck Chahal for consecutive sixes in the 14th over of the match which Mumbai won by six runs on Thursday night.

"When he (Yuvraj) hit three sixes, I felt like Stuart Broad," Chahal said referring to the six consecutive maximums in the 2007 T20 World Cup that Yuvraj had hit off Englishman Broad.

However, Chahal managed to get Yuvraj off the fourth delivery of his over, caught by Mohammad Siraj in the deep after he had scored a quick-fire 23 off 12 balls.

"You know he is a legend batsman and I

backed myself. I had to bowl a bit up, might be a chance to get him out because it is a smaller ground. So that time, I thought of bowling my best delivery and he got sixes. That you cannot help and hence I bowled a wider googly," he told reporters in post-match session.

On September 19, 2007, in a World T20 match in Durban, Yuvraj had scripted a carnage by walloping six sixes off Broad in an over during a 16-ball 58.

Speaking about the wicket, Chahal said since it was good for batting, he varied his pace, especially for the big-hitting Kieron Pollard.

"The wicket was not turning. It was good for batting. So, the plan was to vary my pace, like bowling slower ones and sometimes sliders too," he said.

Battle of spinners looms at Kotla

AMANPREET SINGH NEW DELHI, MAR 29 (PTI): Delhi Capitals will be playing on their home turf but there is a possibility that the conditions may turn out to be favourable for the visiting Kolkata Knight Riders when the two teams clash in an IPL match here Saturday.

In the last match too, it was Chennai Super Kings who exploited the slow conditions at Kotla better than the home side with their spinners taking full advantage of the track on which batting became challenging as the game wore on.

KKR also have a world-class spin bowling attack led by India's premier bowler Kuldeep Yadav. The wily Sunil Narine, along with Piyush Chawla, makes it a very potent attack.

Both Shikhar Dhawan and Rishabh Pant



have been in good form but it remains to be seen if the Feroze Shah Kotla track and the KKR spin trio allow them to free their arms.

Pant has made an inspiring start this season with blistering knocks (78 and 25) in the first two games and Dhawan

too has been in good nick. Both of them know the conditions well and would require to use their knowledge in suitably planning their batting.

But more than anything, the Delhi spinners -- Axar Patel, Rahul Tewatia and Amit Mish-

ra -- will have to be on top form while dealing with the in-form KKR batsmen.

Nitish Rana, Andre Russell, Robin Uthappa and Shubman Gill are all among runs. Russell, with his incredible power-hitting ability, is the most

dangerous batsman.

KKR owe both their wins to the burly West Indian, who has smacked the bowlers around. Taming him will be the key and that is the challenge for Patel and Mishra.

Rana has been impressive as an opener and in the middle order too in the first two games. The performance of young Gill will be watched keenly since he is tipped to be a future India star.

Apart from Delhi's spinners, young South African pacer Kagiso Rabada will also have to take the load of stopping runs in the beginning. He too is considered one for the future.

It will be interesting to see what kind of track Delhi Capitals opts for in the remainder of the home matches with the BCCI curator said to have been withdrawn.

Controversy-hit KXIP look for home advantage against MI

SANJAY GANJOO

MOHALI, MAR 29 (PTI): A controversy-laden first two games at their back, Kings XI Punjab will look to exploit familiar conditions in their first home match of the IPL when they take on Mumbai Indians here Saturday.

It has been a roller-coaster ride for KXIP, having to endure a controversy involving their captain Ravichandran Ashwin who 'Mankaded' Rajasthan Royals batsman Jos Buttler in their first match, an act which was legal but criticised by some as against the 'Spirit of Cricket'.

In their second game against Kolkata Knight Riders, Ashwin's team was penalised for not keeping four men in the 30-yard circle and Andre Russell made full use of the reprieve to take the game away from KXIP.

Ashwin and Co. will now look to forget all these unsavoury happenings of the first two games and start afresh in

their first match at the PCA Stadium on Saturday.

With the tournament still in its early stages and the two teams having won a game each, the balance is not tilted in anyone's favour and the Saturday's tie is expected to be a keenly fought one.

The two rival sides boast of some star players in their lineup and each team will hope to its best when it matters.

KXIP, who are yet to win an IPL title, opened their campaign this season on a winning note against Rajasthan Royals. But, the match caught the headlines more for Ashwin's 'Mankading' of Buttler that triggered a dramatic collapse for the Royals. Kings XI eventually won by 14 runs.

That particular game also saw KXIP's opener Chris Gayle in prime form as he blasted 79 off just 47 balls while Sarfaraz Khan remained unbeat-

en on 46 off 29, giving the Ashwin-led side a boost in the batting department.

Against KKR, the KXIP lost by 28 runs after chasing a mammoth 219 for victory even though Mayank Aggarwal and David Miller impressed with their batting.

Andre Russell's sensational 17-ball 48 and Robin Uthappa's 67 not out and Nitish Rana's 63 left KXIP bowlers in a daze. Even the likes of Ashwin and speedster Mohammed Shami did not have an answer to KKR's blitzkrieg.

For KXIP, opener Lokesh Rahul is yet to hit his top form, managing just five runs from previous two outings, and he will be hoping to get back to his best in Mohali.

On the other hand, Mumbai Indians have come into this match, having notched up a 6-run win over Royal Challengers Bangalore, with India

pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah stamping his class.

For Mumbai, Rohit Sharma (48 of 33) and Hardik Pandya's 14-ball 32 stood out as they set up a target of 188 for RCB to chase.

Mumbai were almost blown away by AB de Villiers' 41-ball 70 not out, but the Rohit Sharma-led side won the match under controversial circumstances with the umpires failing to call Lasith Malinga final delivery a no-ball which left India and RCB captain Virat Kohli seething in anger. Bumrah impressed in the game against RCB, returning with figures of 4-0-20-3, something most bowlers will envy in this format of the game.

Yuvraj Singh, who started the season on a classy note by hitting a sublime half-century against Delhi Capitals and managing 23 against RCB, will be eager to make a mark in Mohali, which happens to be his 'home ground'.

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Swearing, boasting, joking, Trump gets back to being Trump at rally



GRAND RAPIDS, MAR 29 (AFP): He swore on primetime television. He boasted. He told jokes. He made promises. And the crowd loved him.

President Donald Trump was back.

In his first rally since the end of special prosecutor Robert Mueller's two-year Russia collusion probe, Trump took off the gloves to attack opponents, while pushing an almost mythical picture of his own achievements in office.

The packed arena in Grand Rapids, Michigan, where many wore red

Trump campaign baseball caps, responded with chants of "Trump, Trump," and "four more years!" Trump beamed and gave them more.

Over about an hour and a half, he questioned whether opposition Democrats would continue with "ridiculous bullshit." He claimed that his surprise 2016 election win was possibly the most extraordinary event in human experience: "They've never seen anything like it and nobody has in this country's history and in most countries' histories." He

cited God.

He warned against socialists.

He promised "to make America wealthy again." He waved a finger at journalists covering the event -- about a dozen of whom had flow with him on Air Force One from Washington -- and called them "crooked journalists" and "corrupt media." The crowd booed, as if at a sports event.

Trump beamed and gave them more.

Last week's end to Mueller's probe into whether his 2016 campaign colluded with Rus-

sians trying to meddle in the presidential election has clearly given the former real estate tycoon and reality TV host a super boost as his 2020 re-election bid gets underway. According to a short public summary of the report, which remains nearly entirely secret, Mueller determined that Russians did try to interfere in the polls but that Trump did not collude.

Many questions remain unanswered about Trump's links to Russia and his behavior during the bruising investigation.

Even so, the result of

the probe so far is nothing less than a stunning win for a president, who always said he was the victim of a "witch hunt." The Michigan rally was his victory dance.

One by one he ticked off a greatest hit of his old crowd pleasers: The Mexico border wall, his pro-Israeli policies, the strong stock market, his push for car factories, and then his ridicule of Democrats for their environmentally friendly policies like the much-battered Green New Deal.

But underpinning that litany this time was anger -- and a sense of vindication -- over the Mueller probe.

And Trump did not hold back.

He called the probe "a crazy attempt" by Democrats and the media to "sabotage the will of the American people" by putting his victory into doubt. "Their fraud has been exposed and the credibility of those who pushed this hoax is forever broken," he said.

Reveling in his triumph, he said Democrats were "on artificial respirators right now. They are getting mouth-to-mouth resuscitation." "Sick, sick. These are sick people," he said.

Calling for the authors of the investigation into his campaign to be held "accountable," Trump then stood back, smiling.

UK lawmakers poised for pivotal vote on May's Brexit deal



LONDON, MAR 29 (AFP): MPs are set for a momentous third vote Friday on Prime Minister Theresa May's Brexit deal, which could end a months-long political crisis or risk Britain crashing out of the EU in two weeks.

The House of Commons has twice rejected May's withdrawal agreement, both times by large margins, but has been unable to agree any alternative -- and time is running out.

The pivotal vote takes place on the day Britain was supposed to leave the European Union, until May asked the bloc's leaders last week for a little more time.

In a last-ditch bid to garner the support of discontented Conservative colleagues, she dramatically promised Wednesday to resign if the deal passed.

She appealed to Brexit supporters to back her, saying that under the delay plan hatched with Brussels, approval on Friday could see Britain out of the bloc on May 22.

But if the deal falls again, she must set out a new plan by April 12 -- with the options including a potentially catastrophic "no deal" Brexit, or a lengthy delay.

May's sacrifice swayed some of her critics, including former foreign minister Boris Johnson, but more than a dozen Conservative MPs still publicly oppose her deal.

Her Northern Irish allies, the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), also continue to insist that its arrangements for the Irish border are unacceptable.

Without the support of her own side, May

would have to rely on opposition Labour votes to get her deal through, but leader Jeremy Corbyn has vowed to vote against her.

Britain is leaving the EU after 46 years of membership following a divisive 2016 referendum in which voters decided 52 to 48 percent for Brexit.

But MPs appear incapable of agreeing on how to implement the result, reflecting the nationwide divisions that persist on the issue.

The ensuing chaos has led business leaders and trade unions to warn of a "national emergency", while the pound slipped again on Thursday amid fears of what might happen.

May admits her agreement, reached last November during more than 18 months of negotiations, is a compromise but insists it is the best available.

It covers citizens' rights, Britain's financial settlement, plans for the Irish border and for a transition period to ease the split until new trade terms are agreed.

Ardent Brexit supporters say it keeps Britain too close to the EU, but others say it does not do enough to protect relations with Britain's largest trading partner.

The crunch vote caps a tumultuous week in Westminster which also saw MPs seize control of parliamentary business for a day to test support for various Brexit options.

However, none of the eight options drawn up by various lawmakers secured a majority, although they are hoping

to narrow down the field in another round of votes next Monday.

Any new approach at this point would likely require a much longer extension that would force Britain to take part in European Parliament elections in May.

"The EU will only agree an extension until 22 May if the withdrawal agreement is approved this week," said senior minister Andrea Leadsom.

"I encourage all MPs to support it and ensure that we leave the EU... giving people and businesses the certainty they need."

MPs were not originally due to sit on Friday but the government called an emergency session, starting at 9.30am (0930 GMT) with voting due at 2.30pm (1430 GMT).

There was some debate over whether it could even take place, after Commons Speaker John Bercow blocked a similar vote last week, on the grounds that MPs had already clearly rejected May's deal.

He gave the green light after the government decided to put only one part of the Brexit package to MPs, separating out the withdrawal terms from an accompanying political declaration on future ties.

This satisfies the EU's request for approval of the withdrawal agreement, but means another vote might be necessary on the declaration before the deal is implemented.

Labour leader Corbyn strongly criticised the move, saying his party would not agree to a "blindfold Brexit".

Trump to meet South Korean president on April 11 at White House



BY LALIT K JHA

WASHINGTON, MAR 29 (PTI): US President Donald Trump will meet his South Korean counterpart Moon Jae-in at the White House on April 11 to discuss their efforts to denuclearise the Korean Peninsula and bilateral issues. The White House said in a statement on Thursday that Moon and first lady Kim Jung-sook will visit the White House on April 11.

Trump and Moon will discuss the latest developments regarding North Korea as well as bilateral matters, White House Press Secretary Sarah Sanders said.

"The alliance between the US and the Republic of Korea remains the linchpin of peace and security on the Korean Peninsula and in the region. This visit will strengthen this alliance and the friendship between the two countries," she said. Moon was instrumental in brokering talks between Washington and the nuclear-armed and sanctions-hit North Korea.

The two presidents will meet a little more than a month after Trump held his second summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un in Hanoi, Vietnam.

However, the US-North Korea summit

ended abruptly without a deal, with the US president saying he had decided to "walk" in the face of Kim's demands to drop sanctions. The much-anticipated second meeting between the two leaders was supposed to build on their historic first summit in Singapore in June last year.

Trump and Kim signed a vaguely worded agreement at their first summit in Singapore pledging to work toward full denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. Members of Trump's administration, meanwhile, acknowledge North Korea is still developing a nuclear weapons programme and US sanctions on the country remain in place. While North Korea has refrained from overtly provocative actions like testing nuclear warheads or ballistic missiles, it has yet to agree to actually give up any piece of its atomic arsenal.

The last nuclear test North Korea conducted was in September 2017. The regime also launched an intercontinental ballistic missile in November 2017. Some experts say the regime no longer needs to conduct such tests because of advances in its nuclear weapons programme.

US Senators introduce act to address Chinese challenge in space

BY LALIT K JHA

WASHINGTON, MAR 29 (PTI): A bipartisan group of five powerful US Senators have introduced a legislation to strengthen the country's leadership in space, arguing it was essential in view of the aggressive and dangerous Chinese designs.

The Space Frontier Act, that was introduced on Thursday, would secure funding to continue operations for the International Space Station (ISS) through 2030, eliminate overreaching regulations to support further development of the commercial space sector and to strengthen America's leadership in

space exploration. The act moves the US forward in securing the country's competitive edge against China in low-earth orbit and enacts meaningful reforms to modernize the nation's launch and re-entry regulations, and streamlines non-governmental earth observation regulations, Ted Cruz, chairman of the Subcommittee on Aviation and Space, who is one of the Senators to introduce the legislation, said. Besides Cruz, other senators are Kyrsten Sinema, Roger Wicker, Ed Markey and Gary Peters.

"Fifty years after the United States first put a man on the moon, we

are in the midst of a new and exciting space race," Wicker said.

Noting that the challenge in space requires policy certainty, partnerships with the private sector, country's friends across the globe, its continuing competitive edge and innovative thinking, he said that the act would ensure American leadership in space for years to come.

Markey said that the the act will help the American space industry achieve new heights, all while protecting small businesses and the scientific research that benefits all Americans through innovation and discovery.

Vietnam seizes 9 tonnes of suspected ivory from Congo

HANOI, MAR 29 (AFP): Vietnam has seized more than nine tonnes of suspected ivory in a timber shipment from the Republic of Congo, customs officials said Friday, in one of the country's largest illegal wildlife hauls in years. Though it is illegal to buy and sell ivory in communist Vietnam, lax law enforcement has allowed the illicit trade to flourish on the black market.

The government has vowed to crack down on illegal wildlife trade in the face of mounting international pressure and authorities said the latest bust in central Danang city was the biggest in years. "A huge 9.1-tonne (20,000-pound) package of goods suspected to be ivory hidden inside timber logs was found and confiscated," according



to Hai Quan news site, the official mouthpiece of Vietnam Customs. The ivory-stuffed timber logs were discovered Tuesday at Danang's main port on a ship from the Republic of Congo in central Africa, it added.

A customs official told AFP "authorities are still inspecting before making a final conclusion" about the substance. Images on state media showed piles of alleged tusks being weighed by officers in a warehouse after the seizure.

Ivory is used for jew-

ellery, decorative housewares and traditional medicine in Vietnam, which is also a popular transit hub for illegal wildlife destined for elsewhere in Asia, mainly China.

The government has struggled to crack down on the illicit trade as sales have moved online from traditional marketplaces. Britain's Prince William was in Vietnam in 2016 to host a wildlife conference where he delivered an urgent plea to end trafficking to save critically endangered species.



You can be patriotic without beating your chest: director Robby Grewal on 'RAW'

BY JUSTIN RAO

MUMBAI, MAR 28 (PTI): Filmmaker Robby Grewal says his upcoming espionage thriller "Romeo Akbar Walter (RAW)", starring John Abraham in the role of a spy, will not resort to jingoism to drive its point across.

The director said the film does not portray Pakistani officers as "bad people", a stereotype often used in Hindi films made on the theme of patriotism.

"Jingoism and patriotism are two different things. It's not a jingoistic film at all. You can be very patriotic without beating your chest. My attempt with the film is to make you feel proud to be an Indian, proud of the man who's done what he's done in the film," the director told PTI in an interview.

Robby said one does not need to "scream" to make people realise their love for the country and filmmakers should be able to capture that element in their cinema.

"In today's time, a good filmmaker is probably the one who doesn't need to scream and shout to get this emotion out. You can do it without that. The resonance of what the characters are going through is loud, not in terms of pitch but emotions. I'm saying the same thing without any chest thumping," he said.

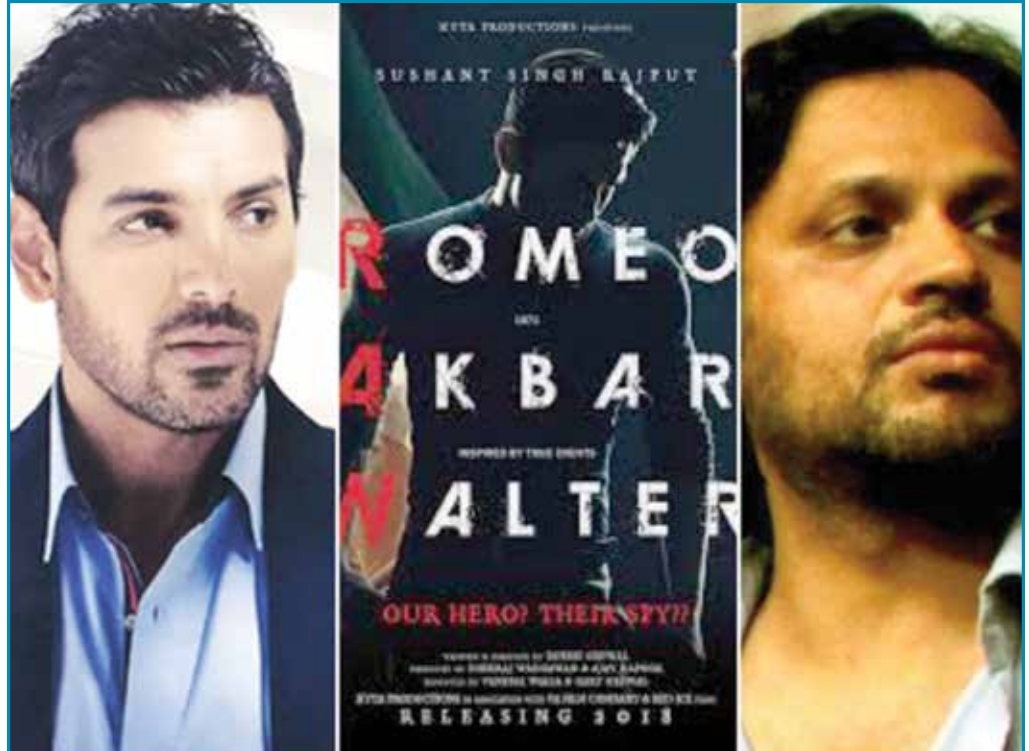
The director, who has previously made romantic films such as "MP3:

Mera Pehla Pehla Pyaar" and "Aloo Chaat", spent six years researching and writing the film, which is set against the backdrop of 1971 war.

"A Pakistan Army officer is as pious

as a spy sent to Pakistan but did not trivialise the Pakistani side, Robby said his is also not a good versus evil narrative.

"Jingoism comes when you project someone as bad. 'Raazi' didn't have a



as an Indian Army officer. What we have in our films, mostly, is that we tend to trivialise the other side, make them caricatures, 'bad people', which they aren't. They are doing exactly what we are doing. Circumstances put us against each other. They are not the bad people," he said.

Citing the example of Meghna Gulzar's "Raazi", which also featured an Indi-

good versus bad story. My story too isn't about 'we are good and they are bad.' I don't enjoy that.

"I like to keep things real. The drama should come through the narrative, not through over-dramatising the performances. As a filmmaker, I don't like pitching it too loud. Now real is commercial." "Romeo Akbar Walter" is scheduled to be released on April 5.



FUN IN FLORAL! The songstress, Katharine McPhee gives a rocker touch to her floral ensemble during a day out in London.

Ranbir is sweet and caring, I am impressed, says Soni Razdan



Mumbai, Mar 29 (PTI): Alia Bhatt's mother, veteran actor Soni Razdan says, she has al-

ways admired her daughter's boyfriend Ranbir Kapoor.

Ranbir and Alia made their relationship public when they attended Sonam Kapoor's wedding reception together last year. Since then both the actors have been spending quality time with each other's families.

While Alia rang in the New Year with the Kapoor clan in New York, Ranbir was recently spotted visiting the "Raazi" star's home on her 26th birthday.

"I have always admired him as an actor much before I knew him as a person. I have come to know him a little bit (more now personally). He is a well brought up and balanced man. He is a very sweet and caring man. I am quite impressed," Soni told PTI.

The actor said she is happy that her daughter is in a healthy space both professionally and personally.

"A good balance in professional and personal life is good and I would be happy as a mother if Alia is happy in all the aspect of her life professionally, personally."

The actor is busy promoting her upcoming film "No Fathers in Kashmir" that hits cinema houses on April 5.

Janhvi Kapoor to star opposite Rajkummar Rao in 'Rooh-Afza'

MUMBAI, MAR 29 (PTI): Actor Janhvi Kapoor has been roped in to feature in Rajkummar Rao and Varun Sharma starrer horror comedy, "Rooh-Afza".



The film will be directed by Hardik Mehta and co-produced by Dinesh Vijan and Mrighdeep Sing Lamba.

"For the female lead, we needed someone who could portray two contrasting personalities with ease and Janhvi stood out, she really connected with the script. Her talent is still raw, but she is excited about being moulded. The script is young, refreshing and totally crazy, and she is exactly that," Vijan said in a statement.

The film revolves around a singing ghost who puts

grooms to sleep so it can possess their brides.

Every time there is a wedding in town, local women come together to keep the groom awake through the first night in a bid to avoid the wrath of the ghost.

The "Dhadak" actor will be seen playing two "poles apart" characters, Roohi and Afsana, and Lamba says she will be the perfect fit.

"She needed to oscillate between two characters which are poles apart. You will fall in love with her in one scene and won't believe she is the same girl in the next one. It's not an easy switch for an actor. It's the perfect casting," Lamba added.

Vijan also said that Hardik is the right choice to helm the project

"His National Award-winning documentary 'Amdavad ma Famous' made me take notice of him. His strength lies in tapping nuances and pulling you into the world of the film. He effortlessly brings realism to bizarre situations. "There's a thin line that connect ours and the supernatural world, and he seems to have the potential to stitch that perfectly," Vijan said.

The film goes on floors in Uttar Pradesh this June and is slated to release on March 20, 2020.

Tom Hanks in talks to play Elvis Presley's manager in Baz Luhrmann's next



LOS ANGELES, MAR 29 (PTI): Veteran actor Tom Hanks is in negotiations to play Elvis Presley's iconic manager Colonel Tom Parker in Baz Luhrmann's untitled biopic on the legendary musician.

The Warner Bros project is also penned by Luhrmann along with Craig Pearce.

According to Variety, the director wants to cast a newcomer for the role of Presley.

Parker discovered Presley when he was just an unknown and quickly moved in as his lone representation. Parker was responsible for various milestones, including Presley's record deal with RCA and his successful acting career.

Luhrmann is planning to get the film into production sometime this year.

Justin Theroux and Pierce Brosnan join 'False Positive' cast

LOS ANGELES, MAR 29 (PTI): Veteran actor Pierce Brosnan and Justin Theroux have joined the cast of entertainment company A24's horror project "False Postive".

Ilana Glazer, Zainab Jah, Gretchen Mol, Sophia Bush, and Josh Hamilton are also part of the ensemble cast.

According to Variety, John Lee is directing the film.

Glazer is producing and co-writing the movie with Lee. Jonathan Wang will also produce.

The production is currently under way, but plot details have not been revealed yet.

ARIES: Your career mojo is rising this morning as the moon lingers in Capricorn, revving up your professional ambition zone. Flex those top-dog muscles and let people see what you're capable of, Ram: leading by inspiring, not bullying. This afternoon, downshift a gear or two as la luna glides into fun-loving Aquarius and your team-spirited eleventh house!

TAURUS: Early in the day, you may feel challenged to stand your ground, but dig in those designer heels and don't let anyone push you around! With the moon in your visionary ninth house, people might not be savvy enough to understand where you're coming from. And you may not be patient enough to explain it to them—again. Distract yourself, and them if necessary, until the afternoon, when the moon sails into your career corner.

GEMINI: You're great at following rules and doing "the right thing," but if you wake up this morning with the sense that you can't just dial it in, don't force things. You've earned at least one personal day, Gemini, so if you don't feel like trudging into the office,

see if you can work from home. At the very least, stick to less demanding and stressful items on your plate.

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: Do your culture-vulture wings need a rest, Pisces? For much of the day, the moon lingers in your eleventh house of group activities. Get those last meetings and conference calls out of the way as early as possible. Just in time for the weekend, la luna downshifts into sensual Aquarius and your twelfth house of R+R. Cancel a few plans so you can make the most of this low-key vibe. Of course, since the twelfth house rules dancing, you might want to conserve enough energy for that.