

150 candidates in fray for 32 Assembly seats in state

Agency Gangtok March 29,

Altogether 150 candidates are in fray for 32 Assembly seats in Sikkim after three nominees withdrew their candidature on Thursday, the last date for withdrawal, Election officials said. There are 11 candidates in the fray for the lone Lok Sabha seat from Sikkim. Election to both the Lok Sabha seat and A s s e m b l y constituencies will be held simultaneously on

April 11, they said. Two candidates Ratan Singh Rai (Sikkim Republican Party) and Nirmal Kumar Pradhan (Independent) withdrew their names from Namchi-Singhihang assembly constituency, while another candidate Dal Bahadur Karki (Congress) took back his candidature from Gylashing -Barnyak assembly seat, officials said. At the end of the withdrawal process, a total of 150 candidates are in fray on 32 Assembly seats.

Sikkim Chief Minister Pawan Kumar Chamling, HSP working president Bhaichung Bhutia and Chamling's younger brother Rup Narayan Chamling are among prominent candidates in fray in the assembly polls. Chamling, the ruling Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF) president is contesting from two assembly seats - Poklok-Kamrang and Namchi Singhihang in his native South Sikkim. Bhutia, legendary footballer, is also trying his luck from two assembly constituencies -

Gangtok (BL) and Tumen Lingi (B-L) seats in East and South Sikkim respectively. The 11 candidates in the fray for the lone Lok Sabha seat in Sikkim are Dhiraj Kumar Rai (SRP), D B Katwal (SDF), Mahendra Thapa (Independent) Biraj Adhikari (HSP), Bharat Basnett (INC), Passang Gyali Sherpa (Independent), Sun Maya Gurung, (Independent), Rabin Rai (All Indians Party), Laten Tshering Sherpa (BJP), Indra Hang Subba (SKM) and Narendra Adhikari of SUF (Sikkim United Front).

Church not aligned with any political party: NEIRBC.

Agency Itanagar March 29,

A statement was issued by the Catholic leaders of Northeast India saying that the church does not identify itself with political party. The letter was addressed to the Catholic faithful of the region, Rev Dominic Jala, the president of the North East India

Regional Bishop's Council (NEIRBC), who had called upon everyone to exercise their franchise. "Voting at every election is a sacred duty and obligation of every citizen," the letter said, and urged everyone to rise above religion, culture and caste to participate in the democratic process. He highlighted some of

the growing concerns in the country, like the huge gap between the rich and the poor, the meager wages for the unorganized laborers, farmers' distress, and corruption at all levels. Rev Jala also issued a seven-point guideline to church leaders, which includes, among other things, working for an economy that seeks to help the poor and the

underprivileged, promoting probity in public life, ensuring a safe environment for all, safeguarding the rights of the tribals over their land, water and forests, promoting communal harmony and the spirit of national integrity through inter-religious dialogue and understanding, and taking steps to protect the environment.

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Six candidates in fray for lone LS seat in the Mizoram state

Agency Aizawl March 29,

Six candidates are in the fray for the lone Lok Sabha seat in Mizoram on Thursday, Election department officials said. Election to the Mizoram Lok Sabha seat will be held on April 11 simultaneously with the by-poll to the Aizawl West - I Assembly constituency. With no withdrawal of nomination on Thursday, the last date

for withdrawal of candidature, six candidates are in the fray for the Lok Sabha seat and three for the Assembly constituency, the officials said. The six candidate in the fray for the Lok Sabha seat are - C Lalrosanga of ruling MNF, Lalnginglova Hmar an Independent supported by the opposition Zoram People's Movement (ZPM) and the Congress, Nirupam

Chakma of BJP, T B C Lalvenchunga of People's Right to Identity and Status of Mizoram (PRISM) and two Independents Lal Hriatrenga Chhangte and Lalthlamuani. In all 7,84,405 electorate will exercise their franchise in the state on April 11 in 1,175 polling stations to elect the lone Lok Sabha MP of the state. Fifteen special polling stations will be set

up at Mizoram-Tripura border Kanmun village for 12,000 Bru voters in the six relief camps in North Tripura district. Three candidates in the fray for the bypoll to the Aizawl West - I Assembly seat are Zothantluanga of the ruling MNF, Lalbuanga Sailo, an Independent supported by ZPM and the Congress and Rev Zaichhawn Hlawndo of the 'Zoram Thar' party.

Assam Rifles Celebrates World Theatre Day



IT News Imphal March 29,

Tulihal Battalion of 9 Sector Assam Rifles under the aegis of IGAR (South) observed World Theatre Day at Maheikol High School, Khuman on 28 March 2019. As part of the event, a series of activities were carried out which included a lecture on importance of World Theatre Day followed by singing and dancing competitions and a play act. During the

lecture students were educated on World Theatre Day and importance of theatre arts, how theatre plays an important role in the field of entertainment and bring changes in the lives of all of us as a society. The event witnessed attendance by over 200 students. The students participated in the play act and displayed their acting skills. In addition the students also keenly participated in the singing and dancing

competitions. The event concluded with prize distribution in which top three performers in each category were felicitated with tokens of appreciations, followed by tea and refreshments for all the attendees. The Principal and the School staff appreciated the efforts of the Assam Rifles and extended their gratitude for organising such an event which gave the students an insight in the world of theatre and arts.

Garden fresh Assam tea in 'tea boutiques' soon

Agency Guwahati March 29,

To make authentic garden fresh Assam tea available to people, the North Eastern Tea Association (NETA) has decided to launch 'NETA Tea Boutique' in the state's Golaghat district. Announcing this, NETA chairman Nepal Saikia on Thursday also said that a pilot project will be launched at Bengenakhowa at the Golaghat-Furkating road

in June this year. "If the pilot project is successful, NETA will assess the possibility of opening many more such exclusive tea boutiques in different cities and towns of India," he said. NETA is a tea producers' association established in 1981 at Golaghat. It represents about 132 tea producers and produces around 75 million kg of tea. "The primary objective of the NETA Tea Boutique is to make available garden

fresh, single estate origin, non-blended and authentic Assam Tea to consumers at a reasonable price. Anyone visiting this boutique will have a complete experience of tea," said NETA adviser, Bidyandana Barkakoty, adding this is also a step in the direction of value addition and branding by tea producers. This tea boutique would be the first of its kind in the entire country where a tea producers'

association will directly cater to the end consumers. NETA will ensure strict monitoring on the quality and will introduce different varieties of garden fresh tea - CTC (crush, tear, curl), orthodox, green tea, white tea, oolong tea, yellow tea, purple tea and other high valued specialty teas. Consumers will have the choice to buy different brands at retail price in 100 gms, 250 gms, 500 gms, 1 kg and 5 kg packs," he added.

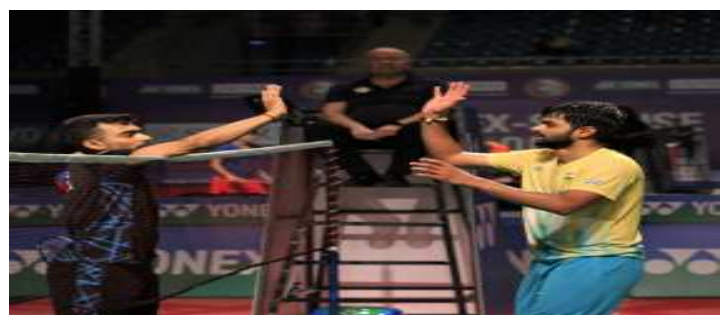
Sai Praneeth edges Sameer in all-Indian thriller; Kashyap cruises at Yonex-Sunrise India Open 2019

Axelsen, Zhang, Pranaav Chopra/Sharma enter quarters

From Correspondent New Delhi, March 29,

In an enthralling all-Indian second round face-off, Sai Praneeth edged fifth seed Sameer Verma to enter the quarter-finals of the Yonex-Sunrise India Open 2019, an HSBC BWF World Tour Super 500 tournament, here on Thursday. The marathon 18-21, 21-16, 21-15 win that took Sai 1 hour 11 minutes to complete, had the World No. 20 lying on the court in relief after converting the match point. This was Sai's second consecutive victory over the World No. 15, just a week after getting the better of him at the Swiss Open, where he made it to the final. Having beaten his practice partner, Sai pointed out on how tough it can get facing a familiar

opponent. "When you play an opponent who you play with, it is obviously tough. We know each other's weaknesses and strengths, so with nobody outside the court to tell you something about strategies, you have to think on your own." Sai could have to face another Indian in the last-eight, provided third seed Kidambi Srikanth beats Lu Guangzu. Parupalli Kashyap made short work of World No. 58 Tanongsak Saensomboonsuk 21-11, 21-13 in just 37 minutes to secure his quarter-final berth. The former Commonwealth Games gold medalist ran away to 14-8 in the first game and continued the momentum in the second game to build an 11-3 lead. A day after playing a 3-day game match, the 32-year-old Kashyap was



happy to finish his second round quickly. "I'm happy I could pull out two good matches. Yesterday was tougher physically, but game-wise I think I was better today and I'm looking forward to the next round," said the former World No. 6. Subhankar Dey failed to repeat his first round heroics and succumbed to a 16-21, 13-21 defeat to World No. 32 Wang Tzu

Wei. Rising star Riya Mookerjee's brave run, however, came to an end at the hands of eighth seed Mia Blichfeldt 8-21, 21-17, 13-21. World No. 67 women's doubles pair of Aparna Balan and Sruthi KP dug deep to edge the 40th ranked Ng Wing Yung and Yeung Nga Ting 21-19, 7-21, 21-17. Pranaav Jerry Chopra and Shivam

Sharma too reached the last-eight stage, courtesy of a 21-15, 21-11 win over Anirudha Mayekar and Vinay Kumar Singh. In mixed doubles, Chopra and Sikki Reddy put up a courageous display before losing 21-19, 19-21, 14-21 to the fourth seeds Hafiz Faizal and Gloria Emanuelle Widjaja. **Axelsen cruises; Bingjiao beats Xuerui** There was no stopping

the 2017 champion Viktor Axelsen, who needed just 32 minutes to register a commanding 21-11, 21-9 win over Thailand's Suppanyu Avihingsanon. In a battle of generations, Chinese third seed He Bingjiao beat 2012 Olympic gold medalist Li Xuerui 21-18, 21-17 for her second consecutive victory over her senior compatriot. Defending champion

Beiwen Zhang beat Brittney Tam 21-6, 21-16 for her seventh win on the trot at this prestigious tournament while seventh seed Han Yue was a 21-13, 21-8 winner over Chananchida Jucharoen. Men's doubles top seeds Kim Astrup and Anders Skaarup Rasmussen effortlessly beat Goh Sze Fei and Nur Izzuddin 21-14, 21-7. In mixed doubles, BWF World Tour Finals champions Wang Yilyu and Huang Dongping halted the run of Ricky Karandaswardi and Pia Zebadiah Bernadet 21-8, 21-11. **Key results**

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