



**HOLLYWOOD CELEBS
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ACTOR PETER MAYHEW**
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**HOW THE WORLD'S LARGEST
DEMOCRACY CASTS ITS BALLOTS**

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**BIOPIC ON PM MODI TO
RELEASE ON MAY 24 NOW**

pg08



SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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*ISRO eyeing
to launch
Chandrayaan-II
rover in Moon's
south pole*

**KANYAKUMARI (TN)
MAY 3 (PTI):** Seeking to create history with India's second moon mission Chandrayaan-2, space agency ISRO Friday said it will attempt to launch a rover in the lunar South Pole, a uncharted territory so far.

"Till date nobody has made an attempt to land a rover in the region. It has been only near the equator (of the Moon). We will be attempting to launch the rover (of Chandrayaan 2) in lunar South Pole for the first time", Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) Chairman K Sivan said here.

Earlier this week, ISRO has said all three modules of the moon mission -- Orbiter, Lander (Vikram) and Rover (Pragyan) -- were getting ready for the launch scheduled in July and the lander was expected to touch down on the lunar surface in early September. ISRO has kept the launch window for the mission onboard GSLV MK-III rocket from July 9 to July 16 with an expected Moon landing on September 6, Sivan told reporters here.

The Orbiter and Lander modules will be interfaced mechanically and stacked together as an integrated module and accommodated inside the launch vehicle. The Rover is housed inside the Lander.

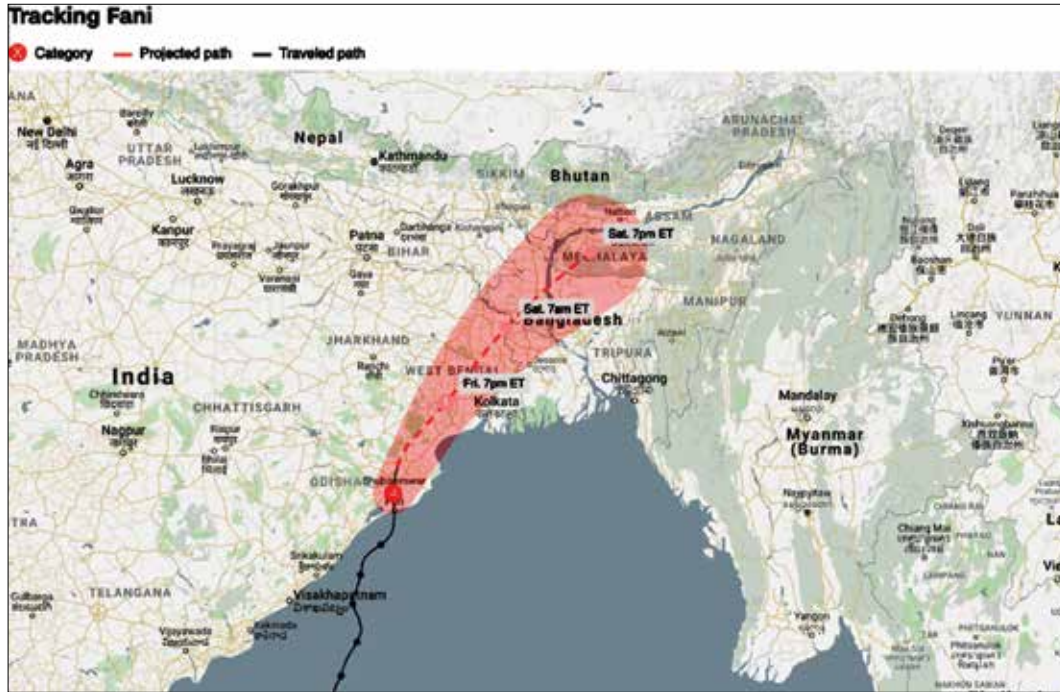
On ISRO's proposed Aditya-L1 mission, Sivan said currently scientists were exploring possibilities to study more about Sun. "To learn about Sun orbit, we will be sending Aditya-L1 during the first half of next year", he said.

The mission is aimed at observing the solar corona, the outer layers of the Sun. The satellite would be inserted in a halo orbit around the L1 (Lagrangian point 1) of the Sun-Earth system so that it has the advantage of continuously viewing the Sun without any occultation or eclipses. The L1 is 1.5 million kms from the Earth.

On a question about tracking cyclone Fani, he said, with the details provided by ISRO, officials were able to forecast the landfall area and this helped in taking precautionary measures in advance. "Due to tracking conditions, we have been able to minimise the impact caused in terms of casualties...", he said.

Cyclone 'Fani' hit Odisha Friday, packing rain and windstorm that gusted up to 175 kmph, leaving at least three people dead, blowing away thatched houses, and swamping towns and villages.

Govt puts administration on Fani alert



**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 03 MAY:** The Land Revenue and Disaster Management Department has issued

an advisory today asking all District Collectors and Sub Divisional Magistrates of the State to remain alert on account of cyclone Fani

hitting the Eastern coast of the country today.

The advisory states that Sikkim too is likely to receive heavy rainfall

accompanied by high winds from Friday night onwards till 05 May.

It may be mentioned that cyclone Fani has al-

ready hit Odisha killing three people. The cyclone made landfall in Puri at around 8 a.m today. However, as the cyclone

moves towards Kolkata and further north east, it is expected to weaken and has been downgraded to a very severe cyclonic storm

from an extremely severe cyclonic storm. The wind speeds have been reduced to 140-150 kmph from 175 kmph.

Do's and Don'ts

1. BEFORE CYCLONE

- Ignore rumours, Stay calm, Don't panic
- Keep your mobile phones charged to ensure connectivity; use SMS
- Listen to radio, watch TV, read newspapers for weather updates
- Keep your documents and valuables in water-proof containers
- Prepare an emergency kit with essential items for safety and survival
- Secure your house; carry out repairs; don't leave sharp objects loose
- Untie cattle/animals to ensure their safety

Fishermen Should

- Keep a radio set with extra batteries handy
- Keep boats/rafts tied up in a safe place
- Don't venture out in the sea

2. DURING AND AFTER CYCLONE

A) If Indoors

- Switch off electrical mains, gas supply
- Keep doors and windows shut
- If your house is unsafe, leave early before the onset of a cyclone
- Listen to radio/transistor
- Drink boiled/chlorinated water
- Rely only on official warnings

B) If Outdoors

- Do not enter damaged buildings
- Watch out for broken electric poles and wires, and other sharp objects
- Seek a safe shelter as soon as possible

Nepal Army, wildlife officer dismiss Indian Army's Yeti claim

SHIRISH B PRADHAN

KATHMANDU, MAY 3 (PTI): The Nepal Army and a wildlife expert have dismissed the Indian Army's claim that its soldiers have spotted footprints of Yeti, the mythical beast found in the Himalayas, near the Makalu Base Camp, saying they were likely that of a bear. On Monday, the Army claimed its mountaineering expedition team in Nepal found mysterious large footprints in the snow that they believe belong to Yeti, or the abominable snowman. In Nepali folklore, Yeti is a mythical ape-like creature taller than an average human that is said to inhabit the Himalayas, Siberia, Central and East Asia.

"For the first time, an Indian Army Mountaineering Expedition Team has sited (sic) Mysterious Footprints of mythical beast 'Yeti' measuring 32x15 inches close to Makalu Base Camp on 09 April 2019. This elusive snowman has only been sighted at Makalu-Barun National Park in the past," the Indian Army tweeted on Monday night.

The Army also released photos showing large footprints in the snow which they claim belong to the creature. However, Director General of the Department of Wildlife and National Parks Man Bahadur Khadka has dismissed the Indian Army's claim, "According to our experts, it may be the footprint of a bear found in the Himalayas," he was quoted as saying by the Kantipur Daily.

According to Nepal Army spokesperson Bigyan Dev Pandey, a liaison officer of the Nepal Army, who accompanied the Indian Army expedition team, had not directly seen the footprint.

Pandey said some 3 to 4 years ago, a French expedition team had reported a similar sighting of giant footprints. At that time it was reported that the unusual footprints were seen in the mountain. When the wildlife experts were contacted for verification, they said that the Makalu Barun region is home to large snow bears and the footprints might belonged to them, the officer said.

An Indian Army team of 18 personnel led by Major Manoj Joshi embarked on an expedition to Mount Makalu in Nepal on April 2. On April 9, the team spotted "mysterious footprints" measuring 32 X 15 inches to close to the Makalu base camp.

Makalu is the fifth highest mountain in the world at 8,485 metres. It is located in the Mahalangur Himalayas, some 19 kilometres southeast of Mount Everest, on the border between Nepal and Tibet, China. Stories of the Yeti first emerged as a facet of Western popular culture in the 19th century. Given the lack of evidence of its existence, the scientific community has generally regarded the Yeti as a legend.

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Gangtok all set for first VIVO IPL Fan Park event



SAGAR CHETTRI

GANGTOK, 03 MAY:

Gangtok is all set to host the VIVO IPL Fan Park for the first time in Sikkim to provide stadium like atmosphere to cricket fans of the State on 04 and 05 May here at old Guards Ground.

Gangtok is among eight new cities added in the list of IPL Fan Parks for Indian Premier League [IPL] 2019 and will be screening four IPL matches.

VIVO IPL Fan Park is an endeavour of the Boards of Control Cricket in India [BCCI] initiated in year 2015 to take the IPL fervour to all parts of the country and to provide stadium-type atmosphere to cricket fans. The venue will have giant screens to telecast live matches of IPL.

IPL Fan Park at Gangtok will be screening matches between Delhi C and Rajasthan Royals at 4 p.m and Royal Challengers Bangalore and Sunrisers Hyderabad at 8 p.m on Saturday and then Kings XI Punjab and Chennai Super King at 4 p.m and Mumbai Indian's and Kolkata Knight Riders a 8 p.m on Sunday.

Addressing a press conference here this afternoon, Sikkim Cricket Association [SCA] general secretary, Sonam Palden Bhutia stated that the

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One election commissioner gave dissent on two decisions on complaints against PM: Sources

NEW DELHI, MAY 3 (PTI): One of the two election commissioners had dissented in the decision of the 'full Election Election Commission' to give clean chit to Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the two speeches made in Maharashtra last month, highly-placed sources aware of the development said Friday. In the last three days, the Commission gave its decision on as many complaints by the Congress against the prime minister, alleging violation of the model code.

One of the election commissioners, according to the sources, gave his dissent in EC's decision to give clean chit to the prime minister on his speech at Wardha on April 1 where he attacked Congress chief Rahul Gandhi for contesting from minority-dominated Wayanad seat and his appeal to first-time voters by invoking the Balakot air strikes and

the Pulwama martyrs in Latur on April 9. The 'full Commission' which takes such decisions comprises Chief Election Commissioner Sunil Arora and fellow election commissioners Ashok Lavasa and Sushil Chandra.

The two decisions were then taken based on 2:1 majority as per prescribed law which governs the functioning the of the poll panel, the sources said.

The Election Commission (Conditions of Service of Election Commissioners and Transaction of Business) Act, 1991 states that if the Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners differ in opinion on any matter, such matter shall be decided according to the opinion of the majority.

The Commission transacts its business by holding regular meetings and also by circulation of papers. All Election Commissioners have equal say in the decision making of the Commission.

Mala, Helen, Nargis: How are cyclones named?

NEW DELHI, MAY 3 (PTI): Mala, Helen, Nargis and Nilofer may sound like the names of yesteryear Bollywood actors, but they are, in fact, lethal cyclones that have brought violent winds, heavy rains and wreaked destruction. As Cyclone Fani pounded the Odisha coast on Friday, the name, which was suggested by Bangladesh, also evoked curiosity. Mritunjay Mohapatra, the additional director general of the India Meteorological Department (IMD), said Fani, pronounced as 'Foni', means a snake's hood.

But how are cyclones named?

The World Meteorological Organisation/Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific Panel on Tropical Cyclones, at its twenty-seventh session held in 2000 in Muscat, Oman, agreed to assign names to the tropical cyclones in the Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea.



After long deliberations among the member countries, the naming of tropical cyclones over north Indian Ocean commenced from September 2004.

The eight countries along the Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea suggest names that are sequentially listed. The nations suggest names

alphabetically -- Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Myanmar, Oman, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

The Regional Specialised Meteorological Centre (RSMC) based here gives a tropical cyclone an identification from the names list. The identification system covers both the Arabian

Sea and the Bay of Bengal.

So, for instance, Bangladesh suggested 'Onil' the first in the list. Onil originated in Arabian Sea, off the Gujarat coast between September to October 2004. It made landfall in the state, but impacted both India and Pakistan.

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Gangtok all...

BCCI is hosting the VIVO IPL Fan Park for the first time in Sikkim in collaboration with DNA Networks and SCA.

He informed that the BCCI has shortlisted 21 States and 36 cities to host the VIVO IPL Fan Park for this season of IPL. Although the IPL has huge fan following globally the BCCI has taken this initiative to further increase viewership and to provide stadium type atmosphere even in those cities which do not have cricket stadiums, he added.

The new State included in VIVO IPL Fan Park 2019 is Sikkim and new cities are Gangtok, Tezpur, Bhillai, Una, Shivmogga, Tirunelveli, Mudurai and Trichy. It is informed that the Fan Parks have covered 65 cities in last four years and in the last season 35 venues accommodated around 5 lakhs of cricket fans. The cities retained for this year are the ones which have seen a good footfall in previous years and continue to draw fans in larger numbers.

Mr Bhutia stated that the main objective of VIVO IPL Fan Park is to provide entertainment and fun for cricket lovers and to bring social changes through community viewing and globalisation of the game of cricket.

Speaking about various attractions of VIVO IPL Fan Park at Gangtok, he informed that the event will have a lucky draw to provide two VIVO phones per day to winners and another lucky draw to provide jersey and bats autographed by big cricket stars and there will be face painters for viewers and banners to cheer their favourite team.

The venue will also have facilities like free distribution of drinking water, toilets and kids zone. He informed that the venue will have live commentary and music and a team will shoot the entire event for live uplink to be broadcasted from the IPL venue.

Mr Bhutia urged sports lovers of Sikkim to be a part of this major event in the state. He informed that the venue can accommodate around 3000 people at a time and the entry to the venue is totally free of cost. He also expressed his hope that the event will further encourage and motivate young cricketers of the State to work harder to play in major tournaments and IPL in the near future.

The press conference was also addressed by SCA PRO, Barap Namgyal.

Mala, Helen, Nargis...

Cyclone Phetai, suggested by Thailand, originated in the Bay of Bengal and made landfall in Andhra Pradesh, ravaging the coastal districts in December last year.

The next cyclone, whenever it originates, will be named 'Vayu', suggested by India.

Of the 64 names suggested by these eight countries, 57 have been utilised.

Some of the names suggested by India are Agni, Jali, Bijli, Akash, while Mala, Helen and Nilofar were suggested by Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Pakistan respectively.

These lists are used sequentially and they are not rotated every few years, unlike the Atlantic and Eastern Pacific lists.

"A storm causes so much death and destruction that its name is considered for retirement and hence is not used repeatedly.

"If the public wants to suggest the name of a cyclone to be included in the list, the proposed name must meet some fundamental criteria," a circular on naming the cyclones over the North Indian Ocean said.

"The name should be short and readily understood when broadcast. Further, the names must not be culturally sensitive and must not convey some unintended and potentially inflammatory meaning," it added.

The name can be communicated to the director general of the IMD.

According to the IMD, in the beginning, storms were named arbitrarily.

Laxman Singh Rathore, a former director general of the IMD, said the practice of naming the storm first started in the United States. This helped identify it and also aided the researchers.

Earlier, the storm was named after the coast it hit, Rathore added.

"Then the mid-1900s saw the start of practice of using feminine names for storms. In the pursuit of a more organised and efficient naming system, meteorologists later decided to identify storms using names from a list arranged alphabetically," the IMD said explaining the genesis of the naming process.

"Before the end of 1900s, forecasters started using male names for those forming in the Southern Hemisphere. Since 1953, Atlantic tropical storms have been named from lists originated by the National Hurricane Centre. They are now maintained and updated by an international committee of the World Meteorological Organisation," the IMD added.

Storms over South Pacific and Indian Ocean are known as cyclones. In the North Atlantic, central North Pacific, and eastern North Pacific, the term hurricane is used.

The same type of disturbance in the Northwest Pacific is called a typhoon, according to the National Ocean Service of the US' National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration.

West convenes monsoon preparedness meeting

GYALSHING, 03 MAY (IPR): The District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) convened a monsoon preparedness meeting today chaired by DC West, Karma R Bonpo, and also attended by SDM (HQ), Tushar G Nikhare; SDM (Gyalshing), Gilbert Lepcha and HoDs of line departments.

The meeting assessed the current level of preparedness of various departments and also took stock of works being done by the various departments and intervention of the DC office where required. The departments made detailed presentations on their monsoon preparedness processes.

The DC directed officials to ensure that the concerned departments were properly prepared for natural calamities



which could occur during monsoons and urged officials looking after PMGSY projects to ensure that road constructions and back cutting works did not hinder the natural flow of drain waters.

He asked the concerned officials to clear all the drains immedi-

ately and take preventive actions.

He also asked the SDMs to inspect the roads and the meeting resolved that carpeting works not to be undertaken during monsoons to avoid unnecessary government resources.

HRDD was instructed

to train students on how to cope with natural disasters and also check on the availability of first aid kits at schools.

The DCSO was instructed to stock supplies and maintain at least three months worth of buffer stock for remote villages in case connec-

tivity was hampered.

Relief centers are to be designated and stocks of essential commodities maintained for victims in the event of natural calamities.

The SSB assured full cooperation in the event of any disaster and the meeting also discussed the criticalities of vari-

ous departments.

UD&HD was directed to take up the clearing of drains at the earliest and an assessment of man-power was also undertaken.

The DC further detailed the Disaster Management Plan and he asked for details and contacts to be compiled and given to the DC Office. The setting up of a control room and communication center is also to be taken up on priority and all SDMs asked to use their wireless sets during the monsoons.

All SDMs and BDOs were directed to undertake cleanliness drives in their respective stations.

Agriculture and Horticulture department officials were also advised to hand over compensation for crops affected by rains in the presence of Revenue Officials in the concerned areas.

Justice Rai begins three-day tour of North Sikkim



MANGAN, 03 MAY (IPR): The three days tour to North Sikkim of Justice, Meenakshi Madan Rai, Judge High Court of Sikkim and Executive Chairperson, Sikkim State Legal Services Authority began today. She was accompanied by Sonam Palden Bhutia, District and Session Judge, North, Suraj Chettri, Member Secretary, SSLSA, Matilda Isaacs, Special Secretary, SSLSA, North, Kunzang Dorjee Shangderpa, Sr. Superintendent of Police, North, Roger R Rai, Managing Director, SIDICO and Somnath Adhikari, Additional District Magistrate.

On the first day of her three days tour, Justice Rai chaired an awareness-cum-sensitization programme on Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012, Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007, Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 and Adoption in terms of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 at Chungthang, Panchayat Bhawan.

The programme which was organized by the Sikkim State Legal Services Authority in co-ordination with District Legal Services Authority, North Sikkim aims to make the school students and general public aware on the importance of above stated Act as the safeguarding tools for the protection of the rights of Senior Citizens, Women and children.

During the programme, resource person Sonam Palden Bhutia sensitized to the partic-

ipants on various provisions of Sikkim Anti Drugs Act (SADA), Protection of Child from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act and Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act (NDPS).

He informed that POCSO Act being implemented with the objective to provide care and protection of children from sexual assault, sexual harassment, pornography and to serve as guidance to children who are in conflict with law.

Similarly, resource person, Suraj Chettri sensitized the house on Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007, Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 and Adoption in terms of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015.

Elucidating the JJ Act, Mr. Chettri enlightened the students on various crimes against children and Acts designed to safeguard the welfare of the children. He also highlighted the responsibilities of Child Development Protection Officer (CDPO) towards Care and Protection of Children those who are in need. Simultaneously, he informed about the Juvenile in Conflict with Law.

Talking on various provisions of child adoption he suggested the house to follow duly legal procedures before adopting any baby child. Further, he enlightened that the senior citizens can approach to the Sub Divisional Magistrate for seeking their maintenance under the Maintenance and Welfare of

Parents and Senior Citizens Act.

Talking on Domestic Violence he informed that there are three types of Domestic Violence viz. Physical Violence, Mental Violence and Economic Violence. Any women facing such violence can seek legal assistance from their respective Magistrate Court.

Summing up the sensitization programme Justice Rai informed that the programme was aimed to enlighten the unreached rural community about child rights and child protection through this sensitization programme. Moreover, she called upon the people of north district to approach Judicial Court in case of any POCSO offences rather to settle it amicably.

On the other side, she urged the Police Personnel to remain more sensitive towards POCSO offence. She opined that the general information of POCSO should be taught in more serious manner in the school as to bring more sensitization among the students.

Justice Rai stated that POCSO is a non-compoundable and non-bailable offence and encouraged everyone to join hands to combat child sexual abuse in our society.

After the programme, Justice Rai and her entourage proceeded towards Lachen. On the second day of three days tour, she will visit Gurudongmar Lake and Tsholhamu Lake. Justice Rai will visit Lachung and Yumthang on the last day of her tour and will also attend the legal interaction programme with Pipons and village elders at Lachung.

First round training for micro observers in South Sikkim



NAMCHI, 03 MAY (IPR): The first round of training for Micro Observers, Counting Supervisors and Counting Assistants for Election 2019, organized by DC (South) cum District Election Officer was had at the Community Hall here today. Present amongst others were ADC (South), Satyen Kr Pradhan, SDM (HQ), Hemant Rai, Master Trainers Jigme Bhutia and Bimal Chandra Rai.

Addressing, the gathering, Master Trainer Mr Jigme Bhutia spoke about the instructions issued by Election Commission of India (ECI) regarding the arrangement for counting centres and management of counting process.

There are a total of three counting rooms in the South district which will all be located at Namchi Senior Secondary School.

The trainer also detailed the various rules and regulations for Postal Ballots, Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballot System (ETBPS), Electronic Voting Machines (EVM) and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trails (VVPATs).

Mr Bhutia underlined that postal ballot papers are to be counted first and the counting of votes in EVMs will commence 30 minutes after the start of postal ballot counting.

He added that during the counting process, the Observer will randomly

select EVMs and cross check them and if any discrepancy is found, stipulated procedures according to the ECI will be followed.

Furthermore, Mr Bhutia explained that the randomization process will be carried out on the day of counting after which each counting official will be assigned a table under the Assembly Segment and Assembly Constituency respectively.

He also stressed that it was imperative for the counting officials to be careful and maintain the secrecy of votes, failing which, disciplinary action may be taken against the counting officials as per ECI.

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Sd/
Col D N Bhutia
Secretary

Meghalaya braces for Cyclone Fani

SHILLONG, MAY 3 (PTI): The Meghalaya government has sought deployment of a platoon of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) in the state in view of Cyclone Fani, officials said Friday.

The extremely severe cyclonic storm made landfall in Odisha on Friday morning. It is gradually heading towards West Bengal and from there it is likely to move towards the north-east, the officials said.

One NDRF platoon, comprising 25 to 30 personnel, has been sought from Guwahati, Meghalaya Revenue and Disaster Minister Kyrmen Shylla said.

The IMD has warned of thundersquall accompanied with gusty winds and heavy rains for the next 48 hours across the northeastern states, including Meghalaya.

"We have requested the NDRF to deploy at least one platoon at the state capital. The NDRF personnel would assist the state in case of any emergency," Shylla told PTI.

The officials of all the 11 districts have been asked to be on alert, the minister said, adding, all officers, including those posted in various blocks, have been asked not to leave their places of posting, the minister said.

The State Disaster Relief Force and the

Fire Services have been kept on standby, the minister added.

The district disaster management authorities have asked all residents to take precautions, he said.

"People are required to take extra care to avoid any incidences and ensure safe keeping of all objects such as lumber piles, loose tin sheets, bricks, garbage bins and signboards which could be blown away by strong winds," an advisory issued by the Disaster Management Authority of East Khasi Hills district said here.

Meanwhile, the Eastern Air Command of the Indian Air Force (IAF) has been kept on standby in view of the storm.

"Six light helicopters for rescue operations and five medium-lift helicopters for transporting relief materials are ready in case of any emergency," a spokesperson at the EAC headquarters said here.

"In addition, four AN 32 aircraft have been kept ready, with medical teams, for ferrying relief material, medical help, NDRF teams and equipment," the spokesperson said.

The IAF spokesperson said that the helicopters have been kept ready at Bagdogra and Purnea for quick deployment in Odisha and West Bengal.

SHSC draws Jr League opener against Aizwal FC



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 03 APR:

Sikkim Himalayan Sporting Club [SHSC] played out a draw against Aizwal FC in the Hero India Junior (HIJ) League today.

The HIJ league is for u-15 teams.

The match was played at Bidhan Nagar Sports Complex, Kolkata, and SHSC finds itself in the group stage alongside Aizwal FC, Maximus Prime Sports and AU Rajasthan FC.

Aizwal FC took a two-goal lead early in the game and the Sikkim

team did well to level the scoreline in the first half itself. The goal scorers for Sikkim were Sagar Mahanto and Rudra Chettri.

Sikkim plays its next match against Maximum Prime Sports on 05 May.

Coach Pranay Subba informs that the result was good for SHSC.

"Aizwal FC is a strong team but we managed to earn one point from the match. We have good chances of qualifying from our group if we win our remaining two matches," he said.

Founder, Tenzing

Lamtha, SHSC, expressed his happiness over the result as well.

"This is a good result for us. I am happy that our lads could get a draw against a reputed club. It has been our club's dream to see our young talent play at the national level against big clubs of the country. This will give exposure and experience to our young players at an early age," he said.

The SHSC team at Kolkata has Mayal Dok Lepcha as the coach while Pranay Subba is the grassroots coach.

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E-mail: contact.synapse@gmail.com/

irshad_ali123@rediffmail.com



GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM WATER SECURITY & PHE DEPARTMENT GANGTOK

GENERAL INFORMATION

The contact numbers of the Jr. Engineers, Area Incharge and Fitters of different areas of Gangtok, Water Supply area area as follows for information of the General Public and the consumers.

S.I	Name	Designation	Contact Number	Remarks
I)	BAZAR ZONE, MG MARG AREA			Chabilall Chettri is Area Incharge.
1.	Chunku Bhutia	J.E	7407181121	
2.	Promod Rai	J.E	8768880206	
3.	Chabilal Chettri	Sr. Fitter	7407024847	
4.	Kalu Tamang	Sr. Fitter	9734452165	
5.	Bhim Bdr Chettri – I	Sr. Fitter	9002890366	
6.	Goverdhan Gurung	Fitter	9733347592	Bholanath Sharma is the Area Incharge.
II)	ARITHANG			
7.	Chotalall Das	Fitter	9800413516	
8.	Badal Rai	Fitter	9832330797	
III)	NEW MARKET, NAMNANG, LALL BAZAR			
9.	Depen Tamang	Fitter	9775462806	
IV)	DEVELOPMENT, SICHEY AREA			Abiney Pradhan is the Area Incharge
10.	Sudip Chettri	J.E.	9733037378	
11.	Saurav Giri	J.E.	9933817883	
12.	Bhola Nath Sharma	Sub J.E.	9434339383	
13.	Bishnu Bhakta Chettri	Sr. Fitter	9609030082	
14.	Sanman Tamang	Fitter	9775944052	
15.	Samuel Bhujel	Fitter	8016690716	Zigme Bhutia is the Area Incharge
V)	DPH AREA			
	Suraj Gurung	Fitter	8967983785	
VI)	DEORALI, SYARI			
16.	Namgyal Bhutia	J.E	8250396081	
17.	Mandira Rai	J.E.	8145101883	
18.	Abiney Pradhan	Supervisor	9547251397	Pemchung Lepcha is the Area Incharge.
19.	Durga Chettri	Fitter	8116279340	
VII)	TADONG AREA			
20.	Sunima Pradhan	J.E	7718468861	
21.	Rinzing Bhutia	J.E.	8597086909	
22.	Tshering Bhutia	Fitter	8372834840	
23.	Dal Bdr. Chettri	Fitter	9434408392	Zigme Bhutia is the Area Incharge
VIII)	BURTUK, CHANDMARI, TATHENCHEN			
24.	Mrinalini Rai	J.E.	7797387562	
25.	Zigme Bhutia	Sub J.E.	7872971527	
26.	Pradeep Darjee – I	Fitter	9474660054	
27.	Suraj Rasaily	Fitter	7602602777	
28.	Man Bdr Dural	Fitter	7872882377	Pemchung Lepcha is the Area Incharge.
	BOJOGHARI, PENLONG AREA			
29.	Sidesh Rai	J.E.	9800067676	
30.	Pemchung Lepcha	Supervisor	7478949888	
31.	Bhaichung Bhutia	Sr. Fitter	9733062958	
32.	Tashi Bhutia	Sr. Fitter	8348586449	
	RANIPOOL AREA			
33.	Sidesh Rai	J.E	9800067676	
34.	Sonam Bhutia	Supervisor	7585872853.	

R.O. No. 15/IPR/Pub/Classi./19-20

Date: 01.05.2019

Modi "touched base" with almost every Indian in 125 days

NEW DELHI, MAY 3 (PTI): In the last few months of his tenure, Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended 200 programmes, political as well as official, held across 27 states and union territories, "touching base with almost every Indian" in 125 days, according to his website.

It said there is no part of the country that he did not visit during the 125 days between December 25 and May 1 as he crisscrossed from Kashmir to Kanyakumari and Jamnagar to Silchar, while speaking to students to scientists, farmers, entrepreneurs, foreign heads of state and political workers.

"These numbers speak for themselves. They also offer a unique glimpse into the working style and multi-tasking abilities of Modi. Through these programmes, he would have touched base with almost every Indian in 125 days," it said.

In this period, Modi made promises and worked at their swift delivery, the website said, referring to flagship welfare programmes, 'Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sam-

man Nidhi' and 'Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Man Dhan Yojana'. The former provides monetary support of Rs 6000 per annum to farmers and the latter assures a monthly pension to the unorganised sector.

The prime minister also dealt with the Pulwama terror attack with "courage and statesmanship" as the Indian Air Force launched air strikes on terrorist camps in Pakistan which put the neighbouring country "on the defensive". "Modi's proactive foreign policy has diminished the stature and voice of Pakistan at the world stage. On May 1, Masood Azhar was declared a terrorist by the UN, thanks to the support from a large number of nations," it noted.

The website also said he became the first prime minister in years to visit the Kumbh Mela and take a dip in Sangam, besides attending a puja ceremony.

"This visit indicated the prime minister's pride towards India's rich culture and the desire to draw more youngsters towards our rich ethos.

In the last few months, Modi visited several such centres closely associated with India's history and culture," it added.

The prime minister also visited Port Blair to pay tributes to Hindutva icon Veer Savarkar and several others at the iconic Cellular Jail.

Noting that Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose has always been an influence on Modi, it said that he unfurled the Tricolour to mark the 75th anniversary of the unfurling of the national flag by Bose. During the 125 days, Modi visited his Lok Sabha constituency Varanasi five times and attended wide-ranging programmes.

The holy city has seen "unparalleled development work", especially in local infrastructure, electricity and cleanliness, and one project that stands out is the Kashi Vishwanath Dham project, which aims at improving infrastructure at the Vishwanath temple and will "transform" Varanasi. In February, Modi addressed a rally of ex-servicemen and dedicated the National War Memorial to the nation.



SIKKIM STATE LEGAL SERVICES AUTHORITY

Development Area, Gangtok: Sikkim
Phone: 03592-207753, Fax: 03592-207753

EMPLOYMENT NOTICE

Applications are invited from eligible local candidates for filling up the following posts on purely temporary basis in the establishment of Sikkim State Legal Services Authority, Districts Legal Services Authorities (East, North, West and South) and ADR Centre, East in the following Pay Matrix.

SLSA

Sl. No.	Name of Post	No. of Post	Pay in the Pay Matrix	Qualification	Syllabus
1.	Peon	02	Rs.18,000/- Cell 1 Level 4	Class VIII passed from a recognized school/Board	Viva Voce only.

DLSA

Sl. No.	Name of Post	No. of Post	Pay in the Pay Matrix	Qualification	Syllabus
1.	Peon	04 (4 DLSAs for all the 4 Districts)	Rs.18,000/- Cell 1 Level 4	Class VIII passed from a recognized school/Board	Viva Voce only.

ADR Centre, East at Gangtok

Sl. No.	Name of Post	No. of Post	Pay in the Pay Matrix	Qualification	Syllabus
1.	Sweeper-cum-Chowkidar	01	Rs.18,000/- Cell 1 Level 4	Class IV passed	Viva Voce only.

Conditions of eligibility

- Should have attained the age of 18 years & should not have exceeded 40 years in terms of **Notification No: M(3)/(55)/GEN/DOP/Pt-III DT: 03/07/2017**.
- Candidates fulfilling the above criteria may apply for the post along with the self attested supporting documents and address proof and 3 (three) recent passport size photographs. Application received without supporting documents will be summarily rejected. Candidates are also required to mention their proper address and mobile/ contact numbers in their applications.
- Other Requisites:-**
 - Candidates must be in possession of either Sikkim Subject Certificate or Certificate of Identification issued by the Competent Authority.
 - Candidate already in Government Service or in Public Sector Undertaking or similar Organizations, whether in permanent or temporary capacity or as Work-Charge employee shall submit their application along with "**No Objection Certificate**" from their present employer.
 - Candidate must possess valid employment card issued by D.O.P.A.R.T., Government of Sikkim.
 - SC/ST/OBC/MBC Certificate as the case may be.
 - Class VIII passed Mark-Sheet from recognized Board/School for the post of Peon.
 - Class IV passed for the post of Sweeper-cum-Chowkidar from a recognized Primary School.
- The application along with self attested copies of the documents mentioned above should reach the Office of the Member Secretary, Sikkim State Legal Services Authority, Development Area, Gangtok on or before **30.05.2019 (Tuesday) between 10.00 am to 4.00 pm**.
- Application received after the last date i.e. **30.05.2019** shall not be entertained on any ground.
- The list of names of candidates found eligible to appear for visa-voce for the post of Peon and Sweeper-cum-Chowkidar will be displayed on the Notice Board of the Sikkim State Legal Services Authority on 7th June, 2019 (Friday).**
- Candidates found eligible on preliminary scrutiny of the applications shall be issued admit cards on **7th to 9th June, 2019**.
- Candidates issued with admit card for the posts above shall be interviewed on 11th of June, 2019 (Tuesday) in the office of SLSA, Development Area from 10:00 a.m. onwards.**
- The State Legal Services Authority reserves the right to accept or reject any application, with or without any reason.
- No separate calling letter will be issued to eligible candidates for the practical/ written examination.
- Eligible candidates should appear with the original documents at the time of interview.
- No TA/DA shall be paid for appearing in the selection test.

Sd/-

MEMBER SECRETARY

R.O. No. 17/IPR/Pub/Classi./19-20
Date: 03.05.2019.

Sikkim State Legal Authority
Development Area, Gangtok.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Tenzin Palbar @ Tenzin Palbar Bhutia, son of Nima Chedar Bhutia, resident of Gangtok, P.O. & PS Gangtok, East Sikkim, solemnly declare that Tenzin Palbar and Tenzin Palbar Bhutia denotes to one and same identical person i.e. myself vide affidavit before Oath Commissioner, Gangtok, East Sikkim on 26th June 2012 at Gangtok, East Sikkim

~ SummitTIMES ~ CLASSIFIEDS

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**Summit Times office
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URGENTLY REQUIRED:

Urgent Recruitment for a waiter with atleast 3 years experience and one kitchen helper. Contact: Hotel Paramount, Dentam, West Sikkim- 9735909625 / 8348285444

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

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Complete yoga syllabus will be provided by SYVC Gangtok absolutely free of cost. After one year of basic training and service (karma yoga)/ volunteering in the Centre, the candidate would be sent for Yoga Teacher Training Course at Shivananda Yoga Ashram. After TTC, the candidate would be appointed on part time basis at the Yoga Centre in Gangtok. College students can also apply. If required, food and accommodation would be provided.

Interested candidates may contact

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LAND FOR SALE

A vacant plot measuring 0.38 Ha. (16552.80 sq – ft) is for sale at Amdo Golai (above the main road), Gangtok. For more information please contact – 9717191985/9474651223.

Looking Out for 10% Should Not be Difficult

And we let them down still

As of 2011, exactly 64,111 members of Sikkim's population were in the 0-6 age-group, making up a neat 10.50% of its population of 6,10,577 people. The national share of population in this age-group is slightly higher at 13.1%, down from 15.9% in 2001. These figures, as per the Census of India 2011. The previous census had posted the number of children in this age-group at 78,195, making up 14.50% of Sikkim's population of 5,40,851 at the time.

There has been talk of the fall in fertility rates, with some even suggesting that Sikkimese women should bear more children: o While such demands are clearly wrong on so many levels, this section had only recently commented on such attitudes, so today, let's discuss "young age dependency", as census enumerators refer to the 0-6 age-group. Dependency ratio can be defined as the age-population ratio of those typically not in the labor force. This would mean the minors and the senior citizens, whose care rests on the shoulders of the productive/ working population. Clearly then, the lower this number, the lesser the stress on the working population and better the access to available resources for the 'dependents'. At a wider, society and State level, this means that the existing infrastructure and funds can now go much further since the number of beneficiaries is fewer. Even in absolute terms, for instance, the number of minors has dropped from 78,195 in 2001 to 64,111 in 2011. Given the trend, this number must be even lower now, five years down the line. Budget outlays have however consistently risen, and even after factoring in inflation, there should be much more available by way of funds for these children per head than was the case a decade and a half ago.

It goes without saying that fewer number of the very young translates into an enhanced ability to invest in child development. It's simplistic, but one needs to be bear in mind that a fewer newborns now, while it might free resources to ensure better care and education for them in the immediate future, also translates as greater responsibilities on their shoulders in the longer run. As a generation ages, they will stop being active contributors to the economy and the work-place. Improved healthcare facilities will mean that they will also remain dependent for more years. The share of elderly will increase, and with fewer young coming of age down the line, the pressure on them to look after the aged will increase. China is feeling the stress of its one-child policy now. That said, today's minors will deliver on their adult responsibilities only as well as they have been groomed at present. All the more reason why they should be exposed to the best education and groomed with a stronger sense of responsibility and belonging if the present generation wants to be looked after better when they retire and grow into the dependency of old age.

If education is genuinely touched by quality, a more confident and definitely more resourceful generation can be prepared. But Sikkim has been failing its young embarrassingly. Take the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) for 2018, for instance. Where one had hoped that more children would have received access to improved classroom teaching, the opposite seems to be happening. Reading levels among standard III students rose only marginally from 26.9% in 2012 to 29.3% in 2018. Even as the improvement is too miniscule, what is also distressing is that reading levels were measured as class III students being able to read standard I texts. It should be a worry that barely 30% of the current standard III students can read even basic standard II texts. Mathematics has actually recorded a fall in learning quality. In 2012, 55% of the standard III students could do subtraction [2-digit by 2-digit with borrowing], a basic standard II task for this age, but in 2018, this number had fallen to 40%! Where the young should have been learning better because there are fewer of them and still the same number, if not more, of teachers attending to them, the quality of learning appears to have fallen!

But quality education is something everyone owes to the very young. And now it is also affordable. Think about it, if 90% of the population wakes up to its responsibilities towards the remaining 10% who depend on them for everything, they can ensure that the minors receive the best of everything. If this 90% consciously resolves to genuinely care, a much more responsive, warm and compassionate generation will take charge of Sikkim in the very near future.

How the world's largest democracy casts its ballots

POORVI VORA
theconversation.com

About 600 million Indian citizens are expected to cast their votes over a period of 39 days ending May 19, in the ongoing election for their country's parliament. There are roughly 900 million eligible voters, and the country has typically seen about two-thirds of them turn out to polling places.

I have been working on the security of electronic voting systems for more than 15 years, and, along with other colleagues, have been interested in understanding how a nation can tally that many votes cast over such a long period. India uses a domestically designed and manufactured electronic voting machine – as many as 4 million of them at 1 million polling places, at least some in extremely remote locations.

The first version of the Indian electronic voting machine debuted in the state election in Kerala in 1982. Now they're used in elections throughout the country, which happen on different days in different areas.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

When a voter arrives at the polling place, she presents a photo ID and the poll officer checks that she is on the electoral roll. When it's her turn to vote, a polling official uses an electronic voting machine's control unit to unlock its balloting unit, ready to accept her vote.

The balloting unit has a very simple user interface: a series of buttons with candidate names and symbols. To vote, the voter simply presses the button next to the candidate of her choice.

After each button press, a printer prints out the voter's choice on paper and displays it to the voter for a few seconds, so the person may verify that the vote was recorded correctly. Then the paper is dropped into a locked storage box.

The whole system runs on a battery, so it does not need to be plugged in.

When it's time for the polling place to close at the end of the voting day, each electronic voting machine device and paper-record storage box is sealed with wax and tape bearing the signatures of representatives of the various candidates in that election, and stored under armed guard.

After the election period is over and it's time to tally the votes, the electronic voting machines are brought out, the seals opened and the vote counts for each control unit are read out from its display board. Election workers hand-tally these individual machine totals to obtain the election results for each constituency.

SECURITY PROTECTIONS – AND CONCERNS

The Indian electronic voting machine primarily runs on specialized hardware and firmware, unlike the voting machines used in the U.S., which are software-intensive. It is intended for the single purpose of voting and specially designed for that, rather than relying on a standard operating system

like Windows, which needs to be regularly updated to patch detected security vulnerabilities.

Each machine requires only a connection between a balloting unit and a control unit; there are no provisions to connect an electronic voting machine to a computer network, much less the internet – including wirelessly.

This design does offer some protections against possible tampering with how votes are recorded and tallied. The Election Commission of India has repeatedly claimed that the electronic



voting machines are tamper-proof. However, a scholarly study has demonstrated there are ways to rig the machines. In particular, the simplicity of the design allows for simple attacks, such as intercepting and modifying the signal carried over the machine's cable.

The Election Commission has not made public any independent security evaluations, so it's unclear exactly what is – or isn't – possible. Parties that lose elections often suspect malfeasance and question the equipment.

MANUFACTURING THE MACHINES

As I and others have observed, when the machines are being made, there are a number of opportunities for someone to physically tamper with an electronic voting machine in ways that preelection device testing might not detect. The machines' software is designed, written and tested at two electronics companies owned by the government of India: Bharat Electronics Limited and Electronics Corporation of India Limited. The chips for the machines are manufactured outside India. In earlier versions of the machine, the chip manufacturer also wrote the machine code into the chip; today the electronics companies do it themselves.

At any time during manufacture, testing and maintenance, it may be possible to introduce counterfeit chips or swap out other components that

could let hackers alter the results.

The Election Commission of India argues that any manipulation or error would be detected because the electronic voting machine is tested frequently and candidate representatives have opportunities to participate in mock elections immediately before a machine is used in a real election. However, it is possible to make changes that will not be detected. Testing can reveal only some problems, and the absence of problems during testing does not mean that problems do not exist.

AUDITING THE MACHINES' RESULTS

There is, however, a mechanism for detecting attacks – that printed-out paper bearing the vote and stored securely with the electronic equipment. A 2013 Supreme Court directive asked the Election Commission to create that process to protect the integrity of the balloting process.

In each constituency, five electronic voting machines will have their results audited by comparing a manual count of the printouts with the electronic tallies. (This means about 1% or 2% of each constituency's machines will be tested.) Opposition parties have asked the Supreme Court to order audits of half of all electronic voting machines, but that may not happen with this year's election.

While the electronic voting machine system is useful and functional, officials and observers shouldn't assume there's no way to tamper with the results. The Election Commission should certainly continue to improve testing and provide public reports of independent testing. However, because no technology can be tamper-proof, each election outcome should be verified by a manual audit, to ensure that the results are correct, whatever they may be.

[the writer is Professor of Computer Science, George Washington University]

Julian Assange has refused to surrender himself for extradition to the US. What now?

SAMUEL BERHANU
WOLDEMARIAM & AMY MAGUIRE
theconversation.com

In the case of Julian Assange, focus has turned to the United States' efforts to extradite him from Britain to the US to face a charge of conspiracy "to commit computer intrusion".

The initial extradition hearing, which took place on Thursday, was a preliminary step in what will be a long, drawn-out process. Assange appeared before the court by video link and made it clear he opposes extradition. The next procedural hearing is set for May 30.

Assange had been arrested by London Metropolitan police on April 11, and removed from the Ecuadorian embassy. He had been granted asylum by the embassy seven years earlier, after fleeing arrest out of fear he would be extradited to the United States.

Earlier this week, Assange was convicted of breaking the conditions of his bail in 2012, and sentenced to 50 weeks imprisonment.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The actual extradition hearing will be some time off, following these preliminary hearings. After an initial decision by a judge, either side may have access to an appeal procedure through the courts.

Regardless of that outcome, the final step rests with Home Secretary Sajid Javid. Despite pressure from UK lawmakers, Javid cannot make a political decision on whether to extradite Assange – rather, his role is to approve a court order for extradition unless there are statutory provisions that prohibit it.

His decision to extradite Assange might also be subject to High Court appeal.

WHAT IS EXTRADITION?

Extradition is a legal process that states use to facilitate the transfer of a person from one jurisdiction to another in order for that person to be prosecuted for a crime. Many extradition arrangements between states rely on bi- and multilateral extradition and mutual assistance treaties.

The US and UK signed an extradition treaty in 2003. Under this treaty, both countries agreed to extradite people sought for trial or punishment for extraditable offences. An offence is extraditable where the conduct is punishable under the laws of both countries "by deprivation of liberty for a period of one year or more."

The offence for which Assange is wanted in the US is punishable by up to five years' imprisonment. It is grounded in an allegation that Assange engaged in a conspiracy with Chelsea Manning to hack US Department of Defence files, and publish classified information on Wikileaks.

Assange maintains his innocence, and his defenders argue that his extradition would set a dangerous precedent for journalism and the publication of truthful information – particularly as it may affect the US.

It is important to note the parallel, but now lapsed extradition claim from Sweden, which had earlier sought Assange for a preliminary investigation and possible prosecution for rape charges. Assange had claimed an extradition to Sweden to face those charges would result in another extradition from there to the US. Having lost his protection under Ecuador, Assange now faces exactly that prospect.

CONSTRAINTS ON EXTRADITION

Extradition is a heavily regulated and multi-stage process. Rules and procedures within and beyond the 2003 Extradition Treaty potentially protect Assange from extradition to the US, or at least constrain its conditions.

POLITICAL OFFENCES

The 2003 extradition treaty be-

tween the UK and the US explicitly provides:

"Extradition shall not be granted if the offence for which extradition is requested is a political offence."

It is common for countries to retain a power to refuse extradition where it is sought in relation to political offences. Such an exemption can protect whistleblowers and others who legitimately challenge the exercise of governmental power.

Pure political offences are those that directly target the government, such as treason, sedition or espionage. Relative political offences are ordinary offences that are "committed for political motives or in a political context".

The UK does not have a statutory or generally accepted judicial definition of a relative political offence. However, the Anglo-American system uses the "incidence-test" according to which "the act must be incidental to and forming a part of political disturbances."

The "requested state" may also refuse extradition if it determines that the request was politically motivated.

Assange's lawyers are expected to make this a chief argument against extradition. Such an argument could not succeed on the basis that conspiracy to commit computer intrusion is a pure political offence under UK legislation, because it is not.

However, the UK courts or authorities may regard the charge Assange faces as a relative political offence. Alternatively, they may be convinced by Assange's argument that his work with WikiLeaks is purely journalistic and the US charge politically motivated.

THE 'RULE OF SPECIALITY'

The "Rule of Speciality" under the extradition treaty offers Assange protection against new charges. Accord-

ing to this rule, an extradited person may only be charged for the offence for which the extradition is granted, or for crimes committed thereafter. However, the requested state may waive the rule of speciality in which case Assange may end up facing more charges than originally specified.

This rule is important for both Assange and the UK authorities. The UK is entirely opposed to the imposition of the death penalty in any circumstances. The UK would be bound to refuse to extradite Assange to the US were he to face charges that carried a possible death penalty.

There will be pressure on the UK authorities to respect the rule of speciality, in which case Assange would face a maximum of five years imprisonment should he be extradited to the US.

TIME AND APPEAL PROCEDURES

Final decisions on extradition requests take considerable time. For example, the extradition of Abu Hamza from the UK to the US took eight years. Progress of the extradition request is likely to be slow through the UK courts and bureaucracy. It will be further delayed by any appeal procedures Assange seeks to utilise, whether through the UK courts or the European human rights system.

It is impossible to say, for now, what awaits Assange. At the very least, following the completion of his current prison sentence, there will be renewed uncertainty about his liberty. Controversy, of course, will persist over whether Assange deserves protection against political prosecution, if he may actually have nefarious links to Russia, or indeed whether the most just course would be for the Swedish charges to be revived first.

[Samuel Berhanu Woldeariam is PhD Candidate (Law), University of Newcastle; Amy Maguire is Associate professor, University of Newcastle]

Cyclone Fani to change Nepal's weather condition

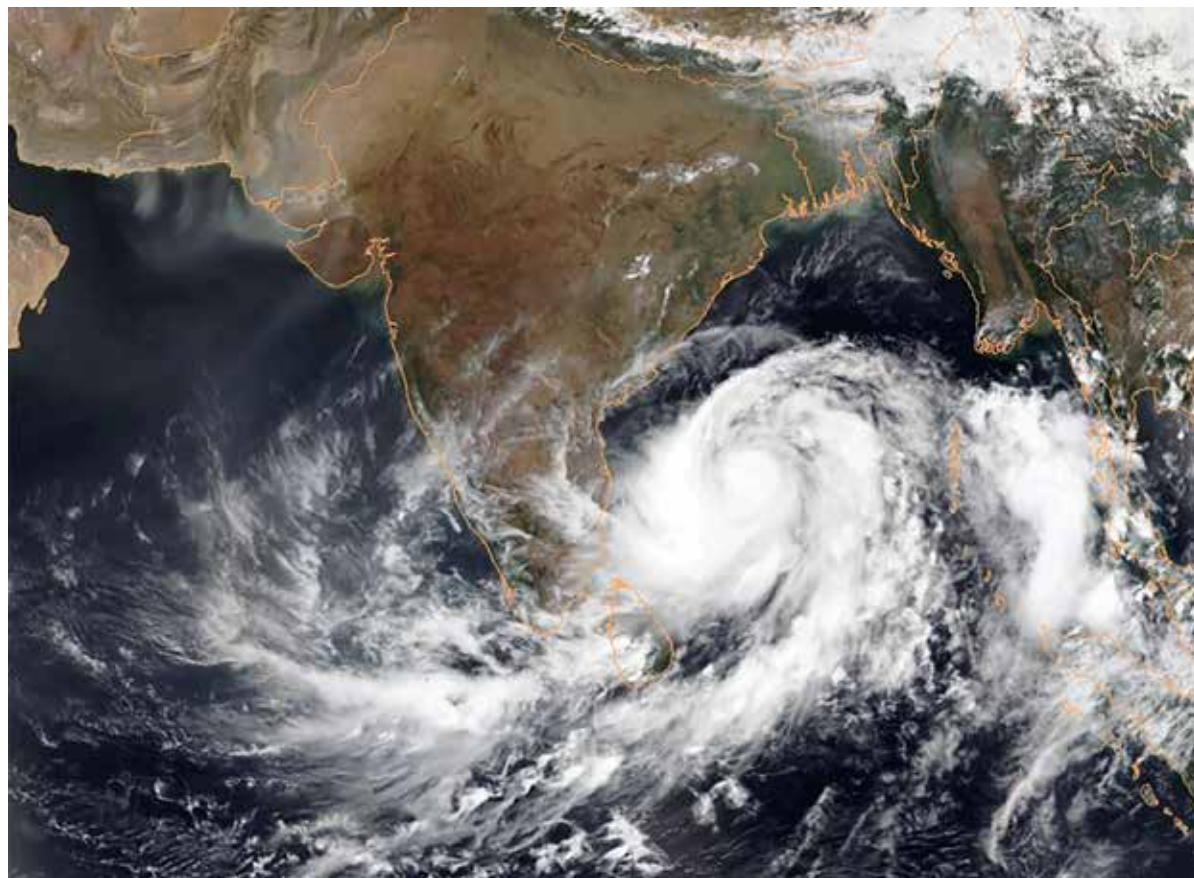
SHIRISH B PRADHAN KATHMANDU, MAY 3 (PTI): Cyclone Fani will alter the weather conditions in Nepal and bring heavy rainfall and snowfall in the Himalayas, meteorologists warned on Friday.

The powerful cyclone, strongest to hit India in 20 years, made landfall at around 8 am in India's eastern state of Odisha.

Large areas in the seaside pilgrim town of Puri and other places were submerged as heavy rains battered the entire coastal belt of the state affecting about 11 lakh people.

Although the cyclone is not likely to make its way to Nepal, light to moderate rainfall coupled with lightning and windstorm will occur in some parts of eastern and central regions on Friday and Saturday. The weather will get a bit extreme, the Meteorological Forecasting Division warned.

They said the cyclone will affect the regular



pattern of weather conditions in some parts of the country.

The cyclone is not likely to make its way to Nepal. However, lightning and showers will occur in some parts of

eastern and central regions, a statement issued by the MFD said.

Experts have warned that it is likely that the Himalayas will see heavy rainfall and snowfall.

National Emergen-

cy Operation Centre (NEOC) has urged tour operators not to fly any helicopters on Friday, citing bad weather due to the cyclone.

High wind flow was noticed above 6,000 me-

tre altitude in Mt. Everest where some 20 tents were damaged by the strong wind.

The NEOC has also urged tourists around the Himalayan region not to venture outside.

BJP office damaged in IED blast

JAMSHEDPUR, MAY 3 (PTI): A BJP office in Jharkhand's Seraikela-Kharswan district was partially damaged in an IED blast triggered by suspected Maoists on Friday, police said.

No one was injured in the blast, they said.

Four armed men came to the party office

at Kharswan early Friday morning and dragged out two/three persons sleeping inside the building before planting an IED, said Superintendent of Police, Chandan Kumar Sinha.

Asked whether Maoists were involved in the incident, the SP said the way blast was triggered indicates the involve-

ment of the Maoists.

A police team has rushed to the spot to investigate the incident.

Kharswan, about 30 km from here, falls under Khunti Parliamentary seat, from where former Jharkhand Chief Minister and BJP leader Arjun Munda is contesting the May 6 Lok Sabha polls.

Nepal witnesses first bird flu death

KATHMANDU, MAY 3 (PTI): A 21-year old man has died here after being infected by bird flu, becoming the first-ever patient in the Himalayan nation to succumb to the viral disease, according to a media report.

The patient, whose identity has not been revealed, was admitted to a hospital in Kathmandu on March 24 with symp-

ptoms of fever and cough. His saliva sample was sent to the National Public Health Laboratory and also to Japan following which it was confirmed that he was suffering from bird flu or avian influenza, My Republica reported on Thursday.

Though he was treated, the patient died on March 29, officials from the Ministry of Health

and Population (MoHP) said. It was the first-ever death case caused by bird flu in Nepal, they said.

The incident was unexpected, Pushpa Chaudhari, secretary at MoHP, said. Bird flu is caused by the highly pathogenic avian influenza A (H5N1) virus or other non-human influenza sub-types (eg H7, H9), according to the World Health Organisation (WHO).

Activists want PepsiCo to compensate farmers for 'harassment'

AHMEDABAD, MAY 3 (PTI): A day after PepsiCo announced that it would withdraw cases filed against the potato farmers in Gujarat, activists and farmer leaders Friday said the company must do it unconditionally and also pay a compensation to the cultivators for causing "harassment".

Agitated by PepsiCo's earlier decision to sue potato growing farmers for allegedly growing a variety of potato registered by it, around 25 major farmers' bodies of Gujarat and the country, including Bharatiya Kisan Sangh (BKS), along with activists and NGOs have decided to form a central body - Seed Sovereignty Forum - to protect farmers' rights on seeds. A meeting to chalk out an action plan under this umbrella body was held on Friday at the Gujarat Vidyapith here, said farm rights activist, Kapil Shah of NGO 'Jatan'.

"We are apprehensive because PepsiCo's statement yesterday does not offer anything new. The company had earlier told the court that it will withdraw cases on two conditions - either farmers give up using company's seeds or farmers become part of contract farming with the company," Shah told report-

ers here. "We demand that the withdrawal of cases must be unconditional. We also want the company to pay compensation to these farmers for causing harassment. The law is crystal clear and it says that farmers' or cultivators' rights will always supersede the rights of seed breeders. Farmers' right over seed is non-negotiable," he said.

Nine farmers from Sabarkantha and Aravalli districts were sued by PepsiCo in two separate courts for allegedly growing a variety of potatoes for which the company has claimed plant variety protection (PVP) rights, and sought damages ranging from Rs 20 lakh to Rs 1 crore from each of them. They have been sued by the company under the Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Act, 2001.

Shah said the issue touches farmers of the entire country and not just of Gujarat.

"After this issue cropped up, around 25 national and regional organisations working for farmers decided to come under one roof to form 'Seed Sovereignty Forum'. We will hold a meeting today to devise an action plan to fight against such cases in the future and formulate a long-term strategy to en-

sure that farmers' rights are not snatched away," said Shah. Shah was accompanied by four farmers of Sabarkantha district, who were sued by the MNC. Office-bearers of the BKS and several other farm rights activists were also present.

Registrar of Gujarat Vidyapith, Rajendra Khimani, called for spreading of awareness among farmers about various laws that protect them.

"All the Acts are in English, not in the language understood by the majority of farmers. As a result, they are not aware of their rights. There is a need to make such laws available in local languages. We also need to keep a check on any attempt aimed at diluting such pro-farmer laws," Khimani, who is the president of Gujarat Association of Agricultural Sciences, said.

Chhabil Patel, one of the farmers sued by PepsiCo, said they used rejected potatoes as seeds, which is a natural practice in villages. "We have been wrongly framed. After grading, PepsiCo takes only large-size potatoes (to make chips), while small potatoes were discarded. Such rejected stock is available everywhere. We sowed those potatoes only.

Shawn Mendes drops new single 'If I can't have you'

Los Angeles, May 3 (PTI): Pop star Shawn Mendes has released his new single "If I can't have you" along with the official music video.

The singer took to Twitter to announce the arrival of his new song and shared the single's video and artwork.

"It's a confident pop record and it's clearly that for me. Pop is what's in my blood no pun intended.

"In the last six months I wrote about 45 songs and they're all over the place and different vibes. This is the one consistently every time I played for myself and for friends and family was giving people that smile," the Candian singer-songwriter told Apple Music's Beats 1.

Mendes has co-written the song with Scott Harris, Teddy Geiger, and Nate Mercereau.

The 20-year-old singer will be performing the latest single for the first time on Saturday Night Live on May 4. This will mark his second appearance on the popular American Television show.

Mendes has recently concluded the European leg of his world tour after he released his self titled album, last year.

Polymaths will reshape the future of education : WB Governor

KOLKATA, MAY 3 (PTI): West Bengal Governor K N Tripathi Friday said a wider range of learning is the need of the time and polymaths are reshaping the future of education.

"Confining education into only a few directions will result in partial growth of society. Polymaths are the new leaders," he said addressing the Annual Education Conference, 2019 organised by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce and Industry here.

Tripathi said the true aim of education is to de-

velop the ability to deal with problems and arrive at creative solutions. "The emergence of new challenges will require new methodology and new approach necessitating transformation of educational norms.

"There is need of re-defining, rethinking and rebooting of education in such a manner that it can successfully combat the situation," the governor added.

Speaking on the occasion, scientist Prof Bikash Sinha said that a polymath has to be a great

teacher, communicator and master of pedagogy. "No digital classroom can replace the actual class.

There has to be a two way interaction between teacher and students," he said. Vice-Chancellor of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad University of Technology, Saikat Maitra said disruptions with technological revolution is bringing in phenomenal changes.

"It is the time of interface of natural and artificial intelligence. It is time of blended learning where no subject exists

in isolation, nothing is one dimensional.

Polymathy allows the concept of seeing problems from different perspectives. Classroom, teaching will take new turn because of digital democracy. We have to adopt polymathic approach to solve the problems," Maitra said.

Satyam Roy Choudhury, Co-Chairperson, Education Committee of the Bengal Chamber, said that polymaths continuously challenge themselves to grasp concepts of different disciplines.

Doctors dispel myths on asthma treatment

New Delhi, May 3 (PTI): In view of rising asthma cases in the country, especially in the city, experts Friday called for more awareness and also stressed upon dispelling myths and fears associated with inhalation therapy. In India, the soaring numbers have reached 15-20 million and the number will continue to grow until adequate emphasis is laid on the importance of identifying the right medication, which can help manage asthma effectively, Dr Anant Mohan, the Head of Department of Pulmonary Medicine at AIIMS, said.

The chronic disease affects a large population worldwide and its number is rising every year. According to the WHO Fact sheet, between 100 and 150 million people around the globe suffer from asthma. The reasons for the increasing prevalence of asthma are multifactorial. They include rising air pollution with increase in air particulate matter, smoking, incorrect treatment in children, and viral infections in early childhood.

Emphasising on right treatment and awareness, Dr Mohan said it is very important to change the perception towards asthma and inhalation therapy.

"While inhalation treatment can play a crucial role in reducing the impact of asthma on people's lives, adherence is crucial. Inhaled medicines help to deliver the drugs directly to the lungs where they are required, so they work faster, better and with negligible side effects," Dr Mohan said.

He said the challenge is to convince the patients to accept inhalers and adhere to the treatment



prescribed in order to get the full benefit. Inhalation therapy works to control asthma by preventing and relieving symptoms and reducing flare-ups, but they will work if patients work in partnership with their physicians and take them as advised.

Another challenge to manage asthma is discontinuation of the medication once the symptoms have subsided. Unfortunately, this may also result in the aggravation of the disease and flare-up of symptoms, leading to worsening of disease.

Experts suggested consulting a doctor before taking such steps as asthma usually requires long-term treatment.

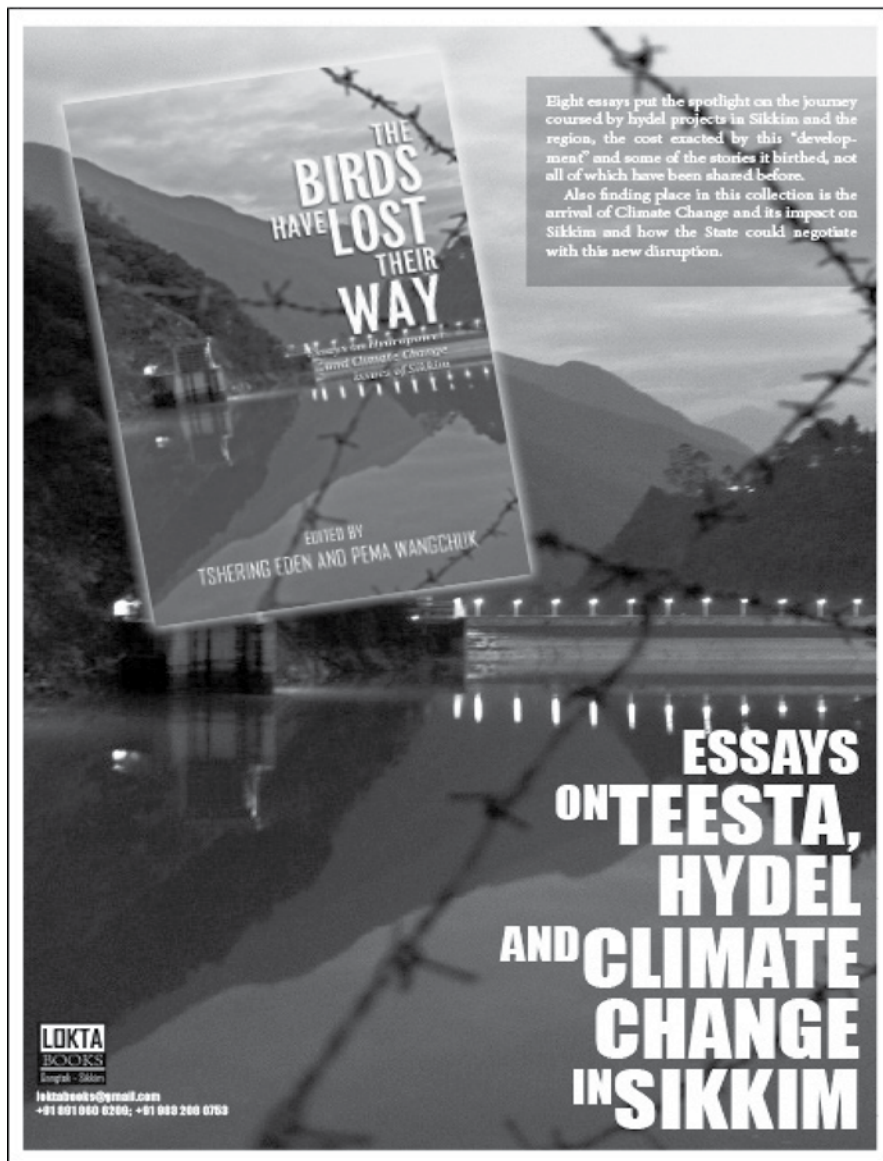
Air pollution is becoming an important cause and trigger for asthma in India and it is proven now that inhalation therapy remains the best form of drug delivery in asthma as it delivers drugs directly in the lungs, and the action

is quick and lesser dose is required to improve the symptoms.

"We need to make people aware about this safe and effective therapy. Inhalers are handy, easy to carry and patient friendly as they are very simple to use," said Dr Ankit Parakh, senior consultant Pulmonologist, Centre For Child Health at BLK Super Speciality Hospital, New Delhi.

According to a Lancet Report, traffic-related pollution caused asthma among 350,000 children in India in 2015, second only to China.

The Lancet study analysed 194 countries and 125 major cities worldwide. Although less than half the size of China's burden, India had the next largest number of cases (350,000) due to its large population of children. Among cities, Paris ranked 21st (33 per cent), New York 29th (32 per cent), London 35th (29 per cent), and New Delhi 38th (28 per cent).



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Delhi Capitals eye big win in pursuit of 2nd place finish

SAUMOJYOTI S CHOUDHURY
NEW DELHI, MAY 3 (PTI): Their play-off berth sealed, Delhi Capitals will aim for a big win against Rajasthan Royals to enhance their chances for a second-place finish when the two teams clash in their final IPL league match, here Saturday.

The Capitals are already sweating over key pacer Kagiso Rabada's fitness as the South African pacer missed a game first time this season against Chennai Super Kings due to a stiff back on Wednesday.

And in all likelihood, Delhi will not risk playing Rabada on Saturday, when they are sure to compete in the Play-offs for the first time in seven years.

A big win on Saturday will not only will boost Delhi's morale after the 80-run hammering at the hands of CSK but it could also propel the side to the second position in the eight-team standings. Delhi are currently sitting third with 16 points from 13 games, just behind Mumbai Indians (16 points) and table toppers CSK (18 points).

A win against Rajasthan will enhance Delhi's chances of featuring in Qualifier 1, giving them two shots at the May 12 final.

In the absence of Rabada, Delhi's bowling attack looked miserable, but it is the shoddy performance of the batting



unit which would be a cause of concern for skipper Shreyas Iyer.

Chasing CSK's challenging 179 for four, Delhi were shot out for just 99 with only Iyer (44) making a significant contribution. The likes of Prithvi Shaw, Shikhar Dhawan, Rishabh Pant and Colin Ingram would like to forget the disastrous outing against CSK and come out afresh in Delhi's last home game.

Rajasthan, on the other hand, are mathematically still alive in the tournament with 11 points from 13 games.

They need to win against Delhi and hope for favourable results from

other remaining games to secure a play-off berth as the fourth team. But a win against Delhi might just not be enough for Rajasthan as it will take them to 13 points, after their last game against Royal Challengers Bangalore was washed away.

With Steve Smith having departed home for World Cup preparations, Ajinkya Rahane will return to captaincy duties. Ashton Turner is expected to replace Smith in the playing eleven.

The departure of Smith, Jos Buttler and Ben Stokes has weakened Rajasthan's batting, putting more responsibility on the shoulders

of Rahane, Sanju Samson and Liam Livingstone but the team's bowling unit would be pumped up after the leg-spinner Shreyas Gopal's hat-trick in the rain-truncated match against ECB.

In the last encounter between the two sides last month, it was Delhi Capitals who came out on top in Jaipur by six wickets in a high-scoring affair.

Teams
Delhi Capitals: Shreyas Iyer (C), Prithvi Shaw, Shikhar Dhawan, Rishabh Pant, Colin Ingram, Keemo Paul, Axar Patel, Rahul Tewatia, Amit Mishra, Kagiso Rabada, Ishant Sharma, Hanuma Vihari, Ankush

Bains, Chris Morris, Sherfane Rutherford, Jajaj Saxena, Sandeep Lamichhane, Trent Boult, Avesh Khan, Nathu Singh, Bandaru Ayyappa, Colin Munro, Manjot Kalra.

Rajasthan Royals: Ajinkya Rahane (C), Ashton Turner, Ish Sodhi, Oshane Thomas, Liam Livingstone, Sanju Samson, Shubham Ranjane, Stuart Binny, Shreyas Gopal, Sudhesan Midhun, Jaydev Unadkat, Prashant Chopra, Mahipal Lomror, Aryaman Birla, Riyan Parag, Dhawal Kulkarni, Krishnappa Gowtham, Varun Aaron, Shashank Singh, Manan Vohra, Rahul Tripathi.

Match starts at 4 PM.

Neeraj undergoes elbow surgery, doubtful for Doha Worlds

MUMBAI, MAY 3 (PTI): Star Indian javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra has undergone an elbow surgery, raising doubts over his participation in the World Championships to be held in Doha from September 27 to October 6.

Neeraj was operated by celebrated orthopaedic surgeon Dr Dinshaw Pardiwala at the Kokilaben Hospital.

"Undergone elbow surgery in Mumbai by Dr.Dinshaw Pardiwala.Will require some months of rehabilitation before i can start back with throwing.Hoping to return stronger. Every setback is a setup for a comeback. God wants to bring you out better than you were before," Neeraj posted on his twitter handle on Friday.

The 21-year-old developed pain in his elbow while practising at the NIS Patiala in April.

Dr. Pardiwala is a renowned orthopaedic surgeon who has treated many sports stars like Sushil Kumar, Saina Nehwal, P V Sindhu, Yogesh-



war Dutt, Vinesh Phogat, Akhil Kumar, H S Prannoy among others.

The duration for which Neeraj will have to stay away from action is not yet clear but his chances of being fit in time for the World Championships is a matter of speculation at this point. His coach Bahadur Singh has already urged him not to rush back keeping next year's Olympics in mind.

The elbow injury had earlier forced the Commonwealth and Asian Games champion to skip the Asian Championships

held in Doha from April 21 to April 24.

The world no. 5 in his discipline would have been India's brightest hope for a medal. Neeraj shot to fame by winning the javelin gold at the 2016 IAAF World U-20 Championships in Bydgoszcz, Poland.

From there it was no looking back for the athlete from Panipat, as he went on to win golds at the 2016 South Asian Games, the 2017 Asian Championships in Bhubaneswar, and last year's Commonwealth and Asian Games.

Sunrisers eye Play-off berth in clash against RCB

BD NARAYANKAR
BENGALURU, MAY 3 (PTI): Sunrisers Hyderabad would look to complete the unfinished business and seal their place in the IPL Play-offs when they clash with laggards Royal Challengers Bangalore, here Saturday.

The defeat against Mumbai Indians via Super Over must be hurting but they need to shrug it off and add two points to take their tally to 14, good enough to stay in top-4.

Despite their defeat against Mumbai on Thursday night, Hyderabad's net run rate is +0.653, which is superior to others in contention for the Play-offs.

Even if Hyderabad lose their last match, they can still reach play-offs if Kolkata Knight Riders and Kings XI Punjab don't win more than one of their last two matches.

In the absence of their batting mainstay David Warner, young Manish Pandey (71 off 47 balls) shouldered the responsibility pretty well in the last match against Mumbai as he pushed the match into the super

over after he carted Hardik Pandya for a last-ball six to bring scores level.

Mumbai Indians had scored 162 for five in the allotted 20 overs. Needing nine to win in super over, Pandya and Kieron Pollard took the side home with three balls



to spare. Hyderabad had managed 8 for 2 with Jasprit Bumrah bagging Pandey and Mohammed Nabi's wickets.

Captain Kane Williamson, all-rounder Vijay Shankar and comeback man Wriddhiman Saha will look to score in the key match.

Hyderabad bowlers have performed well in patches and need to get their act together against Bangalore's master blasters AB de Villiers and Virat Kohli.

The visitors boast of multi-pronged attack in which Afghanistan's Rashid Khan has been the standout performer.

Sandeep Sharma, Khaleel Ahmed and experienced Bhuvneshwar Kumar, along with the Afghan spin twins Rashid and Mohammed Nabi add sting to Hyderabad attack.

Bangalore will be playing for pride after their hopes of entering playoffs went up in smoke after their match against Rajasthan Royals was aban-

doned due to rain.

The Teams (From): Sunrisers Hyderabad: Kane Williamson (C), Basil Thampi, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Deepak Hooda, Manish Pandey, T Natarajan, Ricky Bhui, Sandeep Sharma, Siddarth Kaul, Shreevats Goswami, Khaleel Ahmed, Yusuf Pathan, Billy Stanlake, Rashid Khan, Mohammad Nabi, Shakib Al Hasan, Wriddhiman Saha, Martin Guptill, Vijay Shankar, Abhishek Sharma and Shahbaz Nadeem.

Royal Challengers Bangalore: Virat Kohli (capt), Parthiv Patel, AB de Villiers, Colin de Grandhomme, Umesh Yadav, Yuzvendra Chahal, Moeen Ali, Shimron Hetmyer, Dale Steyn, Shivam Dube, Mohammed Siraj, Navdeep Saini, Devdutt Padikkal, Himmat Singh, Milind Kumar, Gurkeerat Singh Mann, Heinrich Klaasen, Pawan Negi, Washington Sundar, Akshdeep Nath, Prayas Ray Barman, Kulwant Khejroliya and Tim Southee.

Match starts at 8 pm.

Nihal Sarin targets 2600 in Malmo



Malmo (Sweden), May 3 (PTI): Fourteen-year-old Grandmaster Nihal Sarin is training his sight to become the youngest Indian to break the 2600 rating barrier from the TePe Sigeman & Co International tournament, beginning here on Friday.

Nihal goes into the tournament with a live rating of 2598, hoping to break the Indian record set by Parimarjan Negi almost a decade back in 2009. Negi had then become the youngest Indian to have broken the barrier, at the age of 15 years 11 months. Crossing the mark will make Nihal currently the youngest player in the world to do so.

The tournament will have eight players with an average rating of 2663, making it a Category 17 tournament, according to FIDE.

The field is led by the India No. 2 GM Pentala Harikrishna. Having just finished second in the Shenzhen Masters, Harikrishna will be a front runner for the title here having recovered from a patchy stretch that he suffered recently. Going into the Sigeman tournament, the Indian Super Grandmaster will look forward to break

free from the mixed yet strong field.

GM Gawain Jones of England and GM Ivan Saric of Croatia and Parham Maghsoodloo of Iran are three players who could possibly give Harikrishna a close fight. Other players include Swedish duo of GM Nils Grandelius and GM Tiger Hillarp Persson, GM Liviu-Dieter Nisipeanu of Germany besides Nihal Sarin.

Harikrishna will open his campaign against Persson while Nihal is set to meet Saric in the opener.

Speaking about his expectations, Nihal said, "Right now, they are not based on my results. I just want to play as well as I can and try and win as many games as I can."

When asked how he would want to ensure that he will play good games, Nihal said consistency is the key. "It is about making good moves throughout the game, and then doing it game after game."

Pairings round 1:

P Harikrishna (Ind) vs Tiger Hillarp Persson (Swe); Nihal Sarin (Ind) vs Parham Maghsoodloo (Iri) vs Gawain Jones (Eng); Nils Grandelius (Swe) vs Liviu-Dieter Nisipeanu (Ger).

CSA call back Rabada, to miss remainder of IPL

NEW DELHI, MAY 3 (PTI): Injured Kagiso Rabada was on Friday ruled of the rest of the IPL after South Africa decided to call the pacer back as a precautionary measure ahead of the World Cup.

Rabada had missed Delhi Capitals' last match against Chennai Super Kings due to stiff back and his unavailability is a severe blow to Delhi Capitals, who are striving to win their maiden IPL title.

According to a statement from the Delhi Capitals, Rabada, the current Purple Cap holder, has been advised to return home by CSA.

"It is indeed very hard for me to leave the Delhi Capitals at this stage of the tournament," said the 23-year-old Rabada, who took 25 wickets from 12 matches that he played this season.

"But with the World Cup just a month away,



a collective decision has been made for me in this regard. It's been a tremendous season for me with the Delhi Capitals, both on and off the field, and I truly believe that our team can win the trophy."

Delhi Capitals' head coach Ricky Ponting termed the development as "unfortunate".

"It's unfortunate that Rabada is having to leave us at this stage of the tournament. But I have

‘No tension’ as Smith and Warner back in Aussie colours: Langer

BRISBANE, MAY 3 (AFP): Steve Smith and David Warner have been welcomed back to the Australian team with "no tension", coach Justin Langer said Friday, with the World Cup offering another opportunity for redemption.

The duo returned to the national side for a World Cup training camp Friday in Brisbane after serving year-long bans for their part in the "sandpapergate" scandal in Cape Town that rocked cricket. "There is no tension," a smiling Langer told reporters. "They're back in the team now. They've been selected, which is brilliant"

The duo have enjoyed a solid comeback in the Twenty20 IPL, with Warner in blistering form, topping the competition batting rankings with 692 runs from 12 innings. Langer acknowledged there would need to



be some adjustments for the former team leaders, but said the team would be boosted by their experience. "When you come from

the titled position of captain then there is going to be a certain degree of humility that comes with that," he said. "One of our really

strong values is humility, so there will be great opportunity to develop that"

The Aussie coach welcomed the selection dilemma Smith and Warner added to the top order, joining Aaron Finch, Usman Khawja and Shaun Marsh, made it "exciting to have those five 100-makers at our disposal". Australia are the reigning World Cup champions and have been in recent red-hot form winning eight one-day internationals on the trot, against India and Pakistan. "We have had great success in the past. While we celebrate that, it means nothing on how we play this (World Cup)," Langer said. "But I do know that we had a very humbling experience. And we bought it upon ourselves," he added, reflecting on vision of Smith being "frog-marched out of South Africa".

Doubt if Modi knows about Bhagat Singh: Cong leader Manish Tewari

KHATKAR KALAN (PUNJAB), MAY 3 (PTI): Congress Lok Sabha candidate Manish Tewari Friday said he doubted if Prime Minister Narendra Modi knew about freedom fighter Bhagat Singh as the PM never turned up to pay respects to the martyr.

Tewari is contesting the Anandpur Sahib constituency in Punjab against Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) nominee and sitting MP Prem Singh Chandumajra.

"I really doubt if PM Modi has any idea about

'Shaheed-e-Azam' Bhagat Singh as he never turned up to pay respects to the legendary hero here," Tewari said at a public meeting at the memorial of the freedom fighter.

He announced that the first thing he would do after getting elected would be to move a resolution in Parliament to officially declare Bhagat Singh as 'Shaheed-e-Azam'.

"His sacrifice in India's freedom struggle remains unmatched, unparalleled and officially unacknowledged, as we

have failed to recognise it on record," Tewari claimed. "Our great martyrs like Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rajguru have not got their due," he claimed, adding we, at least, owe a respectable acknowledgment and gratitude towards our great martyrs without whose sacrifices we would not have been here today".

Taking a dig at the prime minister, Tewari said despite Modi's "great pretensions" about ultra-nationalism, he has not deemed it necessary to spare an hour to pay

obeisance at the memorial of Bhagat Singh.

"Maybe he does not find Bhagat Singh saleable in his scheme of things," he said.

"God willing, if you (voters) send me to Parliament, I promise, the first thing I will do, is to bring in a resolution to get Shaheed (martyr) Bhagat Singh officially declared as the 'Shaheed-e-Azam' and I am sure each and every member of Parliament irrespective of their party will support it and cooperate in getting it through," Tewari said.

The Congress candidate also took a jibe at his SAD rival Chandumajra, claiming that he had done nothing for the constituency and had only been fooling people in the name of development while remaining indifferent towards his constituency.

Seeking the people's support, Tewari said he promised only those things on which he could deliver. "I have never made any false promise or commitment to anyone. I say only what I mean," he added. PTI CHS VSD RDK

More Aussie candidates withdraw over social media posts



SYDNEY, MAY 3 (AFP): Another candidate for Australia's governing Liberals was forced to stand down over anti-Muslim comments Friday as the party struggles to fend off charges it harbours right-wing extremists.

But the main opposition Labor party, which is comfortably leading in opinion polls ahead of the May 18 general election, also saw one of its own stand down Friday over lewd social media posts.

Jessica Whelan became the third Liberal candidate to quit the race in the past three days over racist or homophobic social media posts.

Whelan, running for the lower house of parliament from the island state of Tasmania, initially said the posts, which included references to "filthy Muslims" and called for a referendum to ban Muslim immigration, had been doctored by hackers.

Party leaders supported her as late as Thursday and said police had been called in to investigate the alleged

hack. But after screenshots of additional anti-Islam posts emerged in the Australian press overnight, Whelan withdrew from the race early Friday. The move came after the Liberals, led by Prime Minister Scott Morrison, were forced to drop two other candidates in the key state of Victoria on Wednesday after they were found to have posted anti-Islam or homophobic messages on social media.

The incidents provided new ammunition to opposition parties' charges that the Liberals have become dominated by extremists since party hardliners ousted moderate prime minister Malcolm Turnbull last August, putting the more conservative Morrison in power. "The Liberals have been forced to dump another one of its extreme right-wing candidates," trumpeted Labor leader Bill Shorten.

Morrison denied that Whelan's views reflected a broader far-right agenda for his party. "Her views were her views and they do not repre-

sent the views of the party I lead," he said.

Labor has also been hit by controversy as both major party campaigns are roiled by social media posts made by their candidates, sometimes years earlier.

One Labor candidate dropped out of the race earlier this week over posts deemed anti-Semitic and Friday another Labor hopeful stepped aside for posting rape jokes and other lewd comments.

Luke Creasey, an openly gay 29-year-old school teacher running for office in Melbourne, posted the comments in 2012 and Shorten defended him Friday morning, saying the candidate regretted the posts made when he was 22.

But with Labor under withering criticism from Liberal officials, Creasey withdrew from the race hours later.

In an increasingly fiery campaign, both parties are learning the value of vetting candidates even in long-shot races where they stand little chance of taking office.

US man executed for double murder

WASHINGTON, MAY 3 (AFP): A man convicted of murdering two people was executed on Thursday in the US state of Georgia.

Scotty Morrow, 52, was put to death by lethal injection at 9:38 pm (0138 GMT) at a prison in Jackson, the Georgia Department of Corrections said in a statement.

Shortly after Christmas 1994, Morrow broke into his ex-girlfriend's house, where she was with two friends and her children.

Morrow shot the three women, killing two of them, including his former girlfriend, in front of her five-year-old son.

He was convicted of the double murder and sentenced to death in 1999, but the decision was overturned in 2011 on the grounds that his trial defense was poor because his lawyers had failed to note he had been abused and raped as a child.

The Georgia Supreme Court then reversed that decision, confirming the original verdict from 1999.

On Wednesday, the Georgia State Board of Pardons and Paroles dismissed a clemency request from supporters, who claimed he had become a model prisoner who was sorry for his crimes.

On Thursday, lawyers made a final appeal to the US Supreme Court, after the state Supreme Court rejected a clemency bid.

He is the fifth person executed in the United States in 2019.

Massive Afghanistan peace summit ends in Kabul



KABUL, MAY 3 (AFP): A huge peace meeting aimed at finding an exit from Afghanistan's war is due to finish Friday in Kabul, with leading politicians expected to announce visions for a much-needed breakthrough.

This week's "loya jirga", or grand assembly, saw about 3,200 religious and tribal leaders, politicians and representatives gather under tight security to try to find common ground and discuss possible conditions for a peace deal with the Taliban.

On Thursday, several officials said a vital first step is an immediate reduction in violence, which has continued apace across Afghanistan even with various peace summits taking place.

"Every day, Afghans are being killed without any reason. An unconditional ceasefire must be announced," said Mohammad

Qureshi, head of one of the jirga's many committees.

The jirga comes as the Taliban, who were not at the talks, are this week separately meeting in Doha with US peace envoy Zalmay Khalilzad.

Those talks focus on a potential deal that would see the withdrawal of foreign forces from Afghanistan in return for the Taliban guaranteeing terrorist groups could no longer operate in the country.

Huge swathes of Afghan society worry that if the US does make a deal with the Taliban, the militant Islamists would try to seize power and undo advances in women's rights, media freedoms, and legal protections.

Such concerns were laid bare at the jirga, where hundreds of women were in attendance outlining their "red lines" for any negotiations with the Taliban. "We don't

want such a peace that women's rights are not respected, freedom of expression are not ensured, elections are not held," committee member Faizullah Jalal told the summit.

The jirga proved controversial, with opposition figures slamming it as an election campaign event for President Ashraf Ghani, who is due to deliver closing remarks.

Among those boycotting were Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah and Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, a notorious former warlord. Both men are running for president in elections slated for September.

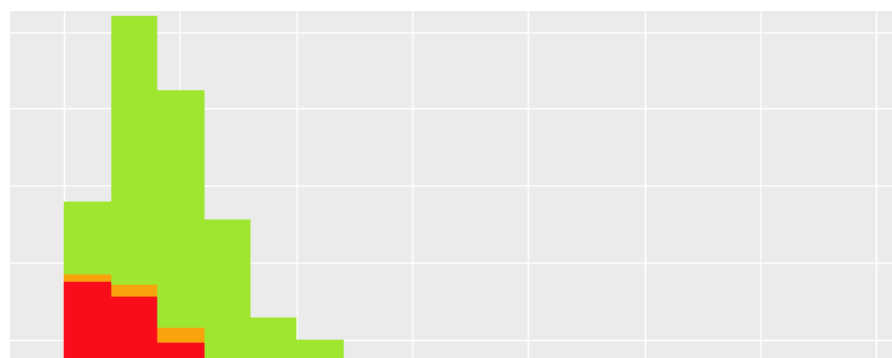
Meanwhile, Afghanistan's war rages on, with thousands of civilians and fighters being killed each year. US forces continue to train Afghan partners on the ground and strike the Taliban from the air, in a bid to push the war -- now in its 18th year -- to a political settlement.

Submit expenditure details in 90 days: Poll officials to MNS

MUMBAI, MAY 3 (PTI): The Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) has been asked to submit details within 90 days of expenses incurred on the election rallies of its president Raj Thackeray.

An election official said the notice for submission of election expenditure was issued after consultations with the Election Commission following a complaint from the BJP demanding that expenditure incurred on MNS rallies be shown in the accounts of opposition candidates in the nine Lok Sabha constituencies where Raj Thackeray addressed rallies.

"We sought guidance regarding the complaint and were told that the



MNS is a registered political party and should give details of the expenses incurred on its election rallies. The notices to this effect are being sent to Raj Thackeray through district collectors of the areas where he addressed rallies," the official said.

The official said this was a routine procedure and all national, state and registered parties have to submit their

statement of accounts. Though the MNS is not contesting Lok Sabha elections, Thackeray held nine rallies in Maharashtra last month, in which he attacked the BJP governments at the Centre and in the state and asked people not to vote for Prime Minister Narendra Modi and BJP president Amit Shah.

The BJP had written to the state's Chief

Electoral Officer (CEO) demanding that the expenses of Raj Thackeray's campaign rallies be added to the accounts of the Congress-NCP candidates who were in fray against the BJP-Sena nominees.

The election official said this could have been done if Thackeray had sought votes for the Congress-NCP candidates in his speeches.

NZ PM Ardern to marry long-time partner

WELLINGTON, MAY 3 (AFP): New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern and her long-term partner Clarke Gayford have become engaged to be married, her office said Friday. A spokesman for Ardern and Gayford said the couple, who have a baby daughter Neve, agreed to tie the knot over the Easter break.

He could not reveal whether a date for the prime ministerial nuptials had been set or who had proposed to whom.

"I can't say anything about it other than they are engaged and it happened over Easter," the spokesman told AFP. Ar-

dern, 38, had Neve last June, becoming only the second prime minister in the world to give birth while in office and later taking the infant onto the floor of the UN Assembly in New York.

Since the birth, Gayford, a television fishing show host, has taken on the role of stay-at-home dad. The engagement comes after a trying time for Ardern, who has been widely praised for her response to the March 15 Christchurch mosque shootings that claimed the lives of 51 Muslim worshippers. Ardern said in an interview last year that she would not propose to Gayford, even though she regards herself as

a feminist. "I want to put him through the pain and torture of having to agonise about that question himself," she told the BBC.

News of the engagement broke after journalists noticed Ardern was wearing a diamond ring while carrying out her duties on Friday. However, there have been at least two false alarms in the past when Ardern has been spotted sporting bling on her ring finger.

On both occasions she quashed the speculation, saying she had to constantly swap her rings between fingers on her left hand due to eczema.

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PUPPY LOVE! The singer, Usher carries his adorable dog around on the set of Hustlers in NYC.

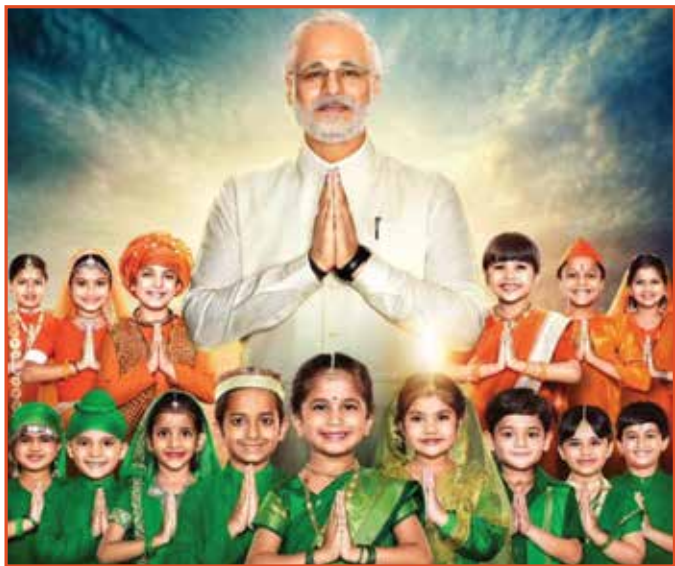
Biopic on PM Modi to release on May 24 now

MUMBAI, MAY 3 (PTI): The makers of Vivek Oberoi-starrer biopic on Prime Minister Narendra Modi Friday announced that the film will be released countrywide on May 24, a day after the results of the Lok Sabha elections are declared. The film, titled 'PM Narendra Modi', was earlier set to release on April 11 but was banned by the Election Commission.

In its order last month, the EC had banned the screening of film during the poll period, saying any such film that subverses purpose of any political entity or individual should not be displayed in the electronic media.

The EC order had come a day before the movie was to be released. Producer Sandip Singh said he hopes the film will have a smooth run in the theatres.

"As a responsible citizen we respect the law of the country. After a lot of discussions and keeping the curios-



ity and excitement about the film in mind we have decided to release the film immediately after the Lok Sabha election results," Singh said in a statement.

"We are now releasing our film on 24th May 2019. This is the first time a film will be promoted for only four days. I hope now nobody has any problem with the

film and we are hoping for the smooth release this time," he added.

Directed by Omung Kumar, the film also features Boman Irani, Manoj Joshi, Prashant Narayanan, Zarina Wahab, Barkha Sengupta and Darshan Kumaar, among others. Suresh Oberoi and Anand Pandit are co-producers of the film.

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Hollywood celebs remember Chewbacca actor Peter Mayhew

LOS ANGELES, MAY 3 (PTI): Chewbacca actor Peter Mayhew passed away on April 30 leaving his on-screen companion Harrison Ford and "Star Wars" teammates Mark Hamill, George Lucas among other Hollywood celebrities heartbroken.

Mayhew, who the affable Wookiee giant Chewbacca, a friend to Ford's Han Solo, in Lucas' original "Star Wars" trilogy, was 74. At the time of his death, he was surrounded by his family and friends at his North Texas home.

In a statement, obtained by The Hollywood Reporter, Ford said Mayhew dedicated his life to portraying Chewbacca and he will never forget his contribution to the franchise.

"Peter Mayhew was a kind and gentle man, possessed of great dignity and noble character. These aspects of his own personality, plus his wit and grace, he brought to Chewbacca. We were partners in film and friends in life for over 30 years and I loved him. He invested his soul in the character and brought great pleasure to the Star Wars audience," the actor said.

"Chewbacca was an important part of the success of the films we made together. He knew how important the fans of the franchise were to it's continued success and he was devoted to them. I and millions of others will never forget Peter and what he gave us all. My thoughts are with his dear wife Angie and his children. Rest easy, my dear friend," he added.

Hamill, who played Luke Skywalker in the franchise, paid tribute to Mayhew in a heartwarming post on Twitter, calling him the "gentlest of giants".

"A big man with an even bigger heart who never failed to make me smile and a loyal friend who I loved dearly. I'm grateful for the memories we shared and I'm a better man for just having known him. Thanks Pete #RIPPeterMayhew #Heartbroken," he wrote.

Creator of the Star Wars universe, Lucas, remembered Mayhew as a "wonderful man".

"He was the closest any human being could be to a Wookiee: big heart, gentle nature; and I learned to always let him win. He was a good friend, and I'm saddened by his passing," Lucas said in a statement.

Billy Dee Williams, another "Star Wars" veteran, also paid his tributes to Mayhew and posted photos with the actor on Twitter.

"Much more than Chewie to me...My heart hurts... I will miss you my dear friend... Thanks for the great mem-



ories! #RIPPeterMayhew #StarWars," he wrote in the caption. Directors JJ Abrams and Rian Johnson, who helmed "The Force Awakens" and "The Last Jedi" respectively, also paid homage to the Chewbacca actor.

"Peter was the loveliest man... Kind and patient, supportive and encouraging. A sweetheart to work and already deeply missed" Abrams, who is currently working on the franchise's new instalment "The Rise of Skywalker", said in a brief statement posted on Twitter.

Johnson said, "RIP Peter Mayhew. To create a beloved character with warmth and humor is a testament to any actor's spirit. To do it under a half ton of yak hair takes a true legend."

Disney CEO and Chairman Bob Iger and Lucasfilm president Kathleen Kennedy also posted their tributes on the microblogging site.

"The @WaltDisneyCo mourns the loss of our beloved #chewbacca portrayal, #PeterMayhew. Peter was larger than life in so many ways...a gentle giant playing a gentle giant. Rest in peace," Iger said.

In a statement, posted on the official Twitter handle of "Star Wars", Kennedy said she is "deeply saddened" by Mayhew's passing.

"Since 1976, Peter's iconic portrayal of the loyal, lovable Chewbacca has been absolutely integral to the character's success, and to the Star Wars saga itself," she added.

Others who condoled Mayhew's death included actors Joonas Suotamo, Alan Tudyk, and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau.

Suotamo, who took over the role of Chewbacca in "The Last Jedi", shared an image of him and Mayhew from the sets of the film and said he is feeling devastated.

"Peter's warm welcome when I came aboard as his double in 'The Force Awakens' meant so much to me. Studying the character he helped create was always a daunting task, but one that was made easier by his tutelage and kindness as we sought to bring Chewbacca

to life for a new generation. He was an absolutely one-of-a-kind gentleman and a legend of unrivaled class, and I will miss him," he said.

Tudyk, who portrayed droid character K-2SO in the spin-off "Rogue One", said, "Peter Mayhew created one of the greatest film characters of all time. Chewbacca was funny, courageous, and caring. He did it all without the benefit of speech, just that vocal growly cry that 1 in 100 fans can do real well when they're drunk. He was always really nice to me. #RIP"

Sharing a throwback photo of his with the Chewbacca actor, Trudeau said the franchise would not be the same without Mayhew.

"Star Wars wouldn't have been the same without Peter Mayhew as the loyal and lovable Chewbacca, and he will always be a favourite for generations of kids & kids at heart. Rest easy, Peter," the Canadian PM wrote on Twitter.

Priyanka and I are still very close:

Ali Abbas Zafar

MUMBAI, MAY 3 (PTI): Priyanka Chopra Jonas' sudden exit from "Bharat" may have left fans disappointed, but filmmaker Ali Abbas Zafar says he understood the actor's decision and continues to share a close bond with her. Priyanka was originally set to star opposite Salman Khan in the film, but she opted out of the project as a part of the film's schedule was clashing with her wedding with American singer Nick Jonas.

"There was no stress. Nothing was going on in my head when that happened. One good thing which has happened with me is that after working with Salman, I have started managing my stress very nicely because he gives that to me everyday," Ali quips. In an interview with PTI, the director says it was difficult to accommodate the date changes as "Bharat" was already scheduled to release on Eid this year.

"She had a genuine reason. She was going through something very special in her personal life. It was affecting our dates. If we would have accommodated her into the film, it wouldn't be releasing on Eid this year," Ali says. Priyanka's exit has not put a dent on their friendship. The duo previously worked in "Gunday".

"Priyanka understood it and we understood her. We thought we will collaborate again in some other film. It was all very happy. Priyanka and I are very close friends even now. We text, we talk all the time. I haven't asked her if she has seen the trailer, I'm sure she must've."

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East Sikkim

ARIES: As the moon rounds out her monthly orbit through your sign, today is all about taking care of yourself first. Pay little (or zero) attention to what the so-called influencers are doing. Design a day that will satisfy your needs and let you go with your own flow. Linger over lunch with your work wife or sneak out in the afternoon to try on shoes.!

TAURUS: Drown out the noise and focus on tying up loose ends, Taurus. With the moon in your sleepy twelfth house for the first part of the day, there's no sense trying to initiate anything major in the final hours of the workweek. Plus, you may have overtaxed yourself, and even the strongest caffeinated beverage won't combat the urge to curl up under your desk for a catnap.

GEMINI: Game face: on! It's going to be a demanding day, Gemini, with plenty of fires to put out and people to please before quitting time. This afternoon, when la luna shifts into your restful twelfth house, you can plot a top-secret mission to break out of the office early. Don't overextend yourself. A chill

evening at home with your favorite human (or animal companion, or Netflix binge) will help you ease into weekend-warrior mode.

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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!.

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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: With the moon chilling in your peaceful second house, start the day with a moment of reflection. Close your eyes and meditate, journal, then nourish yourself with a healthy breakfast like an acai bowl. By charging your batteries early on, you'll have the power to complete your task list and NOT drag any work into the weekend. Are a fierce pair of boots haunting your retail dreams? When the moon dances into Taurus and your social third house for the rest of the weekend, you may be able to justify them as part of your "entertainment budget."