

SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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CM instructs officials to get Kisan Bazaar ready by 31 Mar

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 05 JAN:

Chief Minister Pawan Chamling today visited the upcoming Kisan Bazaar at the intersection area between Lal Bazar and Arithang. The Chief Minister also instructed that the construction of the bazaar should be completed before 31 Mar.

The Chief Minister visited all the floors of the bazaar which is currently under construction and gave various directions and suggestions to the officials of Urban

Development & Horticulture Departments.

He directed that all the shops should be allotted exclusively to rural farmers and the first and second floors should be made an open space for rural farmers to sell their products.

The Chief Minister

also specifically said that only organic products should be allowed to sell in the market which will act as the main hub where the produce grown in villages can be bought and sold under the same roof.

He also directed the

officials to look into the construction of washrooms and kitchens in the first and second floors for the organic produce sellers.

It may be recalled that construction of the Kisan Bazaar had begun in 2012.

Hishey Lachungpa looks set to serve second term as Rajya Sabha MP

VISHNU NEOPANEY

GANGTOK, 05 JAN:

Ruling party nominee for the Rajya Sabha election, Hishey Lachungpa today filed his nomination seeking a second term as Rajya Sabha MP for another six years here at the Returning Officer's Chamber at Sikkim Legislative Assembly. Today was the last date for filing nominations and Mr Lachungpa's was the only nomination received by the Returning Officer.

The party supremo, who is also the Chief Minister, Pawan Chamling along with cabinet ministers, MLAs and party workers were present to witness the filing of nomination.

The Chief Minister, while witnessing the filing of nomination, told



reporters that the selection process for the Rajya Sabha candidate was done in a transparent manner wherein the party decided to nominate Mr Lachungpa for a second time.

Scrutiny of the nomination papers is scheduled to be held on 06 Jan with the last date for withdrawal of candida-

tures being 08 Jan.

SDF has 29 sitting MLAs in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly which means Mr Lachungpa is looking at another term as the Rajya Sabha MP from Sikkim.

Mr Lachungpa is a three-time Minister [1994 to 2009] and one of the influential leaders of North Sikkim.

New Rs 10 notes to come in chocolate brown colour

MUMBAI, JAN 5 (PTI):

The Reserve Bank will soon bring into circulation new Rs 10 denomination banknotes in chocolate brown color, which will have India's cultural heritage Konark Sun Temple as a motif on the reverse side.

The central bank will shortly issue Rs 10 denomination banknotes in the Mahatma Gandhi (new) series, bearing signature of Urjit R Patel, Governor, RBI, it said in a release.

The base colour of the note is chocolate brown, it said. "The new denomination has motif of Sun Temple, Konark on the reverse, depicting the country's cultural heritage," RBI said.

Among the salient features of the banknotes, on the obverse (front) the note will bear portrait of Mahatma Gandhi at the centre, the Ashoka Pillar emblem on the right, watermarks and number panel with numerals growing from small to big on the top left side and bottom right side.

On the reverse (back), it will carry the year of printing on the left, a Swachh Bharat logo with slogan, language panel, motif of Sun Temple and denominational numeral 10 in Hindi script Devnagari. Dimension of the banknote will be 63 mm by 123 mm.

"All the banknotes in the denomination of Rs 10 issued by the Reserve Bank in the earlier series will continue to be legal tender," it said.

5th Pay Revision Committee gets another three months to submit report

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 05 JAN:

The state government has extended the deadline for submission of report recommending the 5th Pay Revision to 31 Mar 2018 through a notification published on 28 Dec 2017. The previous deadline was 31 Dec 2017.

State government employees will now have to wait another three months for the pay revision bonanza as the report of the 5th Pay Revision Committee is yet to be finalised, informed official sources.

The notification has not elaborated on the reasons for the extension, however, it is learnt that the state Pay Revision Committee has completed its task in its

draft form and is in the process of deliberation to give final shape to the report.

Once the report is submitted, the state government will go through the recommendations made by the committee and will take final call after placing the report before the state cabinet. If approved, the state and semi government employees are expected to get their pay revised from January 2016.

The committee has not yet revealed anything about the structures, but ensured that interests of employees of all grades including pensioners have been taken into consideration in view of inflation.

Mamata unveils official emblem of West Bengal government

KOLKATA, JAN 5

(PTI): West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee today unveiled the official emblem of the state government, which was recently approved by the Centre.

The logo highlights the Ashoka emblem on the top with the theme of "Biswa Bangla" at the centre. Banerjee has also contributed to the design of the emblem.

"Bengal begins a new journey today with a new identity...This historic achievement is indeed a new feather in Bengal's cap after a long wait of 70 years



since independence. You will be happy to know that I have made a small contribution in design of the emblem... (sic)," the chief minister said in a Facebook post.

She added that the emblem would feature on all the official stationery and displays.

SBI looks at revising downwards min balance amount, penalty

MUMBAI, JAN 5 (PTI):

The State Bank of India said it is looking at revising minimum balance amount and penalty charges in the wake of all-round criticism for raking in a windfall profit of over Rs 1,771 crore from customers in penalty for non-maintenance of monthly average balances in their savings accounts.

The country's largest lender which has over 402 million savings account holders, had reintroduced monthly average balance (MAB) charges from April 2017 after a gap of five years. Accordingly, the bank demands Rs 5,000 in MAB in metros and Rs 1,000 in rural accounts, failing which it charges a penalty.

As a result, between April and November 2017, the bank

had netted a windfall of Rs 1,771.67 crore, which is more than its second quarter profit, as penalties from customers for non-maintenance of MAB, finance ministry data showed.

"A review of the monthly average balance is something we've been looking at continuously since we had brought it back in April and we have already brought it down in October a bit. Now we are in the process of reviewing it again," MD for retail and digital banking, PK Gupta, told reporters in Mumbai on Thursday.

He said the bank is doing a comprehensive review of the MAB and penalty for non-maintenance of the same, based on the feedback it has received and will soon

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Being and eating Naga in Gangtok

NANGHKHA LONGKUMER

GANGTOK, 05 JAN:

Do you have a penchant for indigeneous Naga cuisine? If you are in Gangtok and ever have the urge to tingle your taste buds or experience authentic Naga cuisine minus the trip to the Naga Hills and back, NAGA Kitchen is the place to be. Established on 07 May 2016, the place is owned by Zangyal Dorjee. Located at 5th Mile, Tadong just opposite CISCO bank, it is the first and only Naga restaurant here in Gangtok.

Sandwiched between a car wash and a building, a huge round sign board reads the words "NAGA Kitchen" where a flight of stairs leads to the entrance. As soon as you step in, whiffs of bamboo shoot and smoked meat greet you, reaffirming that something tasty is simmering in the kitchen.

The interiors are simple and understated with enough room to fit in twenty four people. The ambience has a lot of contrast with tons of natural light pouring through the windows that practically makes a wall on the left side of the entrance and the



warm earthy colors of the furniture and the wall paint that ties it all up.



Flick the menu open and you notice that the menu is symmetrically

divided into Chinese and Naga cuisine. Fried rice, Chowmein, soups and even

parathas are some of the choices you

turn to pg03

Bollywood biopic on the man behind bike ambulance in Bengal

KOLKATA, JAN 5 (PTI): Karimul Haque's 24x7 'bike ambulance' has saved many lives in the villages of North Bengal and now his inspiring story is getting a Bollywood treatment.

Vinay Mudgil, an assistant director "Hum Saath Saath Hain", is planning to make a film on Haque's life.

A tea garden worker in his early 50s, Haque has been at the beck and call of patients in around 20 villages of Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar districts.

He is known as the 'Ambulance Man' in the villages where people bank on Haque's 'bike ambulance' to reach the nearby Sadar hospital.

Having taken a formal training from local doctors and chemists, Haque even provides basic medical care to them.

His selfless service over the last 15 years bagged him the Padma Shri award last year.

Haque's story drew Mudgil to his village and he spent time with the 'Ambulance Man' to understand his life and circumstances.

"Karimul can be an inspiration for many... This is one man who lives for others. Even with his meagre income, he tries and helps people. Not every day do we come across a person like him," he said.

"I had a wonderful time interacting with his family there. They are simple people with hearts of gold," added Mudgil, who has promised to give 50 per cent of the profits from the biopic to Haque.

"We have signed an agreement and I have offered 50 per cent profits from the film to Karimul. I hope the money helps him in his cause," the director said.

Haque, who is not a film buff, finds it hard to believe that a Bollywood movie will be made on his life.

"People used to laugh at me when I had started the service. Now, directors from Mumbai are approaching me for a biopic on my life. It is all too good to be true," he said.

A personal experience had motivated Haque to take up this service 15 years ago.

"My mother fell ill in the middle of the night and with no help in sight, I had to see her die in pain. I felt helpless and could not sleep for the next few days.

"A few years later, when a colleague at the tea garden collapsed, I tied him to my back and took him to the hospital on my bike. That is when this idea of bike ambulance struck me," he explained.

Three-day organic fest kicks off in Mangshila

Wangchuk Bhutia

Mangan, 05 Jan:

Three days long organic festival at Mangshila, North Sikkim organised by Nari Samaj, Mangshila, Tibuk Gram Panchayat Unit officially kicked off today with the aim to promote locally grown produce and to encourage farmers to take up organic farming.

The festival was declared open by Deputy Speaker of Sikkim Legislative Assembly cum area MLA, Sonam Gyatso Lepcha. He was accompanied by Sikkim Nationalised Transport Department Chairman, Pintso Namgyal Lepcha as special guest.

Locally grown organic produce like tuber roots and other items made from cane and bamboo were put on display by different Women Self Help Groups of the area.

Zilla member, Zomin Limboo in his address said that organic produce should be given priority in the State to ensure proper growth of the Organic Movement. He also



extended his gratitude to the area MLA for sanctioning rural marketing in Mangshila.

SNT Chairman, Pintso Namgyal Lepcha said that Mangshila should set an

example in enhancing the growth of organic farming as the government has already announced ban on import of vegetables from March 2018.

The chief guest, in his ad-

dress, appreciated the initiative taken by the Nari Samaj in organizing the organic festival. He suggested to the organizing committee to conduct the festival annually from next year.

"I am very happy that the people of Mangshila have taken an initiative in implementing the policy of the government's organic mission," he said.

"Our State is on its way to

becoming a self reliant State and the people can do a lot to contribute in this mission. Government policies are useless until the people take up the initiative to implement those policies," he added.

Mr Lepcha further directed the Panchayat members to undertake mass production of various vegetables for supply and marketing.

He also informed about government schemes like construction of marketing centers at various locations in Dzongu with transportation facilities of the organic vegetables to these centers.

He further appealed to the Panchayats to award the construction work of government infrastructure to good and resourceful contractors so that the work is completed in time.

Also present in the festival were Block Development Officer [Dzongu], KR Limboo, BDO [Mangan], Karma Thendup Denzongpa, Zilla and Panchayat members, officials and local gentries.



Puppet play on girl child to tour Gyalshing

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 05 JAN:

Dhumketu Puppet Theatre, a registered troupe of Song & Drama Division (Eastern Region), Ministry of Information and Broadcasting,

Government of India is set to organize a social awakening puppet play in various places and villages in Gyalshing, West Sikkim from 08-13 Jan, a press release informs.

The theme of the puppet

show is 'Betiyaan' and the tour aims to promote the Central Government's 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' scheme throughout the area.

The programme will be presented under the supervision

of Second-in-Command, 36th Battalion Sashastra Seema Bal, Gyalshing, RN Mishra, reads the release.

The puppet show will showcase the struggles of being a girl in today's world.

SABKM thanks CM



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 05 JAN:

Sikkim Aam Bihari Kalyan Manch [SABKM] has thanked Chief Minister Pawan Chamling for visiting the two state hospitals, STNM and Central Referral Hospital, Tadong on the first and second day of 2018, a press release informs.

SABKM president, Chotelal Prasad who is currently undergoing treatment at Central Referral Hospital, Tadong

got an opportunity to meet the Chief Minister.

Mr Prasad further informs that Mr Chamling informed the patients about all the health policies of the state government and wished them speedy recovery and a happy new year.

Mr Prasad has thanked the Chief Minister for maintaining peace and security in the State and ensuring smooth business for the Bihari community in the State.



SKM holds coordination meet in Turung

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 05 JAN:

Sikkim Krantikari Morcha held its co-ordination meeting at Turung under Namthang Rateypani constituency today.

A press release from

the party informs that the meeting was led by Constituency Level Committee president, Bimal Kharel and was attended by CEC members, Sharmila Tamang, Ratan Singh, Kavita Sapkota, Santosh Rai and other

members.

Meanwhile, seven youths from Turung ward joined SKM. The new members were welcomed with khadas by CLC president, Bimal Kharel.

Several party related

issues were discussed and highlighted on strengthening the party's activities in the constituency.

The meeting decided to carry forward door-to-door interaction with general public.

GJM student wing demands B Ed College in Kalimpong



SUMMIT REPORT

KALIMPONG, 05 JAN:

The Gorkha Jan Mukti Vidhyarthi Morcha (GJVM) Kalimpong District committee has placed a demand for a B Ed College in Kalimpong to the Gorkhaland Territorial Administration [GTA].

The Committee submitted a memorandum to vice president of GTA, Anit Thapa demanding a separate B Ed College in Kalimpong District.

Informing about the same, president of the committee, Dipen Chhetri said that the students of Kalimpong District either have to go to Siliguri, Darjeeling or Sikkim

to pursue B Ed courses. In view of this, we have requested for the establishment of a B Ed college in our district, he said.

The committee has suggested that the land of BT College be used for the B Ed college, he informed.

General secretary of the committee, Ram Prasad Roka said that the GTA Board, who have a vision of improving education in the Hills, have strongly assured to take this matter up.

Mr Roka informed that after the formation of the committee, their main aim has been the setting up of a B Ed college in Kalimpong and they have started working on that.

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*Gangtok on
Saturday,
06 Jan*

Temp: 15°C / 01°C

Forecast: Partly sunny, partly cloudy and cold.

Sunrise: 06:27 AM

Sunset: 4:56 PM

PCS calls for election to fill Culture Secretary post

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 05 JAN:**

Press Club of Sikkim (PCS) in an executive meeting held today has called for election to fill vacant post of Culture Secretary, a press release informs.

It was decided in the meeting that a committee to conduct the election will also be constituted with a formal notification to be released soon.

The nominations can be filled from 08 Jan onwards, as per the release.

Scrutiny of the nomination papers is scheduled to be held on 10 Jan with the last date for withdrawal of candidatures being 11 Jan. The poll is scheduled to be held on 11 Jan and the counting of votes will be done on 17 Jan.

PCS today during the meeting also constituted a subcommittee to organize its annual picnic party which will be held on Republic Day.

PCI seeks report from U'khand govt on order banning outsiders' entry in sectt

NEW DELHI, JAN 5 (PTI): The Press Council of India (PCI) has sought a report from the Uttarakhand government over its order banning the entry of "outsiders" in government offices at the secretariat.

The Uttarakhand government had claimed that the decision was taken in view of the agenda of Cabinet meetings being leaked to media on several occasions in the recent past.

The local media, however, interpreted the order to be a move to reduce systemic transparency. Members of the media felt the order was meant to deny them direct access to information by the government.

"Taking suo motu cognisance of the issue, the PCI chairman had ordered to immediately call a report in the matter from the chief secretary of Government of Uttarakhand," a PCI release said.

PCI chairman Chandramauli Kumar Prasad "felt that prima facie, the action of the Uttarakhand government impinging on the freedom of the press," it said.

The order states that outsiders cannot directly make an entry into government offices at the state secretariat.

In case of an urgency, they can meet the employee or official concerned at the reception, it says.

Singtam Police conducts awareness drive on bull-bars ban on vehicles

YOGEN THATAL

SINGTAM, 05 JAN:

As per the Ministry of Highways and Road Transport (MORTH) decision to ban bull-bars on cars and SUVs running on roads of India, Singtam Police Department conducted an awareness drive as instructed by the Ministry.

The Ministry had sent out a letter to the transport commissioners of all the States of the country, urging them to act against vehicles running with bull-bars.

While the government notification was brief, it was very clear that the move was to lessen the risk of injury to pedestrians and vehicle occupants, alike, in the event of an impact. The Act will be imposed on private, taxi, SUV and commercial vehicles.

"For a long time, vehicles in India have been accessorized with bull bars – often available at the point of sale, itself. While some feel that the accessory adds the look of their vehicles, others are of the opinion that bull bars and crash guards can help protect their vehicle's body in low-impact scenarios. However, the facts state that these extraneous



parts can actually reduce the effectiveness of safety systems built into the car's structure. This is because bull bars are typically fixed to the vehicle's body structure at two points; in an impact, the crash energy is transmitted directly to these two points rather than being dispersed through the car's crumple zone. Furthermore, bull bars can also hamper the functioning and timely deployment of the airbags in crashes which the reason for the awareness," informed Sub In-

spector Singtam Police Station, Vijay Basnett and Sub Inspector, Laxman Gajmer.

During the drive, police personnel instructed drivers to remove the safeguard failing which legal action will be taken as per Section 52 of the Motor Vehicle Act, 1988 with fine of Rs 1000-Rs 5000.

According to section 52 of the Motor Vehicles Act, "No owner of a motor vehicle shall so alter the vehicle that the particulars contained in the certificate of registration are at variance with

those originally specified by the manufacturer".

Car makers do not homologate cars with bull-bars, which means that when an owner is getting this accessory fitted through the aftermarket, he's committing an illegal act.

Car makers invest millions to make vehicles safer. Crumple zones, which are built into the front end of the car, include components such as bumpers, grilles, radiators, bonnet and other structural parts. When a bull-bar is fitted to a car,

it can make the crumple zones ineffective during a crash, transmitting force to the occupants of the car, causing serious injuries, or even death.

Pedestrian safety is also hugely compromised by bull bars. Cars are, at stock, designed to meet pedestrian safety standards. The fitment of bull bars, however, actually offsets the benefits of a pedestrian-friendly front-end design, as mandated by latest vehicle norms. The rigid bull bars have proved lethal in many car-to-human accidents.

Health Dept condemns allegations of lack of pediatrician at Namchi Hospital

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 05 JAN:**

State Health Department has issued a clarification regarding a post on social media alleging that there is no child specialist at Namchi District Hospital, South Sikkim.

The department has said that Dr Birendra Gurung, Pediatrician was posted in the district hospital since several years until he was transferred to STNM Hospital in Gangtok a few days back. The department has gone on to clarify that Dr Birendra Gurung has been replaced by Dr CK Nepal, Pediatrician who joined Namchi District Hospital on 05 Jan 2018.

"This is a mischievous attempt to give misinformation to discredit the Health Department and Namchi

Hospital in particular and this is highly condemnable," the release reads.

The department further informs that there are 22 specialists posted at Namchi Hospital.

"The Government has recently enhanced the present doctor's cadre strength in STNM Hospital from 305 to 626 with 325 posts of medical officers and 301 posts of specialists," informs the release.

The department has said that health has always been a priority of the State Government with the department referring 400 patients to higher specialized centers in the last six months and sanctioning of Rs 05 crore by the State Government under Mukhya Mantri Jan Raksha Kosh [MMJRK]

After CM sectt, now Haj office gets saffron shade

LUCKNOW, JAN 5 (PTI): The exterior walls of the Uttar Pradesh Haj office, opposite the state legislature building in the heart of the city, has got a saffron look overnight, days after the secretariat building facade was given the same coat.

The Haj office boundary got a bright saffron shade within days of the BJP government reducing the number of holidays allotted to state-recognised madrasas in the 2018 calendar.

The paint was carried out late last night and the Haj office staff were not immediately available for comments, Friday being a holiday.

When contacted, Minister of State for Minority Affairs Mohsin Raza told PTI, "I fail to understand the problem of those having issues with the new colour. Is saffron an anti-national colour? Saffron is a colour which symbolises ujala (brightness) and urja (energy)."

He said, "When the first rays of the Sun fall on the Earth, it comes with saffron light."

Raza said, "Saffron is a colour, which is synonymous with positivity. It is a gift of God. I think those who are against usage of saffron on walls of UP Haj Samiti office, may

also object to saffron colour in the national tri-colour."

He said, "This is peculiar politics. After all, only the outer walls of the government office has been painted and not the building or any personal property of any individual."

The saffron colour, mostly associated with Hinduism and especially with the Sangh Parivar of which the BJP is a part, was painted on the front portion of the Lal Bahadur Shastri Bhawan Annexe where the offices of the chief minister and top bureaucrats are located. After assuming office in March last year, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath showed his fondness for the colour as the state government gave saffron tinge to covers of official booklets and background of official posters issued by the public relations department and ministries.

In October last year, 50 saffron-coloured buses of the UP State Road Transport Corporation, named 'Sankalp Seva', were launched to provide service in rural areas.

The department of energy also announced that power connection to unauthorised colonies would be provided through electric poles painted saffron.

Marwadi Yuva Manch installs amritdhara at Balika Niketan



**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 05 JAN:**

Marwadi Yuva Manch, Prerna Branch, Gangtok installed its fourth amritdhara [water filter] at Balika Niketan in Tadong today.

A press release informs that the chief guest the area MLA, Timothy Basnet, inaugurated the new facility.

The Amritdhara

project is initiated and sponsored by Asha Kandoi and Nisha Kandoi along with their families.

The Prerna Branch of the Marwadi Yuva Manch, Gangtok, has installed several amritdharas in Gangtok. The Manch's first amritdhara was installed at STNM Hospital in the capital last year.

SBI looks at revising downwards min balance amount, penalty

contd from pg01
announce it.

Currently, the bank has a MAB of Rs 3,000 for the metro and urban accounts and the non-maintenance penalty varies Rs 30-50 plus taxes.

For semi-urban and rural branches, the amount is fixed at Rs 2,000 and Rs 1,000, respectively and the penalty for non-maintenance is in the range of Rs 20-40 plus taxes.

SBI has close to 40.5 crore saving bank account customers.

SBI had reintroduced monthly average charges from April 1, 2017, but had to revised downwards the penalties for non-maintenance of the minimum balance from

October 1, after facing backlash from customers.

While between April and October, the MAB was Rs 5,000 for metro accounts, which was brought down to Rs 3,000 per account. The penalty was also reduced from Rs 50-100 to Rs 20-40, plus taxes.

The bank recently said on an average balance of Rs 3,000 in the metros, SBI earned only Rs 6 a month whereas for a minimum balance of Rs 1,000 in rural, it earned on Rs 2 per month which is meagre compared to the services offered and the corresponding costs incurred by the bank (free cheque books, 8 free ATM transactions, free branch transactions).



Anthyesthi Kriya

We are deeply overwhelmed and indebted to all our dear friends and well wishers who

have been so supportive and forth coming in our time of bereavement; the sad demised of our beloved father **late, Nageshwar Singh** who left for his heavenly abode on 26 December. Once again in all humility we request for your benign presence in offering prayer for the departed soul (the 13 day Anthyesthi Kriya) scheduled to be held on **8 January** at our residence at Singh Bhawan, Dikchu Bazar East Sikkim.

Family members:

Pankaj Singh, Abhay Singh, Raj Singh, Pritam Singh, Amant Singh
Contact: 7407812240, 9593781730, 9733052560, 7797885264, 7797582013

Being and eating Naga in Gangtok...

contd from pg01

see in the Chinese option.

Naga cuisine makes up the right side of the menu.

It includes a list of fresh and smoked pork, beef, chicken and fish items prepared with either fresh or dry bamboo shoot. You can play around with different combinations of meat, bamboo shoot and Akhooni (fermented soy bean), or Anishi (fermented dry yam leaves). The choice is all yours.

We tried the smoked pork with fresh bamboo shoot, a vibrant dish with the perfect amount of heat, saltiness and savouriness. The taste of pork with rendered fat and the bursts of smoky flavor was just pure bliss. The smoked pork with anishi and the smoked eel looked nothing short of sophisticated. The

deep brown dishes presented in white platters with shredded carrots and fresh coriander just popped right off the table. If we eat with our eyes first, this was definitely scrumptious.

The anishi makes for thick dark gravy with an earthy taste which the sourness of the bamboo shoot cuts through and balances it out. The pork just melts in your mouth, while the smoked eel had a hard chewy texture to it.

The smoked beef with fresh bamboo shoot was up next and it didn't disappoint. The dish shared similarities in terms of construction and appeal with the smoked pork, but the distinct taste of beef was hard to miss. The meat was tender and laden with smoky goodness.

If you think we were over-

dosing on everything smoked, we were not done yet. Lo and behold, came the smoked pork spare ribs. Here you get two enormous chunks of slow cooked, dried bamboo shoot slathered ribs with meat that fall right off the bone with little effort.

The rice that accompanied the dishes was simplicity at its best. Fluffy rice with freshly diced vegetables on top, color me impressed!

From the chutnies, the akhooni chutney was less than thrilling. A soybean riddled chutney with shards of crushed ginger and dried chilies, the intensity from the beans was somehow lacking. The alu chutney on the other hand had quite the punch. Made with mashed potatoes, chilies, tomatoes and dried fish, the strong flavor of the fish and

the tang of tomatoes comes alive with the rich texture of the potatoes in every swirl in the mouth.

It truly is an authentic Naga experience with an array of mouth watering food. In order to make everything as genuine as possible, all Naga items are prepared by Jungshilemba Longkumer, a lad from Nagaland. All the core ingredients from the meats, chilies, bamboo shoots and other condiments are also shipped straight from Nagaland.

NAGA Kitchen is open Mon-Sat from 10:30am-9pm. Customers can also order from their homes through the Mitho online delivery service. With plans to shift into the heart of the city complete with the bells and whistles of a full Naga ethnic experience in the coming days, food lovers get ready!

Kutse Shegu

The 49 days Kutse Shegu of our beloved father, **Special DGP, Late Mr. T. Norbu, IPS (retd.)**, who passed away on 24th November, 2017 falls on 11th January 2018.

All our relatives, friends and well wishers are requested to join us for offering prayers to the departed soul at our residence at Dallam/ Sombaria Kothi, West Sikkim.

We offer our sincere gratitude towards those who stood by us in the time of bereavement.

Tashi Choyzam (daughter) 8436000805
Rigzing Chopel & Sangay Tupten (sons) 9609860216
Sonam L. Kaleon (son-in-law)
Sonam Sarita & Tenzing Pema (daughters-in-law)

Celebrate Diversity

Some clichés never go out of style

In the current times of overbearing rightwing mono-culturalism, the fact that Sikkim, despite attempts at regimenting people by their community, remains largely unmoved by arguments which seek to other, remains a constant source of relief. Some continue to see individuality at the community level as somehow diluting a larger identity, but they are clearly hamstrung by regressive narrow-mindedness which continues to see empowerment and confidence as somehow detrimental to cultures and identities. Thankfully, such mindsets remain in minority in Sikkim. In an India where boorish religious heads want to hound certain idols out of temples, certain sexes away from worship, and impose caste obsessions on the entire population, the fact that Sikkim is yet to allow communal gimmickry political currency holds up a light that should never be allowed to dim. Clichéd as it may sound, Sikkim should never stop celebrating its diversity, its people should never hesitate from supporting expressions of cultural uniqueness by other groups, and even as such cultural expressions are made by individual groups and communities, the celebrations should be joined by all. Make it a habit and an instinctive response, and troublemakers keen to sow differences by fanning fear of the others will find themselves out of jobs. And make no mistake, agent provocateurs, if given the chance, will tease out hesitations and feed on suspicions thereby weakening the collective society. We have seen how that can wreck vast swathes of a nation as big as ours, so its damage potential for a society as small as Sikkim's should have the residents doubly wary.

Agreed, "unity in diversity" is an overused line, a phrase which has accompanied us for far too long as a topic for essay-writing contests and argument for debates; and since everyone has heard it so often that it fails to elicit either pride or passion anymore, perhaps it is time to turn the approach on its head and reinforce unity. "Diversity in unity", as some thinkers have proposed for the country in the past, carries a nice spin to it, forces one to ponder longer and also acknowledges the fact that confident diversities mean self-assured identities which will be the best safeguard for unity. Unencumbered diversity inspires confidence which goes on to powers empathy; forced identities and ideas on the other hand fan fear which breeds intolerance which is a debilitating, self-defeating handicap.

To its credit, the current dispensation in Sikkim, despite rather loud criticism by individual leaders, has consistently supported the aspiration of the respective communities to express their individualities. And such an approach is also in perfect sync with the requirement for decentralization, empowerment and going back to the roots [as one can see in the revival of organic farming]. Endorsing diversity, once it becomes a habit, is no longer limited to cultures, and would also mean supporting free expression, accepting differing views, living with divergent traits and allowing free thought – if that is not the empathy and tolerance that a people need to thrive as a community, unencumbered by factionalism or hate, then what is?

Diversity, once ingrained, provides diverse people with the ability to be okay with and open to things that set them and others apart – religion, culture, race, gender, sexual orientation, physical and mental ability, language (the list goes on) and understanding and accepting of people for who they are. Being culturally aware provides an opportunity to stand back and consider that there are certain backgrounds, personal values, beliefs and upbringings that shape the things we all do. Something that is considered inappropriate behavior in one culture may be perfectly acceptable in another. Learning about other cultures helps people relate to one another and be okay with different perspectives. Everyone and every community can benefit from such attributes. Now more than ever.

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

The secret to creativity—according to science

VALERIE VAN MULUKOM
theconversation.com

Whether you get mesmerised by Vincent van Gogh's painting *The Starry Night* or Albert Einstein's theories about spacetime, you'll probably agree that both pieces of work are products of mindblowing creativity. Imagination is what propels us forward as a species – it expands our worlds and brings us new ideas, inventions and discoveries.

But why do we seem to differ so dramatically in our ability to imagine? And can you train yourself to become more imaginative? Science has come up with some answers, based on three different but interlinked types of imagination.

CREATIVE IMAGINATION

"Creative imagination" is what we normally consider to be creativity with a large C – composing an opera or discovering something groundbreaking. This is different from everyday creativity, such as coming up with imaginative solutions to household problems or making crafts.

Creative inspiration is notoriously elusive. Being able to train creativity or induce a state of creativity has therefore long been the aim of many artists and scientists.

But is it possible? We know that some individuals have a more creative personality than others. Yet research has suggested that creative imagination can also be boosted through our environment or simply putting in lots of hard work. For example, experimental studies have shown that when children engage with creative content or watch others be highly creative, they become more creative themselves.

There are two phases to creative imagination. "Divergent thinking" is the ability to think of a wide variety of ideas, all somehow connected to a main problem or topic. It tends to be supported by intuitive thinking, which is fast and automatic. You then



need "convergent thinking" to help you evaluate the ideas for usefulness within the main problem or topic. This process is supported by analytical thinking – which is slow and deliberate – allowing us to select the right idea.

So if you want to write that masterpiece, having lots of brainstorming sessions with friends or taking a course in creative thinking or writing may help you come up with new ideas.

However, that doesn't necessarily help you select a good one. For that, research suggests that the first requirement is actually exposure and experience. The longer you have worked and thought in a field and learned about a matter – and importantly, dared to make many mistakes – the better you are at intuitively coming up with ideas and analytically selecting the right one.

Creative success is therefore not so much about finding a muse. As microbiologist Louis Pasteur said: "Fortune favours the prepared mind." This also applies to art, with Pablo Picasso advising: "Learn the rules like a pro, so you can break them like an artist."

FANTASTICAL IMAGINATION

For many people, the ability to be-

come completely absorbed by an idea is key to finalising a successful, creative project. For that you need something scientists call "fantastical imagination", probably best predicted by your fantasy proneness and imaginative immersion. These describe your tendency to have highly vivid and realistic fantasies and level of absorption in imaginary worlds.

However, given that fantastical imagination can increase daydreaming and distract from everyday obligations, it may not seem like a desirable ability to have, at first glance. There's even a dark side – one's fantastical imagination tends to increase as a response to traumatic events by becoming an escape from reality.

But there are benefits. Fantasy engagement in children is associated with increased creative imagination, narrative ability, and perspective taking. For adults, it may help improve memory consolidation, creative problem-solving and planning.

This is also an ability you can boost. Research shows that children who were encouraged by their parents to participate in pretence play and role playing have higher levels of fantasy proneness later in life. And it's never too late to start – amateur

actors are known to have higher fantastical imagination too.

EPISODIC IMAGINATION

"Episodic imagination" is similar to fantastical imagination but predominantly makes use of real (episodic) memory details rather than imaginary (semantic) details when visualising events in our mind's eye.

This helps individuals to better imagine alternative pasts and learn from their mistakes, or imagine their futures and prepare for them. The little research that has been done on this so far indicates that individuals with a higher capacity for visual imagery experience more sensory details when imagining their future.

Moreover, though years of self-improvement books suggest to "imagine it and it will happen", this is actually the opposite of what you should be doing. The best preparation for the future is paradoxically to imagine the process – not the outcome – of your desired future event. One study showed that when students imagined desired outcomes (good grades for an upcoming test) they performed significantly worse than students who imagined the process getting to the desired outcomes (imagining studying thoroughly). Perhaps something to keep in mind for your New Year's resolutions?

We all have imaginative ability to various degrees, and it's difficult to imagine where humankind would be without it. So even though you are yet to actually write that novel you've got in you somewhere, keep trying. There are many routes to boost creativity, with play, practice, and experience being crucial. It may even make you smarter.

As Einstein himself reportedly once said: "The true sign of intelligence is not knowledge but imagination."

[the writer is Research Associate in Psychology, Coventry University]

Why does using a period in a text message make you sound insincere or angry?

LAUREN COLLISTER
theconversation.com

When it comes to texting, the period, full stop, point – whatever you call it – has been getting a lot of attention.

People have begun noticing slight changes to the way our smallest punctuation mark is deployed, from declarations that it's going out of style to claims that it's becoming angry.

What they're actually noticing is written language becoming more flexible, with texting possessing its own set of stylistic norms (sometimes informally called "textspeak" or "textese").

The period is merely one example of this shift, a change that has opened up new possibilities for communicating with written language. Just as we have different styles of speaking in different situations, so do we have context-dependent styles of writing.

READING BETWEEN THE PERIODS

Though periods can still signal the end of a sentence in a text message, many users will omit them (especially if the message is only one sentence long). This tendency now subtly influences how we interpret them.

Because text messaging is a conversation that involves a lot of back-and-forth, people add fillers as a way to mimic spoken language. We see this with the increased use of ellipses, which can invite the recipient to continue the conversation. The period is the opposite of that – a definitive stop that signals, as linguistics professor Mark Liberman has explained, "This is final, this is the end of the discussion."

For some, this can appear angry or standoffish.

Earlier this year, psychologist Danielle Gunraj tested how people perceived one-sentence text messages that used a period at the end of the sentence. Participants thought these text messages were more insincere than those that didn't have a period. But when the researchers then tested the same messages in handwritten notes, they found that the use of a period didn't influence how the messages were perceived.

In a 2007 study by linguists Naomi Baron and Rich Ling, multi-sentence text messages often had punctuation to indicate where the sentences stopped, but only 29 percent of these texts had punctuation at the very end of the message. The reason, Baron and Ling explain, is that "the act of sending a message coincides with sentence-final punctuation."

SITUATIONAL SWITCHES

But of all the things to feel when seeing a period at the end of a text message – why insincerity?

The answer could have something to do with a

term used by linguist John J. Gumperz: "situational code-switching," which is when we change how we talk depending on where we are, who we're talking to or how we're communicating.

A common example is the way we talk in a job interview versus at a bar with friends. Typically, a speaker will use much more formal language in an interview than when hanging out with peers. If you talked to your friends the same way you talked during a job interview, it would probably give a stilted, distant feeling to the conversation.

Scholars originally investigated situational code-switching in spoken language because spoken language was used in both casual and formal settings. In the past, written language was almost always tinged with a level of formality because it was associated with permanence in books and written documents.

However, now that text messaging and social media have given their users an outlet for casual written language, differences between writing styles can be seen.

The use of the period is one example of situational code-switching: When using one in a text message, it's perceived as overly formal. So when you end your text with a period, it can come across as insincere or awkward, just like using formal spoken language in a casual setting like a bar.

A DIFFERENT FORM OF SINCERITY

Another example of language change in casual written forms is the repetition of letters. Communication scholar Erika Darics has observed that the repetition of letters or punctuation marks adds intensity to messages ("stopp!!!"). She writes that this creates "a display of informality through using a relaxed writing style."

Linguist Deborah Tannen described a similar phenomenon, noting that repeated exclamation points in a message can convey a sincere tone, like in the following text message: "JACKIE I AM SO SO SO SORRY! I thought you were behind us in the cab and then I saw you weren't!!!!!! I feel soooooooo bad! Catch another cab and ill pay for it for youuuuu"

Note that this message does not contain a message-final period, since that may convey insincerity that would contradict the apology being presented. Instead, the sender uses the non-standard long vowels in "soooooooo" and "youuuuu" as well as five exclamation points at the end of one sentence.

Compare this to a standardized version of the text message: "Jackie, I am so sorry. I thought you were behind us in the cab and then I saw you weren't. I feel so bad! Catch another cab and I'll pay for it for you."

This more formal version, according to the ar-

guments made by Tannen and Darics, reads more like a work email sent to a colleague than one to a friend sincerely and fervently apologizing for a transportation mishap.

It's a bit counterintuitive, but using formal language may undermine the sincerity of the apology; in order to convey the "right" message, it's important to know the proper protocols. This may explain why some people's text messages seem stilted or awkward: they're used to writing with a formal style that doesn't translate to the casual medium.

WILL TEXTING ERODE OUR WRITING SKILLS?

In the media, there's been a fair amount of debate about whether texting – or using overly casual language – can "ruin" someone's writing ability. (Examples include the LA Times, the BBC and The Daily Mail, to name a few.)

However, past research into situational code-switching in spoken language has shown that a person's ability to code-switch can signal social competency, can affirm one's sense of identity or membership in a community and may be an indicator of high intellectual ability in children.

Studies like the recent work of psychologists Gene Ouellette and Melissa Michaud have shown that the use of text messaging and "textese" has little relationship to how someone will score on spelling, reading and vocabulary tests. Meanwhile, a study out of California State University found little use of "textisms" in formal letter writing assignments completed by students. This observation supports work like a study by psychologist Beverly Plester and colleagues, who found that an increased use of textese was correlated with higher scores on verbal reasoning ability tests. They suggested that the preteens in their study were able to "slip between one register of language and another, as they deem it appropriate."

This shows that frequent and fluent users of casual written language can often readily code-switch: they know to put that period at the end of every sentence in a formal writing assignment. Some educators are even beginning to incorporate lessons about formal and informal writing into their classrooms, which can help students identify those situations that require the use of different styles.

Instead of ignoring or deriding the variation in written language, embracing the change in language – and the ability of speakers and writers to code-switch – can lead to better communication skills in all contexts. Knowing when a period might indicate insincerity is just one of them.

[the writer is Scholarly Communications Librarian, University of Pittsburgh]

Meghalaya CM inaugurates 40 mw Umtru hydro-electric project

SHILLONG, JAN 5 (PTI): Meghalaya Chief Minister Mukul Sangma inaugurated the 40 mw Umtru hydro-electric project at Dehal in Ri Bhoi district. Inaugurating the Rs 629 crore project yesterday, he said the state has various potential areas for power generation and called on the local indigenous people to participate in the process of state building. "Power sector is the most important sector. It not only provides power to consumers but also helps sustain our livelihood and augment revenue of the state," he said. The chief minister said Meghalaya has the potential to sell electricity to other states and may be export power to neighbouring countries like Bangladesh.

NE states tighten vigil on Assam border after NRC publication

ITANAGAR/SHILLONG, JAN 5 (PTI): Northeastern states are keeping a strict vigil to check a possible influx of illegal migrants into their territories following the publication of the first draft of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam, administration and police officials have said. The NRC, first prepared in 1951, is being updated in Assam under the supervision of the Supreme Court to weed out illegal migrants. The first draft of the updated version was published on December 31. Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Nagaland and Manipur have taken measures to prevent illegal migrants from entering their territories. In Arunachal, superintendents of police of all border districts have been directed to liaise with their Assam counterparts regarding the



matter, according to an official release. Chief Minister Pema Khandu had sought information from the state director general of police on the situation in the border areas in the wake of the publication of the NRC first draft. He also directed the DGP to maintain a strict vigil at border outposts to check the possible influx of illegal immigrants, the release read. The Meghalaya Police tightened surveillance along the border with Assam following publication of the NRC first draft, state Director General of Police SB Singh said today. "We have taken precautions to check any infiltration of anti-national elements right from December last week," DGP SB Singh told PTI. The home department had on December 22 directed the state police to step up vigil and conduct checks in the border areas, he said. Special police teams have been deployed at the Jiribam Babupara Bazar in Manipur and along the Barak river bordering Mizoram, the Manipur Police said in a statement. The Barak originates

in Manipur, flows through Mizoram and Assam and enters Bangladesh, where it forks into the Surma and Kushiara rivers. Police teams have been deployed at Mao Gate in Senapati district bordering Nagaland and the Tamei-Haflong road in Tamenglong district bordering Assam to check the entry of migrants into the state, the release read. Nagaland Home Commissioner Abhishek Singh was confident of preventing possible spillover of illegal migrants into the state. With the Inner Line Permit system in the state and police personnel manning check gates, illegal migrants cannot enter Nagaland, he said. State Home Minister Kuzholuzo Azo Nienu, however, said the matter had not yet been thoroughly discussed in his department.

CBFC gives green signal to Amartya Sen documentary

KOLKATA, JAN 5 (PTI): National Award-winning director Suman Ghosh today said the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) has agreed to release his documentary on Nobel laureate Amartya Sen in its entirety, including the four words that the board's regional office had objected to in July last year. The hour-long documentary had courted controversy last year when the director refused to abide by CBFC Kolkata diktat of beeping the four words -- cow, Gujarat, Hindutva and Hindu. "CBFC chairman Praseon Joshi watched 'The Argumentative Indian' in Mumbai yesterday along with other board members and gave his consent to the words. "After seeing the film yesterday, Joshi held a discussion with me and said 'the film can be re-



leased without any cuts," Ghosh told PTI here. The director further said she was hopeful of getting a written communication from the board soon on the matter. The film, shot in two parts in 2002 and 2017, has Sen talking about the social choice theory, development economics, philosophy and the rise of right-wing nationalism across the world, including India. "I am happy that the CBFC respects the freedom of expression in arts. Joshi told me he got to learn a lot about the Nobel laureate through my documentary," Ghosh said.

Scrub typhus virus: One persons dies, 47 infected in Mizoram

AIZAWL, JAN 5 (PTI): One person died and at least 47 people have been infected with suspected scrub typhus virus at Phullen village in Aizawl district, Health department officials said today. Nodal officer of the State Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP) Dr Pachau Lalmalsawma, who visited Phullen village yesterday said the spread of the disease has been contained and the patients were given medical treatment. Phullen village is about 125 kilometre north-east of the state capital. Lalmalsawma said that the first case was detected during the last part of November and new infection detected till January 3.

Scrubtyphus is a mite-borne disease caused by Orientia tsutsugamushi (formerly Rickettsia tsutsugamushi). Symptoms are fever, a primary lesion, a macular rash, and lymphadenopathy. Cases of scrub typhus infection have been detected in Champhai, Aizawl and Lunglei districts. Over a hundred people have died in the state during the past few years due to scrub typhus infection, Health department officials said.

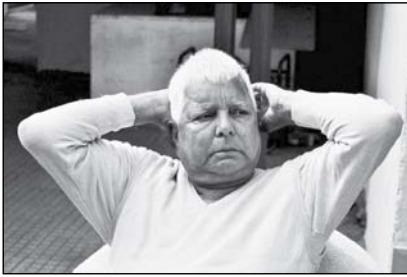
Elderly man rescued, 6 kidnappers arrested

TURA (MEGHALAYA), JAN 5 (PTI): A 63-year-old man, who was kidnapped from Lakhipur town in Goalpara district of Assam on Tuesday, was rescued today from Mansinggre Rongnak village in North Garo Hills of the state, a senior police officer said. A joint team of Assam and Meghalaya police rescued Sukur Ali, a resident of Goalpara district of the neighbouring state, and nabbed four members of an inter-state gang that had kidnapped him, he said. Two more were arrested from Assam yesterday, taking the count to those held in the case to six, the officer said. "The rescue of the 63-year-old man was made possible by Assam police. They had managed to nab one of the kidnappers in their state and found out from him the names of other members of the gang," Superintendent of Police, North Garo Hills, Dalton Marak, explained. The motive behind the kidnap, however, is not clear as yet, Marak said. "During the early morning operation, there was a brief exchange of fire but no one was injured," the SP said, adding that two country-made revolvers and nine rounds of ammunition were recovered from the gang.

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CBI court to pronounce punishment against Lalu on Saturday

RANCHI, JAN 5 (PTI): The CBI court will pronounce tomorrow the quantum of punishment against RJD supremo Lalu Prasad and 10 others in a fodder scam case, his counsel said today. The RJD supremo appeared before the court of CBI special judge Shiv Pal Singh for the argument on the punishment through videoconferencing from Birsamunda central jail, where he has been lodged since his conviction on December 23, and in a written plea sought leniency due to his illness and old-age, Prasad's counsel Chittaranjan Prasad said. "The judge said he would pronounce judgement at 2 pm tomorrow," Chittaranjan Prasad told reporters after emerging from the videoconferencing hall here.



The court concluded arguments on the quantum of punishment against Prasad and 10 others in connection with the withdrawal of Rs 89.27 lakh from Deogarh Treasury between 1990 and 1994 when he was the chief minister of Bihar. Besides Yadav, the court today heard arguments on the punishment of RJD leader R K Rana, former IAS officers Phoolchand Singh, Mahesh Prasad, former gov-

ernment official Subir Bhattacharya, suppliers/transporters Tripurari Mohan Prasad, Sushil Kumar Sinha, Sunil Kumar Sinha, Raja Ram Joshi, Sanjay Agarwal and Sunil Gandhi. The court had heard pre-sentencing arguments in alphabetical order yesterday of former IAS officer Beck Julius, Gopinath Das, RJD leader Jagdish Sharma, transporter/suppliers Jyoti Kumar Jha and Krishna Kumar Prasad. It had deferred announcing the punishment against Prasad and others for the second consecutive day yesterday. The court had on December 23 convicted all the 16 accused in the fodder scam while acquitting six others, including former Bihar chief minister Jagannath Mishra. The court had convicted Prasad for offences of cheating with criminal conspiracy under the Indian Penal Code and the Prevention of Corruption Act. Under the sections, Prasad can be sentenced to a minimum jail term of one year and maximum of seven years, his advocate Chittaranjan Prasad had said. In 1996, the Patna High Court had ordered an inquiry into the fodder scam cases and a

charge sheet in the Deogarh treasury case was filed against 38 people on October 27, 1997. Eleven of them died and three turned approvers while two other accused confessed and were convicted in 2006-07, a CBI official said. On September 30, 2013, Yadav, Jagannath Mishra and several others had been convicted in another case pertaining to illegal withdrawal of Rs 37.7 crore from Chai-basa Treasury in the early 1990s. The conviction on December 23 last is the second in the scam. Yadav faces another three fodder scam cases for illegal withdrawal of Rs 3.97 crore from the Dumka Treasury, Rs 36 crore from the Chaibasa Treasury and Rs 184 crore from the Doranda treasury.

BJP using dirty tricks to destabilise Tripura govt: CPI(M)

HYDERABAD, JAN 5 (PTI): The CPI(M) today alleged that the BJP was misusing power and resorting to "dirty tricks" to destabilise the Tripura government, led by the Left party.

The charge comes a day after the saffron party urged the Election Commission (EC) to appoint the micro-observers in poll-bound Tripura from outside the state and deploy a maximum number of paramilitary forces, alleging that an atmosphere of fear was prevailing in the north-eastern state. "The BJP-RSS is misusing power to destabilise the Tripura government through dirty tricks," CPI(M) politburo member Brinda Karat told PTI. Tripura, she said, was a

symbol of peace and harmony in a region which had a history of ethnic conflicts. The CPI(M) government in Tripura had done better than the BJP-ruled states as far as the social and development indicators were concerned, Karat added. "False charges, manufacturing lies and the abusive statements of BJP leaders will cost them heavily in the coming election (in Tripura), in which the Left Front will emerge even stronger," she claimed. The BJP had yesterday said

only those government officials should be deployed on poll duty in Tripura, who gave a declaration that they were not members of any political party or any trade union, affiliated to a political outfit. "The micro-observers should be appointed from outside the state, because the CPI(M) has started giving membership to the state government employees. Polls cannot be held with the members of the Left party inside the booth," BJP leader Himanta Biswa Sarma had said in

New Delhi. "We also request the EC to deploy a maximum number of paramilitary forces in the state to ensure a free-and-fair election," he had said. Sarma, a minister in the BJP government in Assam, is also the convener of the North East Democratic Alliance (NEDA), a coalition of the BJP and regional parties from the north-east. The CPI(M) has been ruling Tripura since 1993 and elections in the north-eastern state have traditionally been

two-cornered contests between the Congress and the Left party. The BJP's bid to emerge as a force to reckon with in the state got a boost last year with seven MLAs -- six from the Trinamool Congress (TMC) and one from the Congress -- joining the saffron camp. Sarma had also claimed that the BJP would sweep the Tripura polls, following which the number of CPI(M) members would be reduced to less than 10 in the 60-member Assembly.

Journalist killings rocked Tripura in 2017

JAYANTA BHATTACHARYA AGARTALA, JAN 5 (PTI): Killing of two journalists within two months rocked Tripura in 2017 that also witnessed a number of political developments ahead of elections scheduled this year. Shantanu Bhowmick (28), a journalist of local TV channel-Dinrat, was stabbed and beaten to death when he went to Mandai in West Tripura district on September 20. Police said Indigenous People's Front of Tripura (IPFT) and CPI-M's tribal wing Tripura Rajaer Upajati Ganamukti Parishad (TRUGP) gathered at Mandai where prohibitory orders under Section 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure

(CrPC) were promulgated to maintain peace. Sudip Datta Bhaumick (50), a crime reporter with Bengali daily Syandan Patrika and TV channel Vamguard, was killed inside the headquarters of the 2nd battalion of TSR at RK Nagar on November 21. The killings drew widespread condemnation including from the UNESCO. On the political front, the BJP's bid to emerge as a force in the state got a boost with the joining of seven MLAs. Six of them were from the Trinamool Congress (TMC) and one from the Congress. According to Chairman of the North East Democratic Alliance

(NEDA) and Assam Finance Minister Himanta Biswa Sharma, nobody can stop the BJP from forming the government in Tripura. "People have become euphoric of forming BJP government. I am sensing that our party would sweep the elections in the state and would be difficult for the CPI-M to even win 10 seats in the 60-member House," he claimed. The Indigenous People's Front of Tripura (IPFT), an anti-left ultra tribal party, had long been campaigning for a separate state by carving out the Tripura Tribal Areas Autonomous District Council (TTAADC), which constitute two third of the state territory and is the home to the tribals, who form one third of

the state's 37 lakh population. All the major political parties in the state including those in the ruling Left Front, Opposition BJP, Congress and another anti-left tribal party Indigenous Nationalist Party of Tripura (INPT) have rejected the demand as divisive and impracticable. However, the demand for more autonomy of the tribal council has come to the fore to empower it. The IPFT also suffered a split when the dissident faction led by Budhu Debbarma formed a separate committee and declared on April 16 that they are the real IPFT. The issue of more autonomy to the tribals and empowering the TTAADC became an import issue in the

state ahead of the assembly elections. Not a single insurgency-related incident was reported in 2017. Tripura is now free from insurgency, which devastated the state for the last three decades. During the year gone by, India decided to throw open its border roads to help Bangladesh construct border outposts in Chittagong Hill Tract (CHT), known for its inhospitable terrain. Some areas in Chittagong, bordering Tripura and Mizoram, have no motorable roads and India decided to allow the Bangladesh border guards to construct 13 border outposts using the road connectivity available in the two states. Chief Minister Manik Sarkar in-

augurated Indo-Bangla Friendship Park at Chottakhola in South Tripura district, around 130 km from here on December 16. The foundation stone for the 20.20 hectare park, which encompasses seven hillocks and a lake near the Trishna wild life sanctuary, was laid by the then Bangladesh Foreign Minister Dipu Moni in November, 2010. Two statues of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and Indira Gandhi, were put up in the park which was earlier a base for Bangladeshi freedom fighters from where they launched operations against the Pakistani army in Noakhali, Feni and parts of Comilla district of Bangladesh.

Rajya Sabha lost 34 hours due to disruptions, functioned for 41 hrs

NEW DELHI, JAN 5 (PTI):

The Rajya Sabha was today adjourned sine die with Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu urging members to seriously introspect on their conduct in the House which lost almost 34 hours due to frequent disruptions.

The Rajya Sabha, which had 13 sittings during the winter session that started on December 15, saw the passage of nine government bills.

Ahead of adjourning the House sine die at 1 PM in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Naidu said the session had its highs and lows, but lamented that it ended up losing some degree of esteem on account of disruptions.

"It is unfortunate that despite discharging its responsibilities to a great extent, the august House ends up losing some degree of the esteem of the people on account of disruptions and substantial loss of functional time.

"Intense and passionate submissions and debates are the order of democracy, but disruptions are certainly not. I urge upon members to seriously introspect in this regard," he said.

Naidu also said it was "an opportunity for all of us to review, recall and introspect" about how the proceedings have been conducted in the House.

This, he said, was the first full session after he took over as the Chairman and it could have been better than what it proved.

Naidu said though Parliament was a political institution, it "cannot be an extension of politics in its typical sense which is marked by deep divisions and acrimony."

Parliament is an important institution for furthering the shared socio-economic goals of the nation, critical to fulfilling the aspirations of citizens, he said.

"The legislatures of our country including the apex Parliament need to quickly evolve the way we conduct our proceedings so as to meet the needs of our evolving nation," he said.

Naidu said 19 private members' bills were introduced and one was discussed at length.

During the five days when Question Hour was taken up, he said as many as 46 starred questions were orally answered and 51 members made Zero Hour submissions and another 28 made special mentions.

Weeklong karate training camp wraps up in Kalimpong

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 05 JAN:**

Weeklong karate training camp organised by Dragon Martial Art Karate Association, Darjeeling and supported by Lingsey Pithamchin Karate Committee at Lingsey Pithamchin under Kalimpong District officially wrapped up on 04 Jan at Pithamchin with a grand programme, a press release informs.

The programme was attended by former Horticulture Officer, West Bengal Government, C.B Golay and Sikkim Muaythai Boxing Association President, RB Rai.

Dragon Martial Art chief coach cum international karate judge, Shihan Kul Hari Rai in his address talked about the importance of karate in India and how everyone is taking up the game for self defence and physical fitness. Mr Rai also shared his experiences as a karate enthusiast.

Sikkim Karate and Kick Boxing Association



founder, RB Rai talked about the origin of martial arts and informed about Sikkim's performance in various international and national level championships.

Pranjal Biswakar-

ma, a karate coach from Rangpo, East Sikkim was felicitated with Black Belt (02nd Dan) along with Pravash Pradhan from Rhenock, East Sikkim who received Black Belt (01st Dan) and Leela

Kumar Rai of Takathang who received Brown Belt (1st Dan).

Similarly other coaches from Kolkata, Sikkim and other places were also felicitated with various belts.

The programme was also attended by karate trainees and their coaches along with Dragon Martial Art Karate Association members and local residents, reads the release.

SATA felicitates Sikkim Poomsae team

**REBYNA RANA
GANGTOK, 05 JAN:**

Sikkim Amateur Taekwondo Association [SATA] felicitated the participants and coaches of the recently held National Junior Kyorugi and 10th National Junior Poomsae Taekwondo Championship at Chhattisgarh from 27-31 Dec 2017. The felicitation programme was held today here at SATA office in the capital.

Eighteen participants from SATA including three coaches, two managers and one technical officer had gone to represent the State where the Sikkim Poomsae team had managed to secure first position.

Sikkim Poomsae team grabbed eight gold and one silver medal.

The eight gold medalists are; Sulochana Limboo, Abisek Gurung, Sulochana Limboo, Priyadarshini Jyoti Bania, Abisek Pradhan, Jigdel Jangpo Bhuita.

Abisek Gurung and Priyadarshini Jyoti Bania won two



gold medals each in different events.

The team was accompanied by Gangaram Pradhan as the Poomsae coach, Lata Pradhan and R Lepcha as team manager, Dawa Tamang and Sabina Sundas as Kyorugi coaches while Amit Pradhan was the technical

official from Sikkim.

The Poomsae team was trained by Master Trilok Subba, Rajen Subba, Gangaram Pradhan and Saroj Gurung.

SATA assistant chief coach, Rajen Subba congratulated the team for making the State proud and thanked the team for win-

ning laurels for the State.

Next, the team is scheduled to participate in the Sub-Junior Championship in Maharashtra in February.

The program was also attended by the parents of the participants along with SATA members.



Lajong, Chennai play out goalless draw

SHILLONG, JAN 5 (PTI): Shillong Lajong and Chennai City FC played out a goalless draw in a Hero I-League match at the JN Stadium, here today.

It was Lajong who had the upper hand in both the halves with some dominating football but failed to find the back of the net.

Lajong made two changes in their starting line-up as Alen Deory replaced captain Samuel Lalmuanpuia and Kenstar Kharsong was handed his I-League debut in place of experienced defender Juho Oh.

It was the home side who were dominating straight from the kick-off as they enjoyed most of the ball possession.

Ivory Coast striker Abdoulaye Koffi had the first chance of the game in the third minute mark when Alen's through ball fell at his feet and he launched his shot, but the ball went straight into the hands of the Chennai City keeper.

Four minutes later Koffi was again in the thick of things as Redeem's cross from the left found him, but the striker failed to connect well.

The inclusion of Alen seemed to be the right move for the Reds as the striker was finding the majority of the ball on the right flank and was allowed to make his blistering runs.

The hosts were enjoying the majority of the possession in the attacking half and were creating chances from set pieces but none of the efforts were threatening enough.

Hardy soon went for a long ranger on his own but the ball fell straight into the keeper's hands. Lajong had some follow

up corners, but the Chennai defence was strong enough to clear out the danger.

Laurence then received a yellow card and went into the referee's book for a foul on Joachim.

Lajong started the second half right where they left off.

Substitute Samuel Lalmuanpuia shot one from distance but his shot went over the post without creating any trouble for the Chennai keeper.

Koffi then dribbled past three Chennai defenders but failed to keep his shot on target.

Chennai too had a few opportunities in the hosts' box but they didn't manage to test Lajong's keeper Phurba who rarely had to make a save.

In the 78th minute Lajong had their best chance of the half. Aiman's cross from the left was intended for Koffi, but the forward failed to connect and the goal-keeper had to come up with a brilliant save to keep Lajong off scoring.

Seconds later it was Alen Deory who had a brilliant chance to open the scoring, but the forward's venomous shot hit the bar.

The hosts went on an attacking spree looking for a goal in the dying minutes of the game but all their attacks were cleared away by the visitors.

In the second minute of four additional minutes Lajong had their last chance to secure three points at home. Samuel Lalmuanpuia's perfect freekick from thirty yards fell straight into the heads of Koffi, but the striker's header went wide of the post.

Lajong will now host AIFF developmental side Indian Arrows January 8 here.

Kerala CM praises Kim Jong-un's "tough" anti-US stand

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, JAN 5 (PTI):

Veteran CPI(M) leader and Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has lavished praise on North Korean leader Kim Jong-un for putting up a "tough" resistance against "imperialist" America better than the Communist-ruled China.

Addressing a CPI(M) district committee meet at Kozhikode on Wednesday, he said North Korea was showcasing a better



example in defending "imperialist" forces.

The CPI(M) polit bureau member also said there was a general criticism that China's fight against imperialist forces

was not living up to the expectations of the people.

"North Korea has been adopting a tough anti-US stand.

North Korea has successfully withstood the

pressure exerted by the US," Vijayan said.

The chief minister's statement came days after a flex board of the North Korean leader, brought out as part of a programme of CPI(M) in Idukki district, was removed by the party after it triggered a controversy.

The local leaders of the Left party later clarified that Kim's photo was included by "mistake".

Kim, in his New Year's Day address, has said

North Korea's nuclear weapons can reach anywhere in the US and threatened that he has a nuclear button on his desk.

Hitting back, US President Donald Trump on Wednesday warned that his "nuclear button" is "much bigger and more powerful" than the one controlled by Kim as the White House said it was keeping all its options on the table to curb Pyongyang's atomic programme.

What top editors, CEOs of publishing houses read in 2017!

ZAFRI MUDASSER NOFIL

NEW DELHI, JAN 5 (PTI):

When you ask CEOs, top editors and publishers whether they found time to read books published by their competitors in the year gone by, don't always expect a negative answer.

For many of them managed to read a lot of books brought out by other publishers despite having a busy time in 2017.

According to HarperCollins India CEO Ananth Padmanabhan, the three books he enjoyed the most were "Tom Hanks' collection of short stories "Uncommon Type" (Penguin Random House), Tim

Harford's "Fifty Things That Made the Modern Economy" (Hachette) and Dan Brown's "Origin" (Penguin Random House).

He also read Walter Isaacson's biography of Leonardo Da Vinci published by Simon & Schuster which he found "purely fascinating".

The top three reads of Meru Gokhale, Editor-in-Chief, Literary Publishing, at Penguin Random House India, were "Ants Among Elephants" by Sujatha Gidla (HarperCollins India), "Home Fire" by Kamila Shamsie (Bloomsbury India), and "Remnants of a Separation" (HarperCollins) by Aanchal

Malhotra.

When asked about his favourites, Bhaskar Roy, CEO of Palimpsest Publishers, said the book that cast a spell on him was George Saunders' "Lincoln in the Bardo" (Bloomsbury).

"The master short story writer poignantly explores a state between death and rebirth. Soon after the end of the American Civil War, when President Lincoln is still grappling

with the unsettled situation, he sees his 11-year-old son traipsing into the surreal state between life and death. In this first novel Saunders explores an area where fiction merges into philosophy," he told PTI.

"At the opposite end is Haruki Murakami's irrepressibly irrelevant 'Men Without Women' (Random House) which brilliantly explores human relationships and inner crevices of doubts, dilem-

mas, follies and foibles that sum up an urban man's life. This collection of short stories points to our vulnerabilities without leaving the reader sad or depressed," he said.

"My nonfiction reads were overwhelmingly topped by Rana Dasgupta's 'Notes on a Suicide', an incisive quest into the dysfunctionality and delirium of the 21st-century urban life in Europe. Published in Granta, this essay is more thought-provoking than any number of treatises and theories published this year," he added.

The favourite books of Hemali Sodhi, senior vice president (mar-

keting) and publisher (children's) at Penguin Random House India, in 2017 were "Hunger" by Roxane Gay (HarperCollins), Louise Penny's "Glass Houses" (Minotaur) and "History of Wolves" by Emily Fridlund (Atlantic).

Yogesh Sharma, Vice President (sales & marketing) at Bloomsbury Publishing India too liked "Lincoln in the Bardo" besides "My Brilliant Friend" by Elena Ferrante (Europa), "Olive Kitteridge" by Elizabeth Strout, "We Were Liars" by E Lockhart (Delacorte Press) and by L S Hilton's "Domina" (Penguin Random House).



US freezes over \$1 bn military aid to Pak over terror inaction

WASHINGTON, JAN 5 (PTI): Putting Pakistan on notice, the US on Thursday suspended over USD 1.15 billion in security aid and the supply of military equipment to it for failing to clamp down on the dreaded Afghan Taliban and the Haqqani Network terror groups and dismantle their sanctuaries on its soil.

The freezing of all security assistance to Pakistan comes after President Donald Trump in a New Year's Day tweet accused the country of giving nothing to the US but "lies and deceit" and providing "safe haven" to terrorists in return for USD 33 billion aid over the last 15 years.

The suspended amount also include USD 255 million in Foreign Military Funding (FMF) for the fiscal year 2016 as mandated by the Congress.

In addition, the Department of Defense has suspended the entire USD 900 million of the Coalition Support Funds (CSF) money to Pakistan for the fiscal year 2017 and other unspent money from previous fiscal years.

"Today we can confirm that we are suspending national security assistance only, to Pakistan at this time until the Pakistani government takes decisive action against groups, including the Afghan Taliban and the Haqqani Network," State Department Spokesperson Heather Nauert told reporters.

"We consider them (terror groups) to be destabilising the region and also targeting US personnel. The US will suspend that kind of security assistance to Pakistan," she said.

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North Korea accepts South's offer of talks next week

SEOUL, JAN 5 (AFP): Nuclear-armed North Korea today accepted the South's offer of talks next week, hours after Seoul and Washington agreed to defer joint military exercises which always infuriate Pyongyang until after the Winter Olympics.

The meeting, the first since December 2015, will take place in Panmunjom, the truce village in the heavily fortified Demilitarised Zone that divides the peninsula.

Tensions have been high after the North carried out multiple missile launches in 2017, including a number of ICBMs, and its sixth atomic test, by far its most powerful to date.

The tentative rapprochement comes after the North's leader Kim Jong-Un warned in his New Year speech that he had a nuclear button on his desk, but at the same



time offered Seoul an olive branch, saying Pyongyang could send a team to next month's Winter Olympics in the South.

Seoul responded with an offer of talks between the two, and earlier this week the hotline between them was restored after being suspended for almost two years.

Yesterday, the South's President Moon Jae-In and his US counterpart Donald Trump agreed to delay the giant Foal Eagle and Key Resolve joint military drills until after the Winter Olympics, which begin in Pyeongchang on February 9.

That announcement came hours after Trump said high-level talks between North and South would be "a good thing".

A unification ministry official told AFP that the North faxed a message to Seoul accepting the proposal for talks on Tuesday.

Ministry spokesman Baek Tae-Hyun told journalists that the agenda would include the Pyeongchang Olympics "and the issue of improving inter-Korean relations".

Who would attend and the size of the delegations would be settled by

fax, he said.

"I understand the North is also going to have talks with the International Olympic Committee next week," he added.

Last year saw fears of conflict spike, with Kim and Trump trading personal insults and threats of war, and the US president responded to Kim's New Year message with a Tweet that his nuclear button was "much bigger and more powerful", prompting scorn and alarm from analysts.

Concerns over North Korea have overshadowed the Winter Games, which Seoul and the organisers have proclaimed a "peace Olympics", urging Pyongyang to participate, unlike the 1988 Summer Olympics in the South, which it boycotted.

Tensions always rise during the annual drills, which Pyongyang con-

demns as preparations for invasion and often responds to with provocations. Beijing and Moscow both see the exercises as adding to regional tensions.

But recent days have seen a rare softening of tone on both sides.

Announcing the delay to the drills, the White House said in a statement: "The two leaders agreed to de-conflict the Olympics and our military exercises so that United States and Republic of Korea forces can focus on ensuring the security of the Games."

US Defence Secretary Jim Mattis later said the drills would take place some time after the Paralympics, which end on March 18.

He insisted the postponement was for practical rather than political reasons, citing the im-

portance of the Olympics for South Korea's tourist industry, and added that Washington would not lower pressure on Pyongyang in other areas.

North Korea's young leader has shrugged off multiple sets of new United Nations Security Council sanctions -- including restrictions on coal sales and petroleum imports -- and heightened rhetoric from Washington as his regime drives forward with its weapons programmes, which it says are intended to defend against US aggression.

And the US ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley struck a cautious tone earlier this week.

"We won't take any of the talks seriously if they don't do something to ban all nuclear weapons in North Korea," she said Tuesday.

Two Pakistani Hindu businessmen shot dead in Sindh

KARACHI, JAN 5 (PTI): Two Hindu brothers were today shot dead outside their grain shop by bike-borne robbers in Tharparkar district of Pakistan's Sindh province, triggering protests from the minority community.

The victims, identified as Dileep Kumar and Chandar Maheshwari were grain traders. They were opening their shop in the grain market in Mithi area of the district when the incident took place, the Express Tribune reported.

According to police, in the first ever robbery incident in the city, bike-borne dacoits tried to snatch the money from the brothers, but when they resisted, the rob-

bers shot them.

Following the incident, traders shut their business in Hindu-dominated areas in the district in protest and people blocked main roads and staged sit-ins, leading to traffic jams.

Local people alleged that police reached late at the spot as most of the personnel have been deployed in Mirpurkhas for the security arrangement of a rally organised by the Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP), where former President Asif Ali Zardari is supposed to address, the report said.

Meanwhile, Sindh Home Minister Sohail Anwar Siyal directed the Senior Superintendent of Police of Umerkot to probe the killing.

11 killed, 25 wounded in Kabul suicide attack

KABUL, JAN 4 (AFP): A suicide attacker blew himself up near a crowd of police and protesters in Kabul today, killing at least 11 people and wounding 25 others, officials said, in the latest deadly violence to bring carnage to the Afghan capital.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attack which happened during a protest following the death of a shopkeeper during a police operation targeting alcohol bootleggers, an unnamed official said.

"A suicide attacker has detonated himself... close to a number of police who were trying to provide security for an ongoing protest," deputy interior ministry spokesman Nasrat Rahimi told AFP.

Health ministry spokesman Wahid Majroh told AFP that 11 bodies had been taken to hospitals around the city along with 25 wounded.

Majroh added that the toll could rise.

Kabul police spokesman Basir Mujahid said the suicide bomber had targeted police officers, five of whom were killed and another 11 wounded.

"He detonated his vest very close to police who were trying to stop the protesters," Mujahid told AFP.

A security source



who spoke to AFP on the condition of anonymity said 20 people had been killed and 20 wounded in the attack, but that higher toll could not be immediately confirmed.

Footage shown on Afghanistan's Tolo News showed men, purportedly shopkeepers, gathered on a street during the day, angrily denying they were bootleggers.

Afghans are prohibited from selling or consuming alcohol in the Muslim-majority country.

President Ashraf Ghani condemned the "barbaric attack" and ordered an investigation, according to a statement from the presidential palace.

The deadly assault

lied places in war-torn Afghanistan for civilians in recent months, as the Taliban step up their attacks and IS seeks to expand its presence in the country.

Last week's assault came days after a suicide bomber killed six civilians in a Christmas Day attack near an Afghan intelligence agency compound in the city, which was also claimed by IS.

On December 18 militants from the group stormed an intelligence training compound in Kabul, triggering an intense gunfight with police, two of whom were wounded.

Security in Kabul has been ramped up since May 31 when a massive truck bomb ripped through the diplomat-

ic quarter, killing some 150 people and wounding around 400 others -- mostly civilians. No group has yet claimed that attack.

Despite the increased security measures militants continue to plan and carry out devastating attacks.

Yesterday Afghanistan's spy agency announced it had busted a 13-member IS cell in Kabul that had been hatching "a series of big terrorist attacks" in the city.

The Middle Eastern jihadist group has gained ground in Afghanistan since it first appeared in the region in 2015 and has scaled up its attacks in Kabul, including on security installations and the country's Shiite minority.

SIKKIM STATE LOTTERIES	
LABHAXIMI LEO	MUMBAIXIMI SURAJ
Draw No:5 DrawDate: on 05/01/18 1st Prize Rs.10,000/- 6969 2nd Prize Rs.1,000/- 3070 3rd Prize Rs.500/- 6526 4th Prize Rs.300/- 2952 5th Prize Rs. 204/- 1813 6th Prize Rs.100/-	Draw No:5 DrawDate: on 05/01/18 1st Prize Rs.10,000/- 3652 2nd Prize Rs.3000/- 5432 3rd Prize Rs.1,000/- 4493 4th Prize Rs.504/- 3177 5th Prize Rs.220/-
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Issued by: The Director, Sikkim State Lotteries, Government of Sikkim, Darjeeling-737103, Sikkim Please Visit : www.sikkimlotteries.com	

NAGALAND STATE LOTTERIES	
DEAR TENDER MORNING	
Draw Time: 11:55 am onwards Draw No:5 DrawDate: on 05/01/18 1st Prize Rs.26 Lakhs/- 95K 89871 (Including Super Prize Amt)	
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KINDLY CHECK THE RESULTS WITH THE OFFICIAL GAZETTE	

NAGALAND STATE LOTTERIES	
DEAR ADMIRE	
Draw Time: 04:00 pm onwards Draw No:5 DrawDate: on 05/01/18 1st Prize Rs.26 Lakhs/- 87K 27820 (Including Super Prize Amt)	
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KINDLY CHECK THE RESULTS WITH THE OFFICIAL GAZETTE	

NAGALAND STATE LOTTERIES	
DEAR VULTURE EVENING	
Draw Time: 08:00 pm onwards Draw No:23 DrawDate: on 05/01/18 1st Prize Rs.26 Lakhs/- 95K 04478 (Including Super Prize Amt)	
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GAME OF THRONES' SIX-EPIISODE FINAL SEASON WILL AIR IN 2019

The night is dark and full of terrors, one of them being that the final season of Game of Thrones will only have six episodes. According to HBO, season 8 of the medieval fantasy series will air in 2019 and be four episodes shorter than all of its other previous seasons.

Fans took to Twitter to react to the news and express their excitement for the the highly-anticipated last season. GOT devotees also didn't hold back from sharing their disapproval of having to wait more than a year to see the fi-



nal battle for the Iron Throne go down.
Sophie Turner who plays

Sansa Stark in the highly acclaimed series opened up about shooting the final season during

an interview with The Hollywood Reporter last month.

"The day where we had the final read-through for the finals script, it was really bittersweet. It was hard," the 21-year-old star recalled. "At the end of the very last script, they read aloud, 'End of Game of Thrones.' As soon as they read that out loud, pretty much everyone burst into tears. There was a standing ovation for [showrunners David Benioff and Dan Weiss]. We were all clapping and cheering. It was amazing. It was the first time every

single cast member had been there and sat through all of the scripts for season 8."

"I was proud of David and Dan, and I was looking around at all of the other cast members around the table, nodding at them and saying: 'Well done. We've done it.' It was the craziest feeling," she continued. "It's the biggest project we'll ever do. We've put our hearts and souls into it. Saying goodbye to it means putting parts of our hearts and souls behind. But we also know we've given it everything that we've got."

JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE RETURNS WITH NEW SINGLE 'FILTHY'



Justin Timberlake has returned with his new single "Filthy." The Grammy winner, 36, released the edgy new track a few minutes before Friday.

"Filthy" is the first single off Timberlake's forthcoming LP Man of the Woods, his fourth full-length album after Justified, Future Sex/Love Sounds and The 20/20 Experience.

The video begins with applause from a crowd as Timberlake arrives dressed like Steve Jobs and introducing an artificial intelligence creation that proceeds to amaze the crowd with its ability to move and dance.

Timberlake shared the video on Twitter as well, writing, "This song should be

played very loud."

The new record — a rock-tinged set said to be inspired by his relationship with wife Jessica Biel and 2-year-old son Silas — will drop Feb. 2 and features collaborations with longtime producer Timbaland, country star Chris Stapleton and Alicia Keys. Then, two days later, Timberlake will headline the Super Bowl LII Halftime show. Ahead of Man of the Woods's release, Timberlake will tease fans with three more promotional singles and music videos.



BUNDLED UP: Fifty Shades Freed actress and singer Rita Ora is ready for chilly weather in London

TRAILER OF RAJINIKANTH AND AKSHAY KUMAR'S 2.0 TO BE OUT ON 6TH JAN



Rajinikanth and Akshay Kumar will soon be seen together in the film 2.0. The film will showcase two of the biggest superstars of our country together. 2.0 is a science fiction and will involve a lot of visual effects. It is being said that 2.0 will be one of the biggest openers of 2018. The film that is being made with a massive budget will mark Akshay Kumar's Tamil debut.

The film's trailer will be launched at the Natchathira Vizha 2018 in Malaysia on

January 6, which will be graced with the presence of Rajinikanth as well. South film critic Sreedhar Pillai shared the news on his Twitter account by saying, "#2Point0 teaser to be released at the #NatchathiraVizha2018, Malaysia on Jan 6, says @Karthi_Off. @superstarrajini will be there at the event." The film was initially going to be released during Diwali 2017; however, it has now been slated for an April 2018 release.



THIS DAY IN HISTORY

06TH JANUARY

1912- New Mexico: New Mexico is admitted into the United States as the 47th state
1919- President Theodore Roosevelt: President Theodore Roosevelt passed away. He died in his estate home in Long Island, New York. He had took over office at age 43 after President McKinley was assassinated. He was the youngest president ever to take on the office of President of the United States.

2000- UK Major Flu Outbreak: A major flu outbreak in the UK causes problems with NHS hospitals stretched to the limit, many hospitals have been forced to cancel all non-emergency surgery and many hospitals intensive care beds are full and are now facing a shortage of beds, the outbreak is being blamed on the poor take up of flu vaccine shots.

2001- George W. Bush Wins: After a five-week long debate regarding Florida voting ballots, George W. Bush was finally declared official winner of the Presidential election. This was one of the closest presidential election races in U.S. history.

2006- China Worst Storm In 25 Years: Western China

is facing it's worst winter in more than 20 years with temperatures reaching -43C and more than 2 ft of snow, transport and infrastructure has been badly effected and more than 100,000 people have been evacuated after their homes collapsed under heavy snow.

2011- Witches Curse Romania Government: The Romanian government reformed their tax code to include such occupations as fortune teller, astrologer, and witch into the category of self-employed, forcing those who identify as such to pay taxes for the first time. This action prompted some self-identifying witches to threaten to curse the government for their actions, while others praised the government for the official recognition of their crafts.

2013- Pakistan Drone Attack Kills Militants: A US drone attack in South Waziristan killed eight suspected militants according to officials in Pakistan.

2014- Dennis Rodman Visits North Korea: Former basketball player Dennis Rodman arrived in North Korea with a team of other former NBA players for a game that would mark Leader Kim Jong-Un's birthday. Rodman has been criticized for failing to address human rights issues in the country and claims that he is friends with the North Korea leader.

LOCKHORNS

- HOEST & REINER



"AT LEAST THEY'RE PAYING YOU FOR YOUR 'TWO CENTS' WORTH."

ARCTIC CIRCLE

- HALLATT



BABY BLUES

- KIRKMAN & SCOTT



ARIES: You're apt to be in a very joyous mood today, Aries, and it's going to show on your face. This isn't going to go unnoticed by the people you meet. You could make some new friends, and, if you aren't currently romantically involved, you might actually meet an interesting potential love partner. This person is apt to be very polite and polished, not to mention smart! Be cordial, be nice, and enjoy your day.

TAURUS: Today you might host a gathering of people interested in psychic or metaphysical matters, Taurus. A very special guest could give a talk or lead a discussion group. This could be fascinating for everyone present. You'll gain a reputation as a wonderful host, even though all you really do is

pass out cookies and pour the coffee. You, above all, should have a great time and enjoy talking with your friends. Have fun!

GEMINI: Writing may be one of your main focuses for today, Gemini. You have a lot of information to impart to anyone who might be interested in what you have to say. You could try your hand at a magazine article or perhaps fiction or poetry. However, even if all you write at this time is a letter to your cousin, what you say will undoubtedly be bright, gripping, and certainly very interesting. Go to it! **CANCER:** Professional interests continue to expand, Cancer, and you're managing to keep very busy. Your income is rising, and you could be achieving a certain prominence in your field. None-

theless, you could be looking for new opportunities. The field you're in now may not be one that you want to continue for the next 20 years. This is therefore a good day to put out a few feelers and test the waters. You might be surprised at the opportunities out there.

LEO: Travel in the company of a close companion might be looming over the horizon, Leo. In fact, you might be leaving pretty soon, and you're probably growing excited. Some surprising developments could come up during the course of this journey, and thus it's likely to shape up to be more than a simple vacation. Make sure you look your best, don't hold back on what you want to do, and have fun.

VIRGO: An unexpected lucky break could come your way to-

day, Virgo - something you would never have expected in a hundred years. It could seem like a dream come true, yet it could disrupt your life in some way. You might find yourself facing a choice: go for it and change your entire way of life or let it go and take the risk that another great opportunity might never appear. Who said life was easy? Think about it!

LIBRA: If you aren't currently romantically involved, Libra, today you could meet someone who shows a lot of promise. Work might be involved in some way, and it's also possible that this person has been living in your neighborhood for a long time. A friend could introduce you to each other. You'll probably spend at least an hour talking, and will probably

make arrangements to meet again.

SCORPIO: Some kind of unexpected shakeup could take place today, Scorpio, and you could find yourself suddenly being offered more money or responsibilities. This might be just the break you've been waiting for, but it could take you so much by surprise that you might ask for time to think about it. Don't think for too long, however, because they might give the break to someone else!

SAGITTARIUS: Today you might attend at least one festive social occasion, Sagittarius, and therefore you may meet some very interesting people in unusual professions, such as film or TV. Expect to hear some bizarre stories, some of them true, others that are clearly exaggerated. Out of all this

friendly banter and tale telling, however, you could acquire some useful information. Make a note of it so you'll be able to remember it later.

CAPRICORN: Your level of health and physical well-being is likely to be very high, Capricorn, and thus you're probably glowing. As a result, you might find that those around you pay more attention to what you're saying than they usually do. You'll also find that your mind is especially sharp, and you're apt to be exceptionally quick on the uptake. Therefore, you might absorb a lot more from what you hear than you normally do. Make a note of it!

AQUARIUS: You might be feeling especially adventurous today, Aquarius. The same old streets

and buildings in the same old town might suddenly seem to be closing in on you. Therefore, you might just grab a close friend or significant other, hop in the car, and take off for the mountains or the ocean. You probably need a break. You've been working very hard and probably could benefit from some time in open country. Go for it!

PISCES: An intense dream or vision could result in a spiritual breakthrough of some kind, Pisces, and you might spend much of the day in a bit of a daze, trying to make sense of it. You might see if you can find a few books on the subject, because all signs suggest that reading could bring a lot of useful information your way today. You might also want to write down an account of your experience.