

SummitTIMES

Vol 03 | Issue 08 | Gangtok | Wenesday | 10 January 2018

O N T O P O F T H E N E W S

RNI No. SIKENG/2016/69420

Pages 8 | ₹ 5



ORGANIC PRODUCE DISPLAY AT NEW MARKET

GANGTOK, 09 JAN: The display of organic produce of the State in front of Star Hall, New Market has been drawing lots of visitors. The display of organic vegetables, fruits and flowers is part of the ongoing Sikkim Red Panda Winter Carnival 2018. The venue also has a photo exhibition by the department of Information and Public Relation. [pic: Sagar Chhetri]

Aadhaar data breach FIR: Pb Cong govt extends support to protest by Tribune staff

CHANDIGARH, JAN 9 (PTI): Punjab's Amarinder Singh government today extended its support to the protest by 'The Tribune' employees against filing of an FIR against the newspaper's journalist over a report on alleged breach of Aadhaar data.

The Tribune employees union today staged a demonstration demanding revocation of the FIR, during which Cabinet minister Tripti Rajinder Singh Bajwa, state Congress chief Sunil Jakhar and Media Advisor to the chief minister Raveen Thukral joined the protesters, said an official release here.

Bajwa lashed out at the alleged "witch hunt" unleashed by the central government against 'The Tribune' reporter over her Aadhaar data breach report.

Filing of FIR against 'The Tribune' reporter amounted to "sheer victimisation" and could not be condoned at any cost, he said, adding such acts were in violation of the democratic ethos and principles.

Jakhar also lashed out at the Centre for the registration of the FIR against the scribe.

Pointing out that the BJP had opposed Aadhaar when they were in the Opposition in the Centre, Jakhar said the Centre should plug the flaws in the Aadhaar system and ensure that privacy was safeguarded.

The entire leakage episode should be investigated. **turn to pg02**



Bhutanese footballers foray into Indian clubs

**SAURABH RAI
SILIGURI, 09 JAN:**

Bhutanese footballers are making a foray into India this season. After the success of forward Chencho Gyeltshen, two more Bhutan national team regulars, Jigme Tshering Dorjee and Nima Wangdi, reached Punjab on Tuesday to explore the possibility of playing for the I-League side Minerva Academy Football & Cricket Club.

It is learnt that the boys will be on trials with the club led by young and



flamboyant owner, Ranjit Bajaj. Both the players were

playing for Thimphu City FC in Bhutan.

Chencho has been a revelation in the I-League this season after signing for the Chandigarh-based club, scoring two goals and also providing assists.

Minerva has also proved to the other clubs in the country that there is no dearth of talent in the subcontinent and they do not always have to go for African players or those from other countries to supplement their team.

AR Rahman gets nation talking about Sikkim

NITESH R PRADHAN

GANGTOK, 09 JAN:

Music composer AR Rahman donning a new role as the brand ambassador of Sikkim has generally received a positive feedback in the national media along with many noting the state's thrust on organic mission which was also mentioned by the world renowned artist in his speech yesterday in the capital.

Today the globally famous Indian musician visited Tsomgo lake and also took a chopper ride around the state in the popular joyride service.

Leading news network, India today writes, "India's first organic state, Sikkim, looks to boost tourism with AR Rahman on board."

Similarly, another major news source, Times of India writes, "The annual tourism event organized by the state tourism department took a giant leap from preceding years with the presence of the globally renowned musician."

Likewise, Kolkata



based, The Telegraph highlighted the portion of the speech of Rahman with the headline, "Preserve Purity".

Travel-based Conde Nast, taking note of the recent trend among states to declare celebrities as its brand ambassador, writes, "With Rahman as its brand ambassador, Sikkim joins other eastern states that have roped in celebrities to promote tourism. Last

year, Priyanka Chopra signed on as the brand ambassador for Assam, while John Abraham has been endorsing the state of Arunachal Pradesh."

While an editorial in leading digital entertainment portal, glamsham.com writes, "The Heavenly State of India, Sikkim, every year eagerly awaits its most prestigious event, 'The Red Panda Winter Carnival'. And while the State has

already been converted into a winter wonderland, the festival transformed into something extraordinarily yesterday as they honored the first Brand Ambassador of Sikkim none other than Mr. A.R. Rahman!"

Further, the editorial adds, "Besides being one of the most talented and influential music faces, Rahman truly blends with the essence of the North Eastern state."

Don't use national flag made of plastic, says MHA

NEW DELHI, JAN 9 (PTI): Ahead of the Republic Day, the government today urged everyone not to use national flag made of plastic and asked the states and Union territories to ensure strict compliance of the flag code.

In an advisory to the states and Union territories, the Ministry of Home Affairs said the national flag represents the hopes and aspirations of the people of the country and hence should occupy a position of honour. The ministry said that it has been brought to its notice that during important events, the national flag made of plastic is also being used in place of paper flags.

Since, the plastic flags are not biodegradable like paper flags, these do not get decomposed for a long time and ensuring appropriate disposal of national flag made of plastic commensurate with dignity of the flag, is a practical prob-

lem, the advisory said.

As per Section 2 of 'The Prevention of insults to National Honour Act, 1971' - Whoever in any public place or in any other place within public view burns, mutilates, defaces, defiles, disfigures, destroys, tramples upon or otherwise shows disrespect to or brings into contempt (whether by words, either spoken or written, or by acts) the Indian National Flag or any part thereof, shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to three years, or with fine, or with both.

The advisory said that on important national, cultural and sports events, flags made of paper only are to be used by public in terms of the provisions of the 'Flag Code of India, 2002' and such paper flags are not to be discarded or thrown on the ground after the event.

Such flags are to be disposed of,

in private, consistent with the dignity of the flag. Wide publicity for not using the national flag made of plastic should be made along with its advertisement in the electronic and print media.

State governments, UT administrations, secretaries of all ministries/departments of government of India were told to ensure strict compliance of the provisions contained in the 'Flag Code of India, 2002' and 'The Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act, 1971'.

There is universal affection and respect for and loyalty to the national flag. Yet, a perceptible lack of awareness is often noticed amongst the people as well as organisations and agencies of the government in regard to laws, practices and conventions that apply to 'display of the national flag', the advisory said.

SC reverses order on national anthem, says no longer mandatory

NEW DELHI, JAN 9 (PTI): Reversing its order, the Supreme Court today held that playing of national anthem in cinema halls before screening of films is no longer mandatory and left it to a government panel to frame guidelines on this sensitive matter.

The apex court said that playing of national anthem in cinema halls before screening of movies would now be optional and in that case the audience will have to stand as a show of respect.

The direction came a day after the Centre made a plea to the apex court to modify its November 30, 2016 order that made it mandatory for cinema halls to play the national anthem before screening of a film during which the audience was also required to stand. The order had sparked a nationwide debate.

The court, while emphasising that citizens were bound to show

respect to the national anthem, said that a 12-member inter-ministerial committee, set up by the Centre, would take a final call on various aspects including playing of national anthem in cinema halls.

A bench headed by Chief Justice Dipak Misra said that the committee should "comprehensively" look into all the aspects related to playing of national anthem in its entirety.

"The interim order passed on November 30, 2016 is modified that playing of national anthem prior to screening of film in a cinema hall is not mandatory as directed," the bench also comprising Justices A M Khanwilkar and D Y Chandrachud said.

The top court, while disposing of the petitions pending before it, made it clear that the exemption granted earlier to disabled persons from standing in cinema halls when

national anthem was being played, shall remain in force till the committee takes a decision.

The bench accepted the Centre's affidavit which said the 12-member panel has been set up to suggest changes in the 1971 Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act.

Attorney General K K Venugopal told the court that the committee, which was set up through a notification on December 5 last year, will submit its report within six months.

The Centre in its affidavit yesterday said that an inter-ministerial committee has been set up as extensive consultations were needed for framing of guidelines describing the circumstances and occasions on which the national anthem is to be played or sung and observance of proper decorum on such occasions.

The government had said that the top court may "consider the res-

toration of status quo ante until then, that is restoration of the position as it stood before the order passed by this court on November 30, 2016" as it mandated the playing of the anthem in cinemas before a feature film starts.

During the hearing, the bench accepted the submissions of the Attorney General that petitioners before the court could make representations before the committee.

"When we say suggestion, the suggestion should only relate to national anthem," the bench said.

Regarding the playing of national anthem in cinema halls before screening of movies, Venugopal said that it should not be made mandatory until a final decision was taken by the committee and thereafter by the Central government.

The counsel appearing for petitioner Shyam Narayan Chouksey,

referred to various instances when due respect was allegedly not shown to national anthem and said that scope of provision related to it should be expanded.

"National anthem cannot be equated with any caste or religion. It is a tool for integration of the entire country.

Guidelines are existing but they cannot resolve the issue," the lawyer said and referred to an instance where some persons were manhandled inside a cinema hall in Mumbai after they had not stood up during playing of national anthem.

Meanwhile, the Attorney General told the bench that the committee was required to suggest changes in the 1971 Act and the panel comprises of representatives of various ministries.

Regarding disrespect shown to national anthem, Venugopal said **turn to pg03**

BJP's NE tribal cell in-charge visits Sikkim



SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 09 JAN:

Bharatiya Janta Party central committee member and North-Eastern States tribal cell in-charge, KS Khayeliyo received a warm welcome from the state-unit of the party at the BJP regional office in Singtam, East Sikkim.

Mr Khayeliyo took note of the progress of the party in the State and congratulated the state-unit and its leaders for what he saw as the increasing popularity of BJP among the people of Sikkim, informs a BJP

press release.

He also held an interaction with the party workers and discussed the extension of the organisation of the party and the tribal front in the State with the state-unit general secretary, SB Karki.

After the meeting, Mr Khayeliyo also met monks on relay hunger strike at Gangtok demanding that Karmapa Ogyen Trinley Dorje be allowed to visit Sikkim. He also assured to take the issue to the concerned officials and Ministry at the Centre.

Sikkimese personalities not Rahman as brand ambassador says SKM

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 09 JAN:

Sikkim Krantikari Morcha has expressed dismay over AR Rahman being declared the brand ambassador of the State instead of Sikkimese personalities like Danny Denzongpa, Bhaichung Bhutia, Geetanjali Thapa and Tarundeep Rai.

The party has alleged that the repeated sidelining of local personalities shows the state government's 'ignorance' of their existence.

In a press release issued today, SKM further alleges that the state government brought people in vehicles carrying SDF flags from different corners of the State just to show huge crowd in the opening function of the carnival. The party has questioned the use of party flags in the government programme and whether these vehicles were paid for by the Tourism department or SDF.

The release further states that the government is spending huge amounts of money for the carnival when there are very few tourists in the state.

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DC West chairs Republic Day prep meet

GYALSHING, 09 JAN

(IPR): The preparatory meeting for organizing district level Republic Day celebration at Gyalshing, West Sikkim was held under the chairmanship of District

Collector [West], Kapil Meena today.

The meeting chalked out various programs for task distribution and ground arrangement for the Republic Day Celebration 2018 which will

be observed at the Kyo-nga Ground.

Mr Meena announced that all regular activities like mass parade by the police contingents, forest contingents will take place along with cultural

programs and various sports activities. The DC urged the Heads of Departments to extend their maximum cooperation to make the Republic Day celebration a grand success this year also.

Team Sikkim leaves for National Youth Fest in New Delhi

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 09 JAN:

Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan and National Service Scheme, Sikkim are all set to participate in the 22nd National Youth Festival 2018 at Gautam Buddha University, Greater Noida in New Delhi from 12-16 Jan, a press release informs.



Organized by the Youth Affairs, Government of India, the festival is an annual gathering of youth with various cultural activities and is celebrated to commemorate the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda.

Team Sikkim consists of 70 members comprising of NYKS volunteers, NCC cadets and youth from different parts of Sikkim.



New Panchayats sensitized on RTI Act

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 09 JAN:

A short sensitization programme on RTI Act 2005 and the Sikkim State Right to Information (Regulation of Fee, Cost and Miscellaneous) Rules 2005 was conducted at DC Office, Namchi for newly elected Panchayats of all GPUs and Zilla Territorial Constituencies under the Namchi

Sub Division on 08 Jan 2018 and for Ravangla and Yangang Subdivisions on 09 Jan 2018 by Sikkim Information Commission (SIC), informs a press release.

The programme at Namchi was presided over by ADM South, Subash Das Rajalim, Deputy Secretary, SIC, Abinash Rai. At Ravangla the programme was presided

over by ADC (Dev) Ravangla, SDM Yangang and Deputy Secretary, Abinash Rai.

Speaking on the occasion, Deputy Secretary, Abinash Rai gave a detailed presentation on RTI Act 2005 and Rules. Mr Rai also talked about powers and functions of Sikkim Information Commission as per Section 18, 19 and 20 of

the Act. He also talked about how one can use the provisions of the Act for life and liberty and apprised that such nature of information has to be provided within 48 hours.

It was also informed that through RTI one can not only seek information but also perform inspection of works and Government records, and

also take samples of materials. He also urged the gathering to use the provisions of the Act very judiciously and not to use it as a tool with a malafide intention.

Mr Rai further apprised the gathering that only NGOs and Organisations receiving 95% of funding fall under the definition of Public Authority as per the Act.

Aadhaar data breach FIR: Pb Cong govt extends...

contd from pg01

tigated, he demanded. Jakhar accused the BJP-led government at the Centre of suppressing the voice of the media, and the people and said that this did not behove well of a democratically-elected government.

"How can a journalist be prosecuted for doing her work, without malice," Bajwa and Jakhar asked, adding that the way the central government was stifling the voice of democratic institutions did not augur well for the country.

All democratic forces should come together to fight this trend, which, if unchecked, would destroy the very fabric which holds the nation

together, they said.

Thukral conveyed Chief Minister Amarinder Singh's personal support to the agitating Tribune employees during a visit to their protest site here today.

Though the chief minister could not meet them personally as he was indisposed, he had assured of his government's full backing to the media in the interest of 'press freedom', Thukral told the protesters.

"The chief minister was in favour of the central government plugging the Aadhaar leaks instead of putting the plug on the system which had exposed the loopholes," said Thukral,

adding the Congress government in Punjab would do its best to fully protect the freedom of the fourth pillar of democracy.

Thukral said he was personally shocked by the "act of persecution" and urged the Centre to withdraw the FIR and order a thorough investigation into the alleged leakage of Aadhaar data.

The Delhi Police has registered an "open-ended" First Information Report (FIR) on a complaint from Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) over the report on the alleged data breach of more than one billion Aadhaar numbers.

The UIDAI's com-

plaint sparked condemnation from the Confederation of Newspaper and News Agency Employees' Organisations which demanded its withdrawal. Calling it an attack on the free press, the Confederation had said the UIDAI should highlight errors in the report, if any, instead of taking penal action.

Though the complaint named four persons, including the Chandigarh-based daily The Tribune's reporter who had filed the story on alleged breach in Aadhaar database, Law and IT Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad had said the FIR was against "unknown" entities.

Namchi police conducts raid, arrests one under SADA

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 09 JAN:

84 spasmodicxvyn and six N-10 tablets along with 10 bottles of cough syrup were seized in a police raid at Plaza area in Namchi, South Sikkim on 09 Jan.

Police said the raid was conducted following information from a 'source'.

The police have arrested a 27-year-old man of Tingmoo, South Sikkim for possessing the contraband substances. The accused has been booked under Sikkim Anti Drugs Act, 2006.

The contraband substances were seized in front of independent witnesses and in the presence of Sub Divisional Magistrate, Namchi.

NECDC holds executive committee meet

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 09 JAN:

The executive committee meeting of the North East Cricket Development Committee [NECDC] was held here on Monday. The meeting hosted by Sikkim Cricket Association [SCA] was chaired by NECDC co-convenor, Naba Bhattacharjee and deliberated on a host of issues as per agenda circulated in advance.

NECDC is a coordinating body of six NADP states of Board of Control for Cricket in India as members namely Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Sikkim.

An SCA press release informs that the meeting unanimously resolved to sustain and strengthen the present approach of working together for development of cricket in six states and extend support to each other and work in close coordination towards attaining the goal of NECDC as per norms and guidelines of BCCI and CoA.

The meeting further decided to organize tournaments for different age categories as per BCCI format, in a more systematic and professional approach within each state with emphasis on tournaments like inter school and college level including exchange programme among the six states.

"Further, it was also agreed that proposal be sent to BCCI for exposure trips and tournaments with other state teams outside the region, in different age categories, prior to commencement of BCCI tournaments. This will provide an opportunity to players from the six states to play with better teams and gain valu-

able exposure experience and honing of technical skills of the game," the release informs.

The release mentions that the proposal of BCCI suggesting drawing of calendar of events in each of the states including imparting coaching, team selection, prior preparation of teams including registration aspect for an organized approach like course and training of curators, video analysts, on-line and manual scorers was discussed and finalized. It is added that as desired by BCCI, budget for undertaking all such initiatives shall be drawn by each state on priority and sent to BCCI for approval.

"Further, it was also resolved that all projects which include construction of indoor practice facilities, developing of ground and pitches, construction of mini stadium etc which was passed in 2015 by the working committee of BCCI needs to be implemented on priority in all the six states with provision for completion during the coming off season," the release informs.

As suggested by BCCI, the fees and DA of local coaches, physio, trainer, curator, ground supervisor, VDO analysts, Online and manual scorers, Umpires; engaged by each of the states for local tournaments within the state to be funded by BCCI as per prevailing arrangement, was also finalized on uniform rate basis for all states.

The meeting also decided to approach appropriate authorities regarding inclusion of the six states in Ranji Trophy from next season similar to the direction of the Supreme Court for allowing Bihar to play in Ranji Trophy.

SIKKIM STATE LOTTERIES

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3465 3967 4070 4431 4577 4643 4654 4736 4886 4911

4982 5059 5132 5412 5485 5527 5694 5753 5758 5911

6037 6159 6297 6303 6375 6571 6636 6680 6721 6763

6780 6782 6791 6823 6911 7119 7342 7517 7611 7631

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8600 8633 8973 9023 9100 9142 9209 9349 9460 9474

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2376 2457 2487 2716 2888 3126 3140 3150 3194 3332

3363 3372 3574 3663 3682 3848 3908 3919 3935 4127

4166 4379 4452 4460 4526 4724 4890 4894 4943 5151

5155 5207 5213 5220 5238 5611 5711 5807 5841 5941

6088 6266 6358 6359 6417 6472 6603 6607 6642 6689

6715 6808 6872 6928 6949 7057 7267 7503 7540 7682

7817 8160 8193 8229 8426 8453 8656 8658 8686 8706

9043 9241 9264 9270 9361 9379 9421 9764 9936 9938

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1179 1349 1366 1484 1612 1615 1637 1641 2063 2276

2577 2765 2789 2896 2972 2982 3019 3117 3408 3422

3494 3600 3833 4024 4117 4409 4449 4642 4838 4846

4853 5148 5181 5194 5347 5394 5494 5520 5539 5627

5755 5763 5827 5862 6000 6024 6154 6257 6344 6395

6411 6567 6596 6839 6933 7132 7188 7253 7265 7316

7354 7359 7440 7554 7668 7701 7731 7744 8084 8116

8211 8363 8367 8465 8594 8601 8752 8758 8767 8988

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4011 4214 4341 4518 4552 4582 4635 4695 4823 4944

5118 5128 5167 5287 5360 5482 5537 5551 5613 5663

5668 5912 6187 6245 6364 6414 6467 6480 6503 6701

6799 6818 6834 6880 6881 6884 6898 6964 7030 7077

7129 7282 7464 7490 7567 7600 7690 7771 7933 7950

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KINDLY CHECK THE RESULT WITH THE OFFICIAL GAZETTE

Gangtok on Wednesday, 10 Jan

Temp: 18°C /03°C
Forecast: Partly sunny, partly cloudy and chilly.
Sunrise: 06:27 AM
Sunset: 4:59 PM

10-yr-old girl molested by neighbor

SUMMIT REPORT KALIMPONG, 09 JAN: A 10-year-old minor girl from Bong Basti in Kalimpong was reportedly molested by her neighbor on 07 Jan.

According to the victim's father, he had sent his daughter to run an errand and while she was on her way the accused caught hold of her and took her to an isolated place where he committed the crime.

A case under Protection Of Children from Sexual Offenses Act, 2012 was registered against the accused at the police station. The accused has been arrested and the victim has been sent to hospital for medical examination.

SC reverses order on national anthem...

contd from pg01

such matters could be decided on a case to case basis.

Meanwhile, some petitioners raised the issue of Article 51 A (a) of the Constitution which say that it shall be the duty of every citizen of India to abide by the Constitution and respect its ideals and institutions, the national flag and the national anthem.

Senior counsel Sajjan Poovayya, representing another petitioner advocate Ashwini Kumar Upadhyaya, said that national anthem, national flag and national song were secular symbol representing nationhood and were required to be respected.

The bench, while referring to the provisions of the 1971 Act, said it was clear that no one can intentionally prevent playing of national anthem.

The court said that national anthem has to be accorded respect as a respect to salutation of motherland and a proper decorum has to be maintained when it is played. It, however, said that list of occasions where national anthem should or should not be played cannot be stated.

The top court had in October last year observed that the people "cannot be forced to carry patriotism on their sleeves" and it cannot be assumed that if a person does not stand up for the national anthem, he or she is "less patriotic".

The apex court had on October 23 last year observed that people do not need to stand up in cinema halls to prove their patriotism and had asked the Centre to consider amending the rules for regulating playing of national anthem in theatres.

10 finalists get set for Mayal Lyang Lepcha Idol grand finale

REBYNA RANA GANGTOK, 09 JAN:

Ten finalists are all set to compete in the grand finale of the first Mayal Lyang Lepcha Idol scheduled to be held on 11 Jan at Mayfair Resort in Ranipool, East Sikkim.

Organized by Sikkim Indigenous Lepcha Tribal Association (SILTA) the competition is held to promote singing talents from the Lepcha community.

Six finalists are from Dzongu, one from Mangang, one from Namchi, one from Ranka and one from Kalimpong.

Representing North Sikkim are Tshering Doma Lepcha, Sunom Lepcha, Nim Tshering Lepcha, Bhaichung Lepcha, Norchung Lepcha



and Tashi Namgyal Lepcha from Dzongu with Queden Lepcha from Mangang.

The rest of the contestants are Sunong Lepcha from Namchi, South Sikkim, Choden Lepcha from Ranka, East Sikkim and

Nima Tshering Lepcha from Lingsey, Kalimpong.

The finalists will have to sing two songs each (one of their own choice and the other assigned to them by the judges) at the grand finale.

The finalists are cur-

rently rehearsing for the grand finale at YOLO Lounge Bar in Deorali under the guidance of musician Mickma Tshering Lepcha who is also one of the judges for the finals.

There are six judges

for the finale which include Padmashree award-ee Hildamit Lepcha.

The finale will start from 02 p.m. and will also have Lepcha cultural dances for the audience.

Cash prizes will be given to the top three finalists, informed the organisers.

"My preparations are going on well and I am practicing the song given to me daily," said one of the finalists, Tshering Doma Lepcha.

All the contestants said the Mayal Lyang Lepcha Idol is a great platform for the singing talents of the community.

"It is a very good initiative by SILTA to provide opportunity and platform to us," they said.

RED PANDA WINTER CARNIVAL

Second day begins with Yoga and Zumba session



GANGTOK, 09 JAN (IPR): As part of the ongoing Red Panda Festival, Zumba and Yoga demonstration was held at MG Marg this morning.

Minister for Health

Care, Human Services and Family Welfare Department, Arjun Kumar Ghatani attended the occasion as the chief guest.

Guest of honor, Thukchuk Lachungpa and film

producer Chunilal Ghimire led the yoga demonstration presented by Healthy Self Foundation.

Yoga demonstration was followed by Zumba dance.

Sikkim Red Panda WINTER CARNIVAL 2017-18
From 08TH - 18TH JANUARY 2018

Local Artists Lineup

Supporting Venues

CAFÉ LIVE & LOUD	PITCH BLUES
Tibet Road	SPOON DRIFT
GANGTOK GROOVE	HER ILLEGAL PRACTICE
M.G. Road	PRESS FRENCH FOR PLAY
YOLO	GAYCHEN & FRIENDS
Deorali	ABNER DARNAL
CAFÉ INFINITY	FOX REVERIE, GRANITE YARD
Tadong	RHYTHMIC SOUL COLLECTIVE
ANUM PEDRO	ILL BRED
M.G. Road	RINCHEN TSECHUTHARPA
	RINCHEN SHERPA, SUGARUSH
	NIK PRASH PRADHAN
	DEVANSH, JOE'S APARTMENT

SHRA members to host performances by local artists

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 09 JAN:

Sikkim Hotel and Restaurant Association has announced that it has initiated a local line up of performing artists, duos, trios, bands, edm/hip hop artists and DJs at selected local SHRA member venues from 10-18 Jan to support the 03rd Sikkim Red Panda Winter Carnival.

Cafe Live & Loud, Gangtok Groove, Yolo, Cafe Infinity, Anum Pedro, Plur and Code Orange are hosting performances by local artists

throughout the carnival, informs a press release.

Pitch Blues, Spoon Drift, Her Illegal Practice, Press French for Play, Gaychen & Friends, Abner Darnal, Rhythmic Soul Collective, Ill Breed, Rinchen Tsechutharpa, Rinchen Sherpa, Sugarush, Nik Prash Pradhan are some of the local artists announced for the multiple day gigs.

The lineups will be updated accordingly in the respective venue's social media handles along with SHRA Facebook page, informs the release.

Sichey residents form Srijana Samaj Samiti



SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 09 JAN:

A meeting of the residents of Sichey was held under the chairmanship of Andrew Chettri on 07 January here at Marigold School.

The meeting unanimously decided to work for the development of the area and welfare of the local residents. The meeting has also formed an organization by the name of Srijana Samaj Samiti to work effectively in the area.

The committee is led by Mani Kumar Gurung as president, Prakash Lama as vice-president, Deepak Rai as general secretary, Andrew Chettri as joint secretary/ treasurer, David Lama as publicity secretary, Manoj Kumar Srivastav as development secretary, Sushma Barde- wa as assistant development secretary and Ram Bahadur Burathoki, Bimal Chettri, Bindyachal and Durgesh Prasad as members.

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



Sonam Dadul Bhutia
18/11/1951 to 29/11/2017

"We begin to remember not just that you died, but that you lived. And that your life gave us memories too beautiful to forget"



Mrs Nim Diki Bhutia (Wife), Karma R Bonpo , Bhumika Pradhan Bonpo & Chultim Chelisa Bhutia
Sonam R Bonpo, Tashi Dorjee Bhutia , Cheung R Bonpo, Nima R. Bhutia and All Relatives.



SIKKIM PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
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Reference No: 01/EXAM/SPSC/2018 Date: 08/01/2018

NOTICE

The Sikkim Public Service Commission announces the results on the basis of the marks obtained in the Written Examination and Viva-Voce/Interview for selection to the post of **Lower Division Clerk** in the Sikkim Sub-Ordinate (Ministerial & Executive) Service under DoPART, Government of Sikkim by direct recruitment. The candidates bearing the following Roll Numbers are hereby declared qualified in order of merit and the names are recommended for appointment.

ROLL NO.	NAME OF CANDIDATE
73904714	NIKHIL RAI
73901093	BINITA RAI
73900105	ASHIM GURUNG
73906512	RIKDEN TSHERING BHUTIA
73902687	JIGME WANGCHUK BHUTIA
73905967	RINZING ONGMU BHUTIA
73911058	TENZING NAMDUL BHUTIA
73909333	RINCHEN ONGMU
73911178	TENZING DOLMA BHUTIA
73909644	SUSHAN PRADHAN
73901674	DRONA CHARYA CHETTRI
73910973	TSHERING CHODEN BHUTIA
73902719	JIGMEE WANGCHUK BHUTIA
73902518	HEMANT SHARMA
73902254	EKTA PRADHAN
73906869	SONAM GYALPO LEPCHA
73902063	DORJEE ONGMU BHUTIA
73900007	AITA MOTI LIMBOO
73900808	BIVEK POUDYAL CHETTRI
73909710	TSHERING ONGMOO BHUTIA
73907014	SONAM PINCHO BHUTIA
73910996	TENZING CHOPEL BHUTIA
73904609	NORDEN GYATSO TAMANG
73906904	SHIWANI GURUNG
73906591	SONAM THARGAY BHUTIA
73911059	TENZING LEGSHEL BHUTIA
73908722	GEETANJALI CHETTRI
73901332	CHEWANG DEM PHEMPUNADI
73904563	NITEN GURUNG
73906750	SITA SUBBA
73909743	USHA RAI
73906610	SONAM CHODEN SHANGDERPA
73900525	ADITYA LAMA
73901490	CHODEN BHUTIA
73900148	ANUPAMA SUBBA
73900735	BIKRAM GIRI
73908089	SHANKER SHARMA
73900294	ARUN SUBBA
73910048	DIVANI SUBEDI
73905992	RODHA PANDI TASHO
73911609	YESHI CHODEN
73910780	SUNDEEP RAI
73902632	SANTOSH KUMAR SHARMA
73900932	BHAWANA DAHAL
73900373	ANANT RAI
73902278	EDEN DHONDUP
73911357	TASHI LHAMU BHUTIA
73911632	YANGCHEN DOMA BHUTIA
73904798	PRIYANKA RAI
73910933	RESHMITA RAI
73902259	EKSHA HANG SUBBA
73905865	PRASANA PRADHAN
73903652	LILA WATI GURUNG
73905864	PRASHANT SHILAL
73901634	DEVENDRA GIRI
73909221	PRETISA PRADHAN
73909509	SHEELA MOTHAY
73901558	DEEPIKA TAMANG
73907911	SRIJANA SUBBA
73910432	PONA HANG SUBBA
73911051	THUPDEN CHOPEL LEPCHA
73911752	YAMUNA PRADHAN
73904791	PUZA PRADHAN
73906812	SABNAM YONZON
73901994	DIVYANI RAI
73911496	UMA ADHIKARI
73900435	ANJEE PAKIMO LEPCHA
73904328	NAOMI SOMER LEPCHA
73901706	DEEPSHIKA GIRI
73907716	SANGYA DEEKI LEPCHA
73909410	SALUZA RAI
73904608	NISHAMA SUBBA
73902409	GRACY RAI
73908804	KARMA CHOKI BHUTIA
73905616	PRANIT LAKANDRI
73902618	MOHAN SHARMA
73903666	LAKILA SHERPA
73910440	PRADEEP RAI
73908251	TASHI CHODEN GURUNG
73902601	DEPEN CHETTRI
73903990	MANOJ KHATIWARA
73906952	SANDHYA DIYALI
73902587	ASHIF PRADHAN
73903919	MAMTA SINGH
73910907	ANIL KUMAR SHARMA
73906725	SONY ASIS BARDEO
73902593	BIBEK GURUNG
73910909	PREETAM PRADHAN
73906811	SACHIN GAJMER
73902645	THINLAY GYALTSEN BHUTIA
73908257	TSHETEN LEPCHA
73902644	THINLAY DOMA LEPCHA
73903964	MOHAN KUMAR CHHETRI
73908627	DEEWASH SHARMA
73910924	SARAN PRADHAN
73909578	SUDHAN GURUNG
73902909	KARMA THUPDEN BHUTIA
73906613	SONAM CHIZOM BHUTIA
73911341	TIKA RAM GURUNG
73901659	DIL MAYA SUBBA

The candidature of the candidates as shown in the list is **provisional**, subject to the police verification, medical fitness and verification of all required documents by the State Government.

sd/- [BIMLA RAI, Smt.]

CONTROLLER OF EXAMINATIONS

SIKKIM PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
R.O. No. 497/IPR/PUB/Class/17-18 Dated: 09/01/18

On What Basis?

Intolerance of even news is a dangerous sign

Even before the real necessity or benefits of Aadhar were understood, we lined up outside kiosks to submit fingerprints and retinal scans to get registered. So unclear and unprepared the exercise was that Aadhar cards cramped post offices because delivering them to the doorsteps was a logistical nightmare. In the earlier days, people used to spend hours at post offices riffling through stacks of these cards to secure their own (Aadhar) and own another ID, which, we were soon to learn were not valid ID's and were just all our records for the authorities and the corporate sellers to mine. For an exercise so humungous, it is confounding how rushed and unprepared the process was. They learned and adapted as the enumeration and the recording progressed, kind of learning on the job like we saw not so long ago with the demonetization experiment and are currently dancing around with the GST project. In these times of data mining, identity thefts, increasing computing capabilities (of machines and people) and targeted marketing, one would have expected that the planners knew what they were putting together and why it was important, necessary actually, that this data was kept secure.

But that has clearly not happened. As an investigative reporter, Rachna Khaira, of the Tribune, the Chandigarh-based English daily, recently exposed, it was as easy as responding to a classified advertisement to get a username and password which opened part of the Unique Identification Authority of India records on Aadhar details of citizens and from there on it was as easy as typing in people Aadhar numbers to receive all details they had provided the authority. The expose was earth-shattering not so much in establishing that such access was possible but in the fact that it was so easy to do so. One was not even required to be a consummate hacker or pay massive bribes to access such data! The Tribune report detailed how its reporter was able to buy demographic details connected to any Aadhaar number across the entire database for just Rs 500 and then even print out anyone's Aadhaar card for just Rs 300 more.

How did the authorities respond to this revelation? Expectedly, a police complaint was filed. This was fine so long as the intent was to dive even deeper than what a lone investigative reporter has the resources or time to uncover. But that does not appear to be the real priority, since also named as an accused in the FIR was the reporter herself and her publication. Technically, what she had done can be argued to have been illegal, but only if viewed in isolation. Since it was in the pursuit of exposing a criminal act and inexcusable negligence, the criminality argument flies out of the window. And sure enough, the media and the civil society pushed back and received tweeted responses from the concerned agencies and its minister that the "govt was fully committed to freedom of the press". But tweets do not negate police cases and even if the Courts were to eventually throw away the allegations, the case itself would have ensured by then that the faculties of a sharp investigative reporter had been dulled through the pressures of a police case and scarce resources of a newspaper diverted towards dodging such ambushes when they could have been better invested into other investigations or deeper dives into this story itself. The government would have come out with cleaner hands if the reporter and her editors had been named as possible witnesses and their collaboration sought to get to the bottom of the case.

But that was not done. Instead, we received denials and assurances and distractions. Governments around the world are increasingly deploying this noxious combo to dodge accountability – "fake news" anyone. But people have to demand more, seek better. In the present case for instance, for all the noise, one is yet to hear of what is being done to at least plug the one leak that has been exposed or be told how the security of their information has been reinforced since...

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Why African board games should be introduced into the classroom

REBECCA Y. BAYECK
theconversation.com

When most of us think about learning, we imagine a teacher and a classroom. In reality most of the things we know, and a great number of the skills we acquire as children and adults, are learned outside the classroom – in conversations with peers, engaging in community service, on the playground.

Educators and researchers are increasingly recognising opportunities for growth presented outside the classroom, and are working to integrate them into classroom learning experiences.

Games, in particular, are being seen as learning spaces. This is because they enable players to develop non-cognitive skills, such as patience or discipline, which are important for career and life success. Gameplay also develops a number of cognitive skills, including critical thinking and problem solving.

The African continent has a long history of gameplay that extends back to pre-slavery and precolonial times. Board games, in particular, have been used to teach, or reinforce, values as well as cognitive and motor skills.

Games have been part of the social fabric of many African societies for hundreds of years. The Morabaraba board game was historically used to share cattle herding strategies in parts of southern Africa (for example South Africa, Botswana and Lesotho) and discuss information related to war strategies. And legend has it that Oware was used in 1700s Ghana by Ashanti King Katakye Opoku Ware I to resolve issues between married couples. Today, board games remain equally popular and culturally significant.

Though a growing number of re-



searchers around the world are making the connection between playing and learning, the learning potential of African board games remains severely under-explored. My research – which focuses on mechanics, rules and context – suggests that the creative use of these games could play an important role in formal education.

SIMILAR BUT DIFFERENT

The board games explored in my research include Oware (Ghana), Bao (Tanzania), Moruba (South Africa), Morabaraba (South Africa), as well as Omweso or Mweso (Uganda).

I broke down some of the mechanics and rules of each game, as well as the context in which they were and are played. This enabled me to identify some of the learning outcomes of each game's mechanics.

The boards games could be referred to as "strategic games" as they involve strategic thinking. Most – with the exception of Morabaraba – are also from the same family of games, Mancala.

My analysis shows that the board games should be viewed as unique, and different. Each has its own me-

educational levels.

FOCUS ON OWARE

Oware is one of the most played and known African board games in the world – and its rules show its learning potential.

It is played on a board of 12 holes, with 48 seeds or pebbles equally distributed between two players. The seeds or pebbles are dropped one by one into consecutive holes by players who take turns to play. The aim of the game is to capture 25 seeds. This requires players to use multiple strategies and techniques.

Playing Oware teaches strategic thinking and arithmetic. Patience, spatial thinking, communication, decision making and negotiation skills are some of the other learning outcomes it facilitates.

But the game mechanics of Oware suggest that it could even prove to be useful in a biology classroom. The life cycle of a cell is defined by a series of events that lead to its division and replication. Like the cell, Oware gameplay is characterised by a series of cyclical, repetitive movements,

chanics, requires specific skills and produces distinctive learning outcomes. This means that the games could potentially be used to teach a variety of concepts and skills across a number of subjects and at different

guided by the game mechanics or rules. Thus, using Oware mechanics or rules, the concept of cell life cycle can be explained to students in a biology course.

The full learning potential of games like Oware is yet to be completely uncovered, but it's clear that it can be used to introduce students to new concepts they may easily understand because of their familiarity with game. Learning is made fun and enjoyable.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Games are certainly alternative spaces for learning and can advance education. The educational potential of African board games has long been argued by ethnomathematicians (who study the relationship between mathematics and culture) and anthropologists – including scholars such as James Owusu-Mensah, Arthur Powell, Oshon Temple, and Kofi Poku Quan-Baffour.

The field of Game Studies is emerging and, across the world, educators and researchers are exploring games to understand and enhance learning. But many of the digital games that are celebrated for their educational value are expensive and inaccessible to most people. African board games, on the other hand, are simply made and can even be reproduced, or designed, in a playground by digging holes on the ground.

The moment is therefore ripe for African board games to assume their proper place in this emerging field. An inventory of these games is an excellent first step, but there is much work to be done.

[The writer is PhD Candidate, Learning Design & Technology & Comparative & International Education, Learning Performance Systems Department, College of Education, Pennsylvania State University]

From bad to worse? 5 things 2018 will bring to the Middle East

JAMES L. GELVIN
theconversation.com

It's always dangerous to make predictions about the Middle East.

After all, few experts foresaw Anwar al-Sadat's trip to Jerusalem in 1977, which led to the first peace treaty between Israel and an Arab state, nor did they predict the Iranian Revolution of 1978-79 or the Arab uprisings of 2010-11. Having taught and written about the Middle East for three decades, however, I feel confident in making the following forecast for the region in 2018.

1. THE SYRIAN CONFLICT WILL DRAG ON WITHOUT RESOLUTION.

In Syria, the government will continue to reconquer territory, but will not be able to expand its control across the entire country.

There are four reasons for this.

First, regime opponents who have borne the brunt of the regime's brutality for the past seven years know better than to throw themselves on its mercy now. In the past, they have treated government offers of amnesty with scorn. They will continue to do so.

Second, the government is too weak. Most of the territorial gains the government made during the past two years were accomplished by subcontractors – Hezbollah, Iranian units, Iranian-trained and controlled militias and private militias – not by the depleted government forces.

Third, the overwhelming majority of opposition groups operate within the confines of a single province. This indicates that they are local forces under the control of a local power broker. Having experienced the lighter hand of the government for the past six years, they are unlikely to willingly surrender their hard-won autonomy.

Finally, the Syrian civil war has been a proxy war with the West and Saudi Arabia and its Gulf allies supporting the opposition. While that aid will certainly decline as a result of donor fatigue and logistical problems, it will probably not end. As a result, the opposition will not surrender from sheer exhaustion.

The former Arab League and United Nations peace envoy to Syria, Lakhdar Brahimi, will be proved correct. Several years ago, he predicted the Syrian civil war would end with the "Somalization" of Syria.

Like Somalia, Syria will have an internationally recognized government and permanent representation at the United Nations. It will continue to issue and stamp passports and, if it so chooses, will send a team to the Olympics. However, like the government of Somalia, the government of Syria will reign, not rule, over the entirety of its internationally recognized borders.

2. SAUDI ARABIA'S 'REFORMS' WILL FIZZLE. Saudi Arabia will continue to make reforms under the direction of Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman, but those reforms will be purely cosmetic.

Although the crown prince has been portrayed as a reformer, it is important to remember that

Bashar al-Assad, the president of Syria, once played that role as well.

The crown prince will continue to try to consolidate power in his branch of the ruling family. So far, he has imprisoned other princes and economic elites on charges of corruption, while spending US\$300 million on a house in France.

He has also taken power away from another pillar of the Saudi ruling group – the religious establishment. In fact, the so-called "loosening" of restrictions in Saudi Arabia – allowing women to drive, opening entertainment centers, stripping the religious police of the power to make arrests and promoting a "more moderate" Islam – are all aspects of his campaign to divest the religious establishment of its power and centralize power in the hands of his immediate family.

Only by releasing prisoners of conscience from Saudi jails and ending the barbaric war in Yemen might the crown prince demonstrate he is a true reformer.

The crown prince's push to liberalize the Saudi economy will also fail. Two years ago he announced his "Vision 2030." It includes a list of off-the-shelf neo-liberal recommendations intended to turn Saudi Arabia into a market economy within 14 years.

The implementation of Vision 2030 would mean ending a governmental tradition of buying the loyalty of Saudi citizens through subsidies and employment. It would mean ensuring a free flow of information in a country that, in 2017, Reporters Without Borders ranked 168th of 180 countries in terms of press freedom.

It would mean dramatically increasing female workforce participation from 22 percent to a stated goal of 30 percent – still well below the global norm of 49 percent – and adding 2.5 million private sector jobs. Finally, it means changing attitudes toward work in a country in which 11 million guest workers literally do all the heavy lifting.

All in 12 years.

3. THE CALIPHATE WILL BE GONE, BUT NOT THE ISLAMIC STATE.

If 2014 was the year in which IS seemed unstoppable, 2015 was the year the IS caliphate began to slide into oblivion.

At its height, IS controlled 40 percent of Iraq. At the beginning of 2017, that number slipped to 10 percent, and IS lost 70 percent of its territory in Syria. The caliphate also lost all the major towns it had taken. The caliphate is finished.

But what about IS, the movement? Some IS fighters have already given up. They have tried to melt into local populations or return home, although they have met resistance from populations out for vengeance and fearful foreign governments.

For the rest, there are two likely scenarios. First, since a significant number of IS fighters from Iraq, along with their leaders, joined IS because they harbored grievances against the Shiite-dominated government in Iraq, it is entirely possible that they will continue to wage an insurgency against that

government. This is just what the Taliban in Afghanistan did after the Americans overthrew their government.

Second, it is even more likely that former fighters and freelancers will continue their attacks globally, with or without organizational backing. The world is not lacking in gullible and disturbed individuals.

Nevertheless, because IS will lack a base from which to disseminate its sophisticated propaganda, and because the appeal of high-risk but ineffectual ideologies wane over time, so too will IS' appeal.

4. TRUMP'S 'ULTIMATE DEAL?' GONE FOR NOW. When the U.S. recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, it put another nail – quite possibly the final nail – into the coffin of the Oslo agreements, which set the parameters for negotiating a two-state solution.

In spite of the protestations from the Trump administration, an Israeli government secure in the embrace of the United States lacks incentive to concede anything. The United States has been down this road before, multiple times, and to no avail.

In addition, the polarized politics of the Middle East further erodes the possibility of resolving the conflict. In 2002, the Saudis proposed a peace plan: If Israel made peace with the Palestinians, the Arab states would normalize relations with it.

Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States and Israel are now in de facto alliance against Iran. The Palestinian issue has dropped by the wayside and another incentive for Israel to make peace has disappeared.

5. YEMEN WILL SINK FURTHER INTO THE ABYSS.

Down the road, the most important underreported crisis in the Middle East is the war in Yemen, which Saudi Arabia, with American support, is waging against an indigenous uprising. There is no end in sight.

The Saudis claim the Houthis – rebellious members of the dominant clan of Shiites who live mainly in the north of that country – are Iranian proxies. The Saudis have thus entered the war on the side of a government that took power after a rigged "national dialogue" and an election won by the only candidate – a Saudi-supported candidate – allowed to run. The Houthi rebellion in fact began in 2004, long before the Saudis noticed Iranian conspiracies throughout the region.

The Saudis have engaged in a massive bombing campaign of civilian areas and have blockaded the ports of a country that is dependent on imports for 90 percent of its food. Yemen is the poorest Arab country. As a result of the Saudi campaign, which not only has killed 12,000 Yemenis but has kept a civil war going, 50,000 children faced starvation at the end of 2017. Between April and August 2017, 20,000 Yemenis died of cholera.

The United States supports the Saudi war effort. Yet, like Saudi Arabia, it accuses Iran of being the greatest purveyor of terrorism in the region.

[The writer is Professor of Modern Middle Eastern History, University of California, Los Angeles]



TMC to continue fight against Aadhaar: Derek O'Brien

NEW DELHI, JAN 9 (PTI): The Mamata Banerjee-led Trinamool Congress (TMC) said today that it would continue to “expose” various Aadhaar card-related problems and carry on its fight against the central government’s move in and outside Parliament.

In a statement, TMC MP Derek O'Brien said that his party would be “persistent” in its protest against Aadhaar card.

“From notices in Parliament to questions in Question Hour and Mamata Banerjee’s public declarations, the Trinamool Congress has exposed Aadhaar card problems. We won’t stop. The All India Trinamool Congress have fought war on Aadhaar beyond just tweeting about it -- early, consistent, persistent. In Parliament and outside it,” he said.

Opposing linking of Aadhaar with mobile phone number, West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee had earlier said that she would not comply with it even if her phone connection was snapped.

The TMC has accused the central government of imposing an “autocratic” rule and said her party would “have to play a role so that the BJP is removed from power” at the Centre.

In a TMC parliamentary party meet just before the winter session of Parliament, Banerjee had directed party MPs to keep raising the issue to corner the government.

TMC MPs also staged a protest in front of the statue of Mahatma Gandhi in the Parliament House, while in the Rajya Sabha TMC member Sukhendu Sekhar Roy had given a notice for a short duration discussion on the matter and also raised the issue.

Naga tribal body urges PM Modi to postpone Nagaland elections

NEW DELHI, JAN 9 (PTI): The Naga Hoho, an apex Naga tribal body, has sought Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s help in postponing the forthcoming Nagaland Assembly elections, saying that the vexed insurgency problem should be resolved first.

In a memorandum, the Naga Hoho said an exceptional situation has been prevailing in the north eastern state as a result of the ongoing negotiations for a peace accord with the militant group NSCN-IM.

“It is the unanimous view of the Naga people that the political solution or Naga peace accord is more important than elections and therefore, it has become imperative that the elections to the legislative assembly of Nagaland be deferred for peace and tranquillity,” the tribal body said.

Assembly elections in Nagaland, Meghalaya and Tripura are due in March and an announcement in this regard is expected early next month.

The expectations for a lasting peace have soared in Nagaland, which had been hit by insurgency for decades, after the Centre and the NSCN-IM signed a framework agreement in 2015.

The National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Isak-Muivah) (NSCN-IM) has been engaged with peace talks with the interlocutor of the central government since 1997, when it announced a ceasefire agreement after a bloody insurgency movement which started in Nagaland soon after the country’s independence.

Reminding the prime minister about his statement, soon after assuming office in 2014, that the Naga issue would be resolved in 18 months, the Naga Hoho said almost three years have gone “without finding any tangible solution”.

It also said more than 20 years have gone by since the signing of the Naga ceasefire and the beginning of the political dialogue.

The Naga Hoho said it has come to know that the Naga peace accord was at its final stage and likely to culminate in a very short period of time as the Centre’s interlocutor and the NSCN-IM had earlier issued a joint statement that they were closer than “ever before to the final settlement and hope to conclude it sooner than later”.

“We sincerely hope that your competent authority shall exhibit its political will and bring out a logical conclusion to this predicament. In the event of failure to defer the election process and ignite unwanted situation, the government of India shall be held responsible,” the tribal body told Modi in its memorandum.

During a visit to Nagaland in November last, President Ram Nath Kovind had said the state was at the threshold of making history as the final agreement on the Naga political issue would soon be arrived at and a lasting peace achieved.

On September 19, Nagaland Governor P B Acharya had said the vexed Naga issue would be solved within a few months.

Seeking to allay concerns of three north eastern states, Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh had said on November 8 that the territorial integrity of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Manipur would not be compromised while inking the final Naga peace accord.

The insurgent group NSCN-IM’s key demand is to integrate Naga-inhabited areas of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Manipur, which has been strongly opposed by the BJP-ruled states.

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Myanmarese refugees of Mizoram unwilling to return

AIZAWL, JAN 9 (PTI): Around 1,440 Myanmar-marese nationals who took shelter in Mizoram following a clash between militants and the Army there in November last year, have refused to return, officials said today.

At least 1,600 Myanmar-marese people from several villages in Chin state had taken refuge in Lawngtlai district of Mizoram since November 25.

Assam Rifles sources said the force had tried to repatriate the refugees after the Myanmar Army officials said they had busted AA hideouts in Chin state and took control of the area.

“While a few refugees had returned, 1,440 people comprising 998 adults including 773 women and 442 minors refused to return to their homes,” the sources said.

Some of them were afraid to go back apprehending that violent confrontation may erupt anytime between government forces and the Arakan Army (AA) militants, while many preferred to settle down in the state.

Officials said some of the refugees even tried to construct houses but the district administration stopped them and sent them back to the relief camps.

The refugees from Chin state entered Mizoram after the Myanmar Army launched a crackdown on the AA militants fighting for freedom of the neighbouring Rakhine state.

The Myanmar-marese refugees belonging mainly to Zakhai and Khumi tribes are staying at camps in Zochachhuah, Dumzautlang and Hmawngbuchhuah villages.

A senior police official said people of the villages were having problems as they were outnumbered by the refugees in their own villages, though many of them were their relatives.



Why one crore people left out of NRC first draft, asks Mamata

ALIPURDUAR (WB), JAN 9 (PTI): West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee today demanded to know why the names of over one crore people did not figure in the first draft of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam and urged the people here to give them shelter if they were forced to leave the north-eastern state.

Banerjee asserted that the move was a ploy of the BJP to drive the Bengalis out of Assam and alleged that not only Bengalis, but those from Bihar were also left out of the NRC.

“I am saying this because it hurts us,” she told a public meeting here in Alipurduar district. Asking the people of this north Bengal town to stay alert, the Trinamool Congress (TMC) chief urged them to give shelter to those left out of the NRC, if they were forced to leave Assam.

Seychelles leader’s journey to land of his ancestors in Bihar

NEW DELHI, JAN 9 (PTI): His great-grandfather left the Indian shores over 130 years ago, and now Seychelles’ Leader of Opposition Wavel Ramkalawan is all set to undertake an “emotional journey” tomorrow to reconnect to his roots in a village in Bihar.

Ramkalawan, who was born in the island nation in 1961, and is currently the Leader of Opposition in the National Assembly of Seychelles, is here for the first conference of persons of Indian origin (PIO) parliamentarians from across the globe.

“Part of the mission, part of my personal mission, is what I consider to be an emotional one. My great grand-father left Bihar in 1883, from his village called Parsauni, and travelled down to Patna.

“And from there, he took a train to Calcutta (now Kolkata) and from Calcutta did a 10-12 week-long sea voyage to Mauritius. He was then placed in a sugarcane plantation,” he said.



Ramkalawan, who shared the journey of his forefathers, last evening during a talk session hosted by the Indian Council of World Affairs at the Sapru House here, said his odyssey to the ancestral village will be the “first such journey” undertaken by anyone from Seychelles.

The SNP leader at present heads the National Assembly’s Outer Island Committee, the Committee for Truth and National Reconciliation and the Finance and Public Accounts Committee.

The leader of the Seychelles National Party, who heads the National Assembly’s Outer Island Committee, the Committee for Truth and National Reconciliation and the Finance and Public Accounts Committee, emphatically said, he was taking the journey, because, he did not to “lose my roots”.

“No one from Seychelles has done this kind of research, so I am proud of it. I want to go back and see what I can contribute to in making the lives of my distant relatives better,” he said.

Going down memory lane, Ramkalawan, a Christian by faith, also narrated the journey of his ancestors from Mauritius to Seychelles.

“When my great-grandfather died at the age of 48, his wife and two sons sent left Mauritius and came to Seychelles.

So, my grandfather came to Seychelles and married a local woman, and my father was born of that relationship.

“And, part of mission I have is... I want to go back and see the village where my great grandfather came from, to find out my roots,” he said.

Ramkalawan said the village has been identified and tomorrow with the “help of my friends and the Indian government”, he will be going to Bihar.

“Hopefully, I will be able to catch up with the relatives of my grandfather... I do not want to lose my roots,” he said.

The SNP leader, also shared the India connection with the first settlement of Seychelles, when 28 people had landed on its shores.

“In 1778, when the first settlement took place, of the 28 people who landed in Seychelles, 15 were white, seven Africans, five Indians and one black woman. So, India and Seychelles go a long way back,” he said.

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GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM

ROADS AND BRIDGES DEPARTMENT

NAMCHI DIVISION

SOUTH SIKKIM

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

N.I.T No: 98/R&B/Nam-Div/2017

Dated: 04/01/2018

For and on behalf of the Governor of Sikkim, Divisional Engineer, Roads and Bridges Department, Namchi Division, invites sealed tenders under single bid system from the eligible contractors of Class IV grade enlisted with Sikkim Public Works Department vide Notification No. 373/R&B/Secy. Dated: 1/5/2017, through competitive bidding within the territorial jurisdiction of Gram Panchayat / Urban local bodies where the work is to be executed. The works are listed as under:-

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Value put to tender (Rs)	Completion time (in months)	Amount of Bank Receipt for cost of tender documents (Rs)	Amount of Earnest Money @ 2.5% For issue of tender form (Rs)
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Upgradation and Carpeting of Sadam Dara to PMHSY road via Rameshwaram Mandir, Sadam in South Sikkim. Km. 1 st	91,57,962.00	18 months	15000	2,28,949.00
2	Upgradation and Carpeting of Sadam Dara to PMHSY road via Rameshwaram Mandir, Sadam in South Sikkim. Km. 2 nd	67,45,669.00	18 months	15000	1,68,642.00

TIME SCHEDULE:-

1. Date of submission of application with bank Receipt for issue of Tender Documents (excluding Tender Form) : 5th Feb' 2018 (From 10.00 am to 4.00 pm)

2. Date of issue of Tender Form on submission of TDR (as Earnest Money) : 6th Feb' 2018 (From 10.00 am to 4.00 pm)

3. Last Date and Time of submission of Tender : 7th Feb' 2018 (From 10.00 am to 12.00 noon)

4. Date and Time of Opening of Bid : 7th Feb' 2018 (at 1.30 pm)

1. CONDITIONS OF CONTRACT:-

- Tender is open to the eligible Contractors/Firms of appropriate Class/Area.
- The intending tenders/contractors should apply in writing for issue of tender documents. The application would invariably be signed by the contractor himself/herself. The tender document will not be issued to any person other than the INTENDING TENDER. The application shall be submitted initially for each work list above with all required documents.
- The applicants should enclose attested copies of the [a] latest Value Added Tax Clearance Certificate [b] Latest Income Tax Clearance Certificate as per the Indian Income Tax Act and [c] Validated/Updated Contractor Enlistment Certificate, and Professional Tax Clearance Certificate along with the application. It is mandatory to produce the Original validated/ updated Enlistment Certificate during sale/issue of the Tender Document for verification.
- The prescribed Non-Transferable Tender Documents [excluding the Tender Form] can be obtained during the period specified in [As above from the office of the Divisional Engineer, Road and Bridges Department, Namchi Division, on production of requisite Bank receipt of the state of Sikkim towards the cost of Tender Documents [non-refundable] under the receipt Head "0059-80-800" cost of Tender Form [Roads & Bridges].
- Earnest Money deposit @ 2.5% in State Bank of Sikkim shall be in the form of Deposit Receipt of Schedule Bank which includes deposits in the form of temporary deposit receipts to fixed deposits receipts in favour of the Sr. Accounts Officer, Roads & Bridges, Namchi. Tender form shall be issued only on production of the deposited receipts to that contractors/firm who has obtained the tender documents, on production of toward deposit receipt of 2.5% earnest money.
- The Tender Documents, including the Tender Form with quoted offer should be placed in a sealed cover with the name of the tenderers and the name of the work superscripted on it. Supporting documents list at Sl. No. [a], [b] and [c] above should be enclosed with the offer.
- Sealed tenders may be deposited in the Tender box in the office of the Divisional Engineer, Roads and Bridges Department, Namchi Division, on the date and within the time indicated above.
- Tenders will be opened by a Tender Opening Committee as prescribed by the Government in the presence of the Tenderness on the date and time indicated above.
- The Tenderer should sign on every page of the tender documents as Acceptance of the general Direction and Conditions of the Contract and other laid down norms. The rate quoted should be both in figures and words and should be inclusive of Value Added Tax and all other Taxes and Levies. Over writing and correction should be avoided and if made should be authenticated. Incomplete/ Conditional tenders shall be rejected forthwith.
- In case of any discrepancy in rate[s] printed in the Schedule of Rates and Quantities issued with the tender documents, rates as per approved Schedule of Rates will be taken as correct. For items outside the SOR, the rates shall be as per the technically checked estimate/analysis. Decision of the Principal Chief Engineer cum Secretary/ Head of the Department will be final in this regard.
- The work value, scope and quantum of work are subject to change, the contractor shall execute the work as per the directives of the Department. No claim on this account shall be entertained whatsoever. If any claim is made, it shall be as per the agreement rates.
- The Department reserves the rights to withhold payments to the contractor unless test certificates are not produce by the contractor when called upon to do so.
- Avoidable damages due to negligence of the contractor shall be at his own risk and cost. The Department shall not be liable for payment of such damages [if any], including accidents to labourer at site.
- The offer shall remain valid for a period of 90 days. The work should commence within 15 days from the issue of work order.
- All the conditions as mentioned in the NIT shall be deemed a part of the agreement to be entered with the contractor. Security deposit shall be collected by deductions from the running bills of the contractors @ 5% of the value of work done.
- The department reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason thereof.
- The contractors are required to register themselves under the rule 39 or 40 (as the case may be) of the Sikkim Value Added Tax Rules 2005 with the Income and Commercial Tax Division of Finance Revenue and Expenditure Department and obtain the TIN number before the settlement o bill, or they must be registered Companies/Firms registered under the Companies Act. 1956, having valid PAN Card and Tan. The contractors are also required to submit PAN No. as per rates provision of Indian Income Tax Act, wherever applicable.
- The recoveries of Income Tax, Value Added Tax and Royalties on Forest produces shall be as per rates notified by the Government from time to time and applicable on the date of payment. In no case, claim of any contractor for deduction as per rates incorporated in Analysis of Rates or Schedule of Rates on the date of tender shall be acceptable.
- In case of carriage of non-stock materials, if these materials are available at site or are actually transported from a lesser distance than indicated in the schedules, the department shall pay the carriage as per actual proof of carriage supported by permits issued by Forest Department indicating the quarries which is required to be submitted by contractor with bill, not exceeding the rates as incorporated in these schedules. The contractors are required to submit necessary documents to fulfil the claim of payment for carriage of non-stock materials.
- Subletting of contract work is against the norms and if it comes to the notice, the original contract shall be cancelled and appropriate action shall be initiated as per the rules.
- In case the men powers employed by the contractors are from outside the State or neighbouring countries, it shall be the responsibility of the contractors to get them registered with the labour department. Government of Sikkim as per the relevant Labour Laws.
- The Department also reserves the right to increase, decrease, alter or modify the item of works as indicated in the NIT without assigning any reason thereof.
- Use of explosives shall be regulated as under:-
 - Transportation, Handling, Storage and use of Explosive (if necessary) shall be in accordance with the provisions of the India Explosive Act and General Guidelines, Circulars issued by the department and other competent authorities in the subject from time to time.
 - The rules and regulations issued by the Sikkim Public Works Department or any other competent authority shall strictly be adhered to with regard to transportation, storage, handling and use of explosives shall be maintained by the contractor.
- The contractor shall also make arrangements to have photographs of the works taken at least at three stages of the construction period. i.e. beginning, middle and completion stage.
- Quarrying of stones shall be allowed only from designated approved quarries. Where work of Water bound Macadam is involved, binding materials shall strictly be in accordance with the specifications, both in quality and quantity. Works such as compaction, consolidation and stabilization etc., will be required to be done on trail stretches to ensure that materials, procedure and equipment are producing the desired result.
- Damage to properties in and around the work site must be avoided at all cost. The contractor shall be held responsible for any acts of negligence and shall be made to make good the damages.
- Expenditure involved for material testing, cube strength of concrete, crushing strength of road metals etc., at site or in laboratories shall be borne by the contractor. The contractor shall make necessary arrangements accordingly as and when instructed to do so.
- It is accepted to the tenderer to have inspected the site before submitting his bills. There may be possible site difficulties for which the tenderer should have their own correct assessment before submitting the bid.
- The contractor will have to pay all taxes and duties as applicable and notify by the State/Central Government. No claim shall be entertained in this regard whatsoever.
- The cost of stock materials and bridges parts supplied from the department store will be deducted from the contractors bills as per rules.
- Defect liability period for the pavements works shall for a period of five years which shall not cover the damages due to natural calamities, formation sinking, landslides etc.
- The payments of the executed work shall be done only after obtaining financial sanctioned from NABARD-NIDA and no claim whatsoever shall be entertained prior to that.
- The bidders shall produce a certificate of residence from the concerned Gram Panchayat Unit where the work is executed.

Sd/-
DIVISIONAL ENGINEER-I
ROADS & BRIDGES DEPARTMENT
NAMCHI DIVISION
SOUTH SIKKIM

R.O. No: 494/IPR/PUB/Class/17-18 Date: 08/01/2018

MHA spl secy to head inter-ministerial team on national anthem

NEW DELHI, JAN 9 (PTI): BR Sharma, a special secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs, will head a 12-member inter-ministerial committee which would take a final call on the playing of the national anthem in cinema halls and public places and recommend, if needed, changes in existing laws.

The first meeting of the committee, which will have joint secretary-level officers from 11 ministries and departments of the central government, will be held on January 19, a home ministry official said.

It will submit its report within six months, the official said.

Set up on December 5 last year, the committee will have representations from the ministries of Home Affairs, Defence, External Affairs, Women and Child Development, HRD, Culture, Parliamentary Affairs, Law, Minority Affairs, Information and Broadcasting and the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities.

The formation of the inter-ministerial committee was mentioned today by a Supreme Court bench, headed by Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra, that made playing of national anthem in cinema halls before screening of movies optional, modifying its earlier order.

The Centre's decision to set up the committee came after the top court in October last year observed the people "cannot be forced to carry patriotism on their sleeves" and it cannot be assumed that if a person does not stand up for the national anthem, he or she is "less patriotic".

The home ministry official said the committee will give recommendations regarding regulations of playing/singing of the national anthem and suggest changes in the acts and orders relating to the Insult of National Honour Act 1971.

The bench, also comprising justices A M Khanwilkar and D Y Chandrachud, said the committee should comprehensively look into all the aspects relating to the playing of the national anthem and allowed the petitioners to make representations before the panel.

Key thing was to keep Virat quiet, says Philander

CHETAN NARULA

CAPE TOWN, JAN 9 (PTI): The plan was to keep Virat Kohli quiet and South Africa's wrecker-in-chief Vernon Philander said his team executed it to perfection during the 72-run win over India in the opening Test here.

"Virat is a good player and an aggressive player. The key thing is to obviously keep him quiet and to make sure you set him up for the other one. Initially it was for me to keep him quiet upfront, and I always knew I had the one coming back," said Philander, who took a career-best six for 42.

"It was probably two-and-a-half overs of away-swingers and then the one back at him (Kohli). It was definitely a plan to keep him quiet, and also to drag him across to make sure that when you do bowl the other one, he is on the other side of the off-stump.

"I was not worried about his DRS review. I knew it was stone dead," he added, referring to the review asked by Kohli after onfield umpire ruled him out.

Asked if he had told anything to Kohli after the dismissal, Philander said: "I never said anything to Virat. It was in the spur of the moment. I just tried to spur my boys on; that's what we tend to focus on.

"We knew Virat was a big wick-



et to get, and getting him there and then I was just trying to motivate my boys."

With 208 to defend against India, Philander said he knew he had to quickly take the responsibility of spearheading the pace battery and put his team in a good position.

"When you look at the type of score that you have to defend, 208, someone has to make the play. You can't wait for later in the game because there might not be a 'later on in the game'," he said.

"I knew that I had to bowl overs

upfront and put us in a good position, and I just wanted to bowl and make a difference."

His 12th five-wicket haul in Test cricket also included the prized wicket of Ravichandran Ashwin, who had conjured up hopes of a revival for India with a fighting 37.

The 32-year-old seamer credited his skipper Faf du Plessis for the tactics of having Quinton de Kock standing up to the stumps to get rid of Ashwin.

"You have to be open to those suggestions, but I'll have to give this

one to 'Faffie' (du Plessis)," he said.

"Ashwin, at the time, was batting quite far out of his crease, and the wicket was a touch on the slow side and the ball was a bit older. I also felt that by pushing him back we could get all three dismissals into play."

Ashwin shared a crucial 49-run eighth wicket stand with Bhuvneshwar Kumar to resurrect India's second innings after they were reduced to 82 for 7.

Philander said: "You just have to remain calm. We had it in our arsenal to get those last three wickets. The team with the calmer head was going to come out on top.

"Coming out after Tea I was a bit on the stiff side and I had to bowl two or three overs to get myself going. Just before that last over I bowled, 'Faffie' was going to bowl Morne, and I said to him, 'Listen, I'm actually warm now, so just give me one more'. Luckily it paid off"

Philander had to face criticism due to his lack of fitness during the four-match Test against England last year and he said he initially took it 'personally' before deciding to work on his fitness.

"I like people to be constructive and open and honest with us as players. There are two ways of taking it - you can take it personally and fade away, or you can take it on board and

make a play," he said.

"I took it a bit personally up front, you are all obviously human, but you try to get over it as quickly as possible, get better, do some work behind the scenes and come back stronger."

With match-winning figures of 9-75 on his home ground, Philander gave South Africa a 1-0 lead in the three-Test series and he was all praise for the Newlands' pitch.

"Day one was a lot faster than we thought it was going to be. I walked out there and the spikes went straight in, and I said to Faf, I think it's going to be a touch on the slow side because of the moisture in the wicket," he said.

"But it surprised all of us and was a lot harder than what we thought it's supposed to be. But it was a good cricket wicket," he added.

Talking about the venue, Philander said: "It is a wonderful venue. The crowd is wonderful. Defending 208, there is no better place to play with crowd cheering us on and the momentum carrying you in.

"Bowling from the Kelvin Grove End is not unfamiliar but it's a bit out of my territory because I love the Wynberg End.

But there was a little bit of pace from this end. It looked to be squatting a little bit. I had to use it to my advantage," he signed off.

I have achieved everything; it's tough to set new goals: Paes

AMANPREET SINGH

NEW DELHI, JAN 9 (PTI): At 44, with 18 Grand Slam titles and an Olympic medal in his cupboard, Leander Paes is finding it "tough to set new goals" but still spent his off-season getting stronger to remain relevant in modern day tennis, which is being dominated by brute power.

Many of his contemporaries have become coaches and many of his juniors have already hung racquets but this Indian legend's hunger for tennis is far from satiated.

"For me the off-season is about skill, endurance, weights, core, back, reinventing my game because now the game has become physical. All these boys are 6'3", 6'5". They are so strong, that your reaction time becomes less because the ball is being hit so hard.

"Building power means that the serve can be powerful. The forehand can be stronger. You can come back with a new style of doubles. So, the off-season for me is more about physical fitness and also about setting new goals because I am finding it very tough to set new goals," Paes told PTI in an exclusive interview.

The question of retirement keeps popping now and then with many wondering what keeps him going?

"Right now I am going through a beautiful part of my tennis career, where I don't need to prove anything. To be able to still control the ball to be



still able to command the court, it still motivates me."

The legendary player hinted that he wants to develop into a role model.

"I enjoy the game. I have achieved everything, I wanted to. Now I am playing for myself. I want to motivate people around the world that if Leander can do something even through hard and tough times, if I can keep that health and fitness and happiness about my life, then everybody else can.

"We live in times, where life is very hard. There is terrorism everywhere, there is poverty, the cost of living is rising, lots of scams going on but you need good role models out there to show that life is tough but can be good too," he said.

When asked if he still wants to play one more Asian Games and the Olympics, he replied: "That does not push me.

I play, because I have fun. If that comes along, wonderful."

Paes said he indeed has be-

come stronger, this year.

"I have done lot more weights. If you see, the strength in lower part of the body is very good and the way I served (in Pune), they (Rohan Bopanna and Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan) did not come close to my serve."

"I have also worked on trying to re-invent a certain style of play. It did not work in Pune but at the end of last year for three weeks, we were undefeated. It was at Challenger level and now have got to move it up at the ATP level."

It's been some months that he and Raja are playing together on the tour. They ended 2017 on a high by winning the Challenger titles in Knoxville and Cham-paign in the US.

Ask him about Raja and he praises his partner.

"He has made progress. Last match was not a good reflection of it but he has lost some weight. He has become smarter about his fitness, about his diet. To transform a body, it takes time.

What is good about Purav is that he has got power. He is strong.

"I am encouraging him to play to his strengths. The movement is my strength. He did not hit the ball (against Bopanna-Jeevan). Last match was an awkward match, he did not play his best tennis."

It was also noticed that Ramkumar Ramanathan, one of India's best singles player these days, was spending a lot of time with Paes and his team.

Paes said for the Chennai boy to succeed at the highest level, he needs to work on the mental aspect of the game.

"Ram has got a phenomenal game. His serve is huge, his second serve is brilliant. Good inside out forehand, good backhand down the line...technically very sound.

"There's not much I can teach Ram about technique and strokes. It's hard to be a Pro on tour when you are 150. When you are top-100, you get into Grand Slams but to get there is important. So, when I see him at different places, we do training together. So it's a long-term friendship. I am not gaining anything out of it."

Asked why Ram has not been able to make a mark when he has everything right about his game, Paes said, "Time".

"He has to put it together. Stay calm and be peaceful and rise at big points. You need to conserve energy. You can't be playing high octane all the time. And it takes mental skills.

Path-breaking journalistic stories find place at JLF 2018

NEW DELHI, JAN 9 (PTI):

Among intense political and literary discussions by eminent authors and experts, the upcoming Jaipur Literature Festival will also witness award-winning journalists and media personalities sharing their experiences.

The programme at the 11th edition of the literary fest will present visitors with an opportunity to get a firsthand knowledge of journalistic writing.

While sessions like 'On Balance: Journalistic Objectivity', 'Rajasthan: Badalte Mahaul Mein Media' talk of issues closer to home; 'The Frontline Club', 'Spotlight: The Hunt for Truth', and 'Among the Insurgents' bring stories of media from across the world.

The annual festival, beginning from January 25, will witness participation by the likes of Adrian Levy, Azeem Ibrahim, Carlo Pizzati, Falguni Bansal, Jeffrey Gettleman, Justin Rowlatt, Praveen Swami, Suki Kim, among others.

In a session titled 'Spotlight: The Hunt for Truth', renowned journalist Michael Rezendes, famous for his investigative work as a member of

The Boston Globe's legendary Spotlight team, will speak of the power of traditional and local reporting, the values, veracity and commitment required for investigative journalism.

The extraordinary inside story of Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda in the years after 9/11 will unfold in 'Manhunt: Pakistan and the Search for Bin Laden' with Adrian Levy, Cathy Scott-Clark, Peter Bergen and TCA Raghavan.

In 'Undercover in North Korea: Facts and Fictions', Suki Kim, the South Korean author of the award-winning novel 'The Interpreter', will speak of her six-month undercover investigation embedded within North Korea in conversation with Michael Breen author of 'The New Koreans: The Story of a Nation.

Moving closer to home, 'Rajasthan: Badalte Mahaul Mein Media' will see discussions on how the media in the state have always balanced a local and regional approach with a larger understanding of national and international issues.

The festival will come to an end on January 29.

Yusuf Pathan gets retrospective suspension for dope fail

NEW DELHI, JAN 9 (PTI): Indian all-rounder Yusuf Pathan was on Tuesday handed a five-month retrospective suspension for failing a dope test, a sanction which will end on January 14, after the BCCI accepted that the violation was inadvertent.

"Mr Yusuf Pathan has been suspended for a doping violation. Mr Pathan had inadvertently ingested a prohibited substance, which can be commonly found in cough syrups," the BCCI said in a statement.

The 35-year-old Pathan had provided a urine sample as part of the BCCI's anti-doping testing program during a domestic T20 competition on March 16 last year.

"His sample was subsequently tested and found to contain Terbutaline. Terbutaline, a specified substance, is prohibited both In and Out of Competition in the WADA Prohibited List of Substances," the BCCI stated.



The all-rounder, who has played 57 ODIs and 22 T20 Internationals for India, was charged with the "commission of an Anti-Doping Rule Violation (ADRV) under the BCCI Anti-Doping Rules (ADR) Article

2.1 and provisionally suspended pending determination of the charge".

"Mr Pathan responded to the charge by admitting the ADRV and asserting that it was caused by his ingestion of a medica-

tion containing Terbutaline that had been mistakenly given to him instead of the medication prescribed for him, which did not contain any prohibited substance," the BCCI explained.

The BCCI said it is "satisfied" with Pathan's explanation that was using the medication to "treat an Upper Respiratory Tract Infection (URTI) and not as a performance-enhancing drug".

"Having considered all of the evidence and taken expert external advice, the BCCI has accepted Mr Pathan's explanation of the cause of his ADRV, and on that basis has agreed that a period of ineligibility of five months should apply, together with the disqualification of certain results," the BCCI stated.

The BCCI said Pathan had been provisionally suspended on October 28 last year and the Board has now decided to back-date the period of his final suspen-

sion from August 15.

"...there is discretion under BCCI ADR Article 10.10.2 to back-date the start date of the period of ineligibility still further on account of Mr Pathan's prompt admission of his ADRV upon being confronted with it by the BCCI, and under BCCI ADR Article 10.10.1 on account of the delays in the results management in this case that are not attributable to Mr Pathan.

"In all of the circumstances, the five-month period of ineligibility will be deemed to have started to run on 15 August 2017 and end at midnight on 14 January 2018," the Board stated.

The development comes amid the BCCI's stoic opposition to allow the National Anti-Doping Agency to test cricketers. The Board has refused to sign up with NADA despite repeated requests by the agency.



Oldest Buddhist stele discovered in Tibet

BEIJING, JAN 9 (PTI): Chinese archaeologists believe that the ninth century Purang stele which was discovered in northern Tibet to be the oldest in the Himalayan region.

Shargan Wangdue, of Tibet Cultural Relics Protection Institute, said the stele was discovered in Ngari prefecture in northern part of the Tibet Autonomous Region.

The stele is 1.85 meters tall, inscribed with the image of a standing Buddha, state-run Xinhua news agency reported today.

On its left side are 24 lines of old Tibetan language. On its right side are 19 lines of Buddhist prayers.

Shargan Wangdue said most scholars agree that the stele was set up in 826 or 838, during the period of Tubo kingdom. "This stele shows Buddhism was already being practised during the Tubo period in western part of Ngari," Shargan Wangdue said.

Also, archaeologists in southwest China's Sichuan Province have restored a "dragon bed" believed to be used by an ancient king 2,500 years ago.

The bed, 2.55 meters long, 1.3 meters wide and 1.8 meters tall, is the oldest and the best-preserved lacquered bed ever unearthed in China, said Yang Tao, an assistant researcher with Chengdu Cultural Relics and Archaeology Research Institute.

The bed was unearthed in 2000 in a tomb complex discovered in Chengdu, capital of Sichuan.

"Parts of the bed were scattered in a number of boat-shaped coffins at the time of the discovery, and it took archaeologists and their staff 17 years to restore the bed to its original form to the best of their ability, using various techniques," said Xiao Lin, who heads the restoration department of the institute.

"Based on its structure and patterns, the bed is very likely to have been used by an ancient king of Shu State, who ruled the region in the early Warring States period 2,500 years ago," Yan Jinsong, an archaeologist who headed the excavation work of the tomb complex said.

"The signs that makers left on the bed are highly related to the language used in the Shu State, offering new and valuable clues to archaeologists keen to decode the mysterious ancient language," he said.

Relief for Indian techies, US says no change in H-1B extension policy

LALIT K JHA WASHINGTON, JAN 9 (PTI): In a relief for Indian techies, US authorities today said that the Trump administration is not considering any proposal that would force H-1B visa holders to leave the country.

The announcement by the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) came days after reports emerged that the Trump administration was considering tightening H-1B visa rules that could lead to deportation of 7,50,000 Indians.

The reports had said it was mulling ending extensions for H-1B holders.

The USCIS "is not considering a regulatory change that would force H-1B visa holders to leave the United States by changing interpretation of section certain



language in Section 104 C of the American Competitiveness in the 21st Century Act (AC21) statute that states that USCIS may grant the extensions," an official said.

This provides for H-1B extensions beyond the 6 year limit.

"Even if it were, such a change would not likely result in these H-1B visa holders having to leave the United States because employers could request extensions in

one-year increments under section 106(a)-(b) of AC21 instead," Jonathan Withington, Chief of Media Relations at the USCIS, said in a statement.

"The agency is considering a number of policy and regulatory changes to carry out the President's Buy American, Hire American Executive Order, including a thorough review of employment based visa programmes," Withington said.

The statement comes

after last week's news report by US-based news agency McClatchy DC Bureau according to which the US was considering new regulations to prevent the extension of H-1B visas, the most sought after by Indian IT professionals.

The USCIS was never considering such a policy change, he said adding that "any suggestion that USCIS changed its position because of pressure is absolutely false."

The reported move had been opposed by both the industry and several lawmakers.

The National Association of Software and Services Companies (NASSCOM), a trade association of Indian information technology, had warned that any disruptive move on the visa front would be detrimental for both India and the US.

The USCIS has a Congressional mandate to issue 65,000 H-1B visas in general category and another 20,000 for those applicants having higher education -- masters and above -- from US universities in the field of science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

The H-1B programme offers temporary US visas that allow companies to hire highly skilled foreign professionals working in areas with shortages of qualified American workers.

Since taking office last January, the Trump administration has been talking about cracking down on the H-1B visa scheme.

During his election campaign, President Trump promised to increase oversight of our H-1B and L-1 visa programmes to prevent its abuse.



Officials from both North and South Korea have held their first formal talks in more than two years, with the feuding countries brought together by sport. During a meeting in the village of Panmunjom, which sits on the border, the two nations discussed next month's Winter Olympics in the South Korean county of Pyeongchang. In a breakthrough, North Korea has offered to send a delegation of high-ranking officials, athletes and a cheering squad to the event. Meanwhile, South Korea proposed that athletes from both nations march together at the opening ceremony - bringing the prospect of improved ties after years of strained relations. Seoul went on to suggest that military talks should take place with a view to reducing tensions on the Korean peninsula, and raised the prospect of resuming temporary reunions for families separated by war.

China denies plans to set up military base in Pakistan

BEIJING, JAN 9 (PTI): China today denied as "unnecessary" speculation reports that it was planning to build a military base at Jiwani in Pakistan's Balochistan province close to the strategic Chabahar port, which is being jointly developed by India, Iran and Afghanistan.

According to reports, Pakistan may allow China to build the military base in Jiwani which is also close the Gwadar port being developed by Beijing.

The Global Times quoted a Washington Times report that China is in talks with Pakistan to build its second overseas military base as part



of a push for greater maritime capabilities along strategic sea routes.

"I am not aware of what you mentioned," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Lu Kang told the media when asked to comment on the report.

The media in China and abroad said that Pakistan offered the key

location to China as a retaliation to US President Donald Trump's New Year Day criticism of Islamabad for not cracking down on terrorist safe havens in the country.

The Chinese media has been speculating that Trump's efforts to step up pressure on Pakistan may move it closer

to Islamabad as Beijing is involved in a number of projects in the country under the USD 50 billion China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

"As you know building of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is an important part of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)," Lu said.

"China and Pakistan are also making efforts to build the CPEC which is in the common interests of the countries along the route. I don't think it is necessary for the outside world to make too much guesses in this regard," he said.

Chinese analysts said the Jiwani base was not necessary for China at

present as it already has Gwadar.

Lin Minwang, a professor at Fudan University's Centre for South Asian Studies told Global Times that "both Beijing and Islamabad have the ability to build a joint naval and air facility in Pakistan, but it is unnecessary at this time."

But he said it could be a backup plan for the Indo-Pacific strategy of the US and its allies, he told the daily.

Lin believes if the US and its allies push their Indo-Pacific strategy to the extreme, China will surely carry out a plan with Pakistan to ensure the security of sea routes.

Canada-India initiative for training of smart city planners

OTTAWA, JAN 9 (PTI): Twenty cities across three Indian states of Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan are likely to have a fast-track development under a new Indo-Canadian initiative to train smart city planners on capacity-building and governance, according to experts associated with the project.

Under the proposed initiative, a rigorous planning and analysis would be taken up to assess the capacity and investment needs in municipalities, they said.

The 20 cities identified are among the 64 cities in the three states that come under the Atal Mission popularly called AMRUT. The work involves capacity building, reform implementation, water supply, sewerage amongst others.

It is in this context that the Society for Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA) based in India, and Canada-India Centre for Excellence (CICE) at Carleton University is undertaking the initiative to improve the service delivery infrastructure of these cities and thus create

opportunities for private investments.

"The joint initiative would leverage Canadian and Indian expertise to address underlying challenges and build downstream receptor capacity," Rajesh Tandon, president of PRIA said.

"The Carleton University and CICE had already carried out considerable work with the Indian Smart Cities Mission. CICE had developed a portal called Smart Cities Navigator to identify market opportunities in India for Canadian investors and companies," Harry Sharma, manager, CICE said.

The proposal aims at training at least 150 official urban planners and designers and build localised platforms and tools for efficient and predictable planning and execution of "smart cities," they said.

The initiative, researchers said, comes at a time when there are reports that only 7 per cent of the Rs 600 crore released by India could be utilised by the municipalities due to lack of governance and capacity building.

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QUEEN, TINA TURNER & MORE HONORED WITH THE RECORDING ACADEMY'S LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

The Recording Academy has announced its Special Merit Awards recipients and this year's Lifetime Achievement



Award honorees include Neil Diamond, Emmylou Harris, Louis Jordan, Queen and Tina Turner. "This year's Special Merit Awards recipients are a prestigious group of diverse and influential creators who have crafted or contributed to some of the most distinctive recordings in music history," said Neil Portnow, President/CEO of the Recording Academy, in a press release. Portnow continued, "These exceptionally inspiring figures are being honored as legendary performers, creative architects, and technical visionaries. Their outstanding accomplishments and passion for their craft have created a timeless legacy" The Lifetime Achievement Award celebrates legendary performers who "have made outstanding contributions of artistic significance to the field of recording." Hal Blaine, the lead drummer and founder of the legendary Wrecking Crew, Neil Diamond, Emmylou Harris, Louis Jordan, funk band 'The Meters', Queen, Tina Turner have all been announced as the honorees of this year's Lifetime Achievement Award. A special award presentation ceremony and concert celebrating the honorees will be held in summer 2018. Additional details regarding the ceremony will be announced in the coming weeks.

THIS WEEK'S TOP 10 SONGS ON BILLBOARD HOT 100

- 1. Ed Sheeran Duet With Beyonce- Perfect
- 2. Camila Cabello Featuring Young Thug- Havana
- 3. Post Malone Featuring 21 Savage- Rockstar
- 4. Imagine Dragons- Thunder
- 5. G-Eazy Featuring A\$AP Rocky and Cardi B- No Limit
- 6. Halsey- Bad At Love
- 7. Sam Smith- Too Good At Goodbyes
- 8. Migos, Nicki Minaj, Cardi B – MotorSport
- 9. Lil Pump- Gucci Gang
- 10. Cardi B- Bodak Yellow [Money Moves]



BTS ANNOUNCES FIRST OFFICIAL GAME 'SUPERSTAR'



As of late, the BTS fandom has been occupied with a fan-project known as Outcast, but the band is vying to win all their attention back. Earlier today, the group announced its first official game, and fans have a lot to say about the mobile app. You know, like the fact the game isn't inclusive of foreign fans just yet. Over on YouTube, a video of BTS featuring each of its members dropped for fans. It was there the leader RM confirmed BigHit has been hard at work on a game called Superstar. "We are here to let you know the exciting news about us! The first official BTS game! Superstar BTS," the rapper said before Suga joined in.

"Pre-registration just started today. You can enjoy our songs by a rhythm game. Anyway, when is the release date of this game?" Jimin let fans know the release date wasn't far away and that fans have to pre-register online to play. Jungkook chimed in as well to say he's had fun playing the app so far, and V reminded fans they can get a pre-registration gift after they sign up online. As you might have guessed, the website for Superstar was quickly swarmed with fans, but international ARMY members learned a sad fact once they tried to register. When you try to sign up for the game, the BTS Superstar

page requires you to enter a phone number and only South Korean numbers are currently accepted. This has led fans to worry about the game's offerings abroad. Its announcement video did have English subtitles, but there is no guarantee BTS Superstar will come in any other language than Korean or if it will be offered in app stores internationally. If you cannot wait for BTS to drop its first official game, then you do have some options. Aeon Dream Studios has been hard at work on an unofficial game inspired by BTS, and To the Edge of the Sky has got fans freaking out over its thrilling visuals and story.

SELENA GOMEZ UNFOLLOWS DEMI LOVATO, CAMILA CABELLO AND MORE ON INSTAGRAM

37 accounts on Instagram. Fans noticed that the 25-year-old "Wolves" crooner, who previously followed more than 300 people, made the changes on Saturday, January 6. The former Disney star is still following close friends Taylor Swift, Francia Raisa and Julia Michaels, in addition to Amy Schumer and Jessica Alba. She is also still keeping tabs on several fan accounts dedicated to celebrating her career. Gomez devotees took to Twitter to ask what prompted the "Bad Liar" songstress to unfollow Demi Lovato, Camila Cabello, Gigi Hadid, her costars on her breakout series Wizards of Waverly Place and the cast of 13 Reasons Why. As previously reported, the producer made her Instagram account private in December, following controversy over a recent Billboard interview about a teddy bear in Gomez's home. Gomez expressed her disapproval of a cover story for Billboard magazine's 2017 Woman of the Year issue that included details about her home. The "Fetish" singer, who reactivated the account shortly after, shared a heart-felt photo via the account on



Sunday, January 7, showing her outside her childhood home in Texas.



THIS DAY IN HISTORY

10TH JANUARY 1964: "Introducing the Beatles," the first Beatles Album is released in the US by Vee-Jay Records, Check Out Our 60s Music Page for more information on The Beatles and other sixties groups, The A side features "I Want to Hold Your Hand" and "I Saw Her Standing There", 1944: Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944 (GI Bill of Rights) is passed by Congress. The bill provided a number of provisions for servicemen when they returned from World War II including. (a) Pay for a G.I.'s further education tuition plus a living allowance at colleges and vocational schools when returning home (b) Provide former servicemen with \$20 a week for 52 weeks while they were looking for work (known as the 52-20 clause)

(c) Low interest, zero down payment home loans for servicemen 1946: The first General Assembly of the United Nations, comprising 51 nations, convenes at Westminster Central Hall in London, England 1991: The United Nations Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar will leave shortly for Baghdad in a final diplomatic effort to avoid war against Iraq. Saddam Hussein is under UN orders to pull his soldiers out of Kuwait within five days, Iraq refused to comply with the UN ultimatum for its troops to withdraw from Kuwait and at 2330 GMT on January 16th 1991, Operation Desert Storm began. 2005: British Petroleum, a major oil company, sent 1.6 Mil GBP to Southeastern Asia. The purpose of this money was to aid those who were affect by the earthquake and tsunami that occurred this month (January). These proceeds were taken from a percentage of this oil company's 2004 profits.

LOCKHORNS

- HOEST & REINER



"YOU SAID I NEED TO SHARE THE TV REMOTE MORE ... YOU DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING ABOUT THE BATTERIES."

ARCTIC CIRCLE

- HALLATT



BABY BLUES

- KIRKMAN & SCOTT



CITY SCENES: Supermodel Gigi Hadid heads out to run errands in New York City.

THE DAY AHEAD

ARIES: A close friend or love partner may not be returning your calls, Aries, and your insecurities could well get the best of you, causing you to think your friend doesn't care anymore. Don't fall into this trap. Your friend is probably surrounded by a lot of demanding people who need assistance, and therefore isn't phoning anybody else. Be patient, distract yourself, and give your friend another call tomorrow. The response should be more immediate then! TAURUS: Do you have a date tonight with someone special, Taurus? If so, expect some delays. You might get tied up with doing your daily errands. This could be frustrating both for you and your partner, but you'll eventually touch base. Don't get so upset

over the delays that you're in a bad mood when you meet. This won't help at all! Just hang in there and you'll still have a great evening. GEMINI: Overindulgence in food or drink could have you feeling a little under the weather today, Gemini. Therefore it will be difficult to focus on anything that needs your attention. Perhaps you just need to take it slowly so as to recoup your energy. Do just enough to keep your conscience clear, but don't wear yourself out. Get a good book, a cup of tea, then sit on the couch and relax. CANCER: A love partner may be away, Cancer, causing you to have to put your passions and desires - not to mention the need for your friend's company - on hold. Don't let this catapult you into a lousy mood. If you're artistic, throw all

your energies and passions into creative work. If you're athletic, go play a game of tennis or racquetball. Time will pass more quickly that way until your partner returns. Hang in there! LEO: Today you might be feeling a little out of sorts, Leo, and most likely will want to stay home. Crashing in front of the TV seems a lot more tempting than going out socializing. Friends, however, may try to talk you into partying with them. Don't let yourself be talked into anything you don't feel like doing. Make your friends understand that you'd best relax tonight, and that you can go out with them another time. VIRGO: A close friend or love partner might be feeling a little blue, Virgo, and could therefore ring you up wanting a sympathetic

shoulder to cry on. You'll be of great help to this person this way, but don't let your friend distract you from other things you need to do. You may have errands to run, people to see, tasks to take care of. Give your friend as much time as you feel is appropriate, then make your excuses. LIBRA: Are you going out shopping today, Libra? If so, expect at some point to be confronted with a wonderful luxury item you'd give your eyeteeth for but can't really justify purchasing. Don't be impulsive, but don't hold back unnecessarily either. Will you really enjoy the look? Or is it something you'd look at for a while, then put away or ignore? Do what you want, but be sure you know what that is! Think about it!

SCORPIO: Are you expecting visitors, Scorpio? If so, you might go into a panic because your house isn't as spotless and beautiful as you would like it to be. You might be tempted to take broom, mop, and pail and whip through the place like a cyclone! Don't try to do too much. Your guests won't care if the unused back bedroom is messy or not. You'll want to have enough energy to enjoy their company. Take care! SAGITTARIUS: You're probably looking pretty good, Sagittarius, but emotionally you might not feel very attractive. This could be one of those days when you look in the mirror and think you're seeing Frankenstein's monster. This is a great day to pamper yourself a little. Go for a haircut and a massage, and take a sauna

or Jacuzzi while you're at it. Treat yourself to a fruit smoothie at the local juice bar. You'll feel better! Enjoy! CAPRICORN: Intellectual or spiritual concepts that you're trying to grasp may seem a little elusive, Capricorn. Don't try to push yourself too hard to understand them today; you'll only confuse yourself that much more. You're not losing it; your mental biorhythms are simply low. Instead, look at something else for a while, and let the information churn around in your subconscious. It may hit you tomorrow and you'll want to cry, "Eureka!" Be patient with yourself. AQUARIUS: If you're involved in a creative project, Aquarius, your imagination might seem to

have deserted you. You might rack your brain trying to think up new ideas but draw a blank every time. Perhaps this isn't the best day to work on your project. Sometimes we need a break from our work to maintain the quality of it. Do something else for today. Tomorrow you'll be back to normal. PISCES: A friend may ask for your assistance with regard to finances in some way, Pisces. It's nothing major, but it might involve a choice that your friend needs to make. Don't try to make the decision for him or her, but do point out enough facts to enable them to realize exactly what's best for them. This way your friend will be sure he or she thought up the idea. Your wisdom will definitely be appreciated!