

# SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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## THREE-DAY NAMCHI MAHOTSAV GETS UNDERWAY

### Chief Minister Chamling urges Namchi youth to participate in tourism development

#### SUMMIT REPORT

NAMCHI, 01 DEC:

Chief Minister Pawan Chamling inaugurated the three-day Namchi Mahotsav 2017, organized by Namchi Mahotsav Celebration Committee, under the guidance of South Sikkim Tourism Development Society [SSTDs], today here at Namchi Central Park in South Sikkim. The inaugural function was also attended by SLA Speaker, KN Rai, Tourism Minister, Ugyen Gyatso Bhutia, Cabinet Ministers and Chairpersons, Namchi Mahotsav Celebration Committee and other dignitaries.

Addressing the gathering, the CM extended his warm greetings to the public of Namchi on the occasion of Namchi Mahotsav. He spoke about the significance of the Mahotsav and informed



that such festivals should be celebrated consistently in order to preserve

tradition and culture and also to showcase the rich culture, tradition and

food of the State to the world. Extending his best

wishes to the newly elected Panchayats of South District, he urged them to work efficiently for the development and upliftment of the public.

Addressing the people of Namchi, the CM said that Namchi has always been close to him and after his government came to power, the face of Namchi has drastically changed.

"Namchi is now the second best town of the State. It has seen infrastructural developments but all such opportunities and developments have not benefited the people of Namchi as people here have never tried to grab the opportunities. It is shameful that not a single tourist halts in Namchi though there is a huge inflow of tourists to Chardham, Samdruptse and Buddha Park," the CM expressed.

The CM called upon the public to establish Namchi as a prime tourist destination through various tourism oriented ventures such as development of hotel establishments and eateries which are both equipped with ideal amenities and state-of-the-art facilities for tourists. He also announced the second phase of beautification of Central Park which will be an added asset for the public of Namchi.

Additionally, he reiterated the initiation of Smart City Project which will open up various avenues for the youth of South district. Thus, he urged the stakeholders and the public of Namchi to promote sustainable and eco friendly environment in the South District Headquarters. He further appealed to the

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### State government waives levy of Restricted Areas permit fee

#### SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 01 DEC:

As per a notice issued by Additional Director General of Police-Law & Order and Check Post, Gangtok, Akshay Sachdeva, Sikkim Police will now be providing restricted area permit without levy of any fee/permit charges.

It may be mentioned here, the Permit Section of Checkposts Branch, as per government order, till recently had been levying a Restricted Areas permit fee of Rs 10 per vehicle for Nathula, Changlu, Baba Mandir, Lingtam, Phadamchen, Gnathang and Kupup in East district and Chungthang, Lachen, Lachung, Thangu, Gurudongmar and Yumesamdong in North district.

The Tourism Department additionally levies an environmental cess of Rs 200 per person per trip to Nathula. Tour operators, taxi drivers and tourists were, as per rules, obliged to cut a Bank Receipt of Rs 10 from State Bank of Sikkim and produce the receipt to the permit section of Checkposts Branch at MG Marg for obtaining the Police permit.

Checkposts Branch officials had recently interacted with hoteliers, tour operators and Taxi Drivers' Associations wherein they were informed that this

procedure has resulted in wastage of time and energy of tourists and locals alike and created inconvenience for all. In tune with the Sikkim Government policy of 'Atithi Devo Bhawa' and in order to facilitate tourists and locals alike, CP Branch of Sikkim Police moved a proposal for waiver of Rs 10 per vehicle as Restricted Area permit fees.

The notice issued informs that the Director General of Police-Sikkim Police has strongly supported the proposal in public interest and that the Sikkim Government has agreed to withdraw/waiver the levy of Rs 10 as Restricted Area permit fee with immediate effect. Further, the Home Department has also issued an office Memorandum for withdrawal of vehicle charge of Rs 10 per vehicle with immediate effect.

Sikkim Police has extended gratitude to the state government, office of the Chief Secretary, Additional Chief Secretary-Home and DGP for taking the much needed measure in public interest.

The office of the ADGP-Check Post has further warned that any tour operator, taxi driver or any Police officer found to be charging any Restricted Area permit Police fees will be dealt with sternly as per law.

### SC notice to govt on PIL to ban convicts from heading parties

NEW DELHI, DEC 1 (PTI):

The Supreme Court today sought the responses of the government and the Election Commission on a PIL seeking to restrain convicted politicians from running and holding posts in political parties.

A bench comprising Chief Justice Dipak Misra and Justices AM Khanwilkar and DY Chandrachud agreed to examine the validity and contours of Section 29A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951.

Registration of associations and bodies as political parties with the Election Commission are dealt under this section.

Senior advocate Siddharth Luthra, appearing for lawyer Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay who has filed the PIL on the issue, said convicted politicians are barred under the law from contesting elections but they can still run a political party and hold posts in them, besides deciding as to who will become a lawmaker.

The plea has sought directions to the Centre and the Election Commission of India to frame guidelines to decriminalise the electoral system and ensure inner-party democracy as proposed by the National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution (NCRWC).

The petition has

turn to pg02

### Union Minister for Civil Aviation visits Pakyong Airport

GANGTOK, 01 DEC [IPR]:

Union Minister for Civil Aviation, Government of India, Ashok Gajapathi Raju Pusapati, visited the ongoing construction site of Pakyong Airport today. The Union Minister was accompanied by Chief Secretary of Sikkim, AK Shrivastava, Secretary-Tourism, C Zangpo, Member Planning-Airports Authority of India, Sudhir Raheja, Chairperson & Managing Director-Pawan Hans, BP Sharma, Joint Secretary-Ministry of Civil Aviation, Usha Padhee, officials from Ministry of Civil Aviation, AAI, and State Tourism Department.

Mr Pusapati took detailed stock of the progress of work at the Terminal Building, the runway and bay area, and the Air Traffic Control Tower. He was apprised about the present status of progress by General Manager-Engineering cum Project head, Pakyong Airport, Gautam Biswas, and Director-Operations, Manjunathan R.

According to them, 40 metres from the runway central line at hill side has been cleared by cutting and excavating the mud



and boulders. A clearance from the Director General of Civil Aviation, the regulatory authority for safety norms, would mean that the airport would be ready and functional. They further in-

formed that technical help has been sought from IIT Kharagpur to strengthen the slope through bolting or any other suitable technology.

Mr Pusapati expressed sat-

isfaction at the present status of the project and maintained that the Government of India will extend all possible support to ensure early completion of the project.

### Indo-China border trade concludes for the year

GANGTOK, 01 DEC [IPR]: Border trade between India and China via Nathula formally came to a close for this season on 30 Nov. A closing ceremony was organized at Nathula today to mark the occasion and was attended by officials from Commerce & Industries Department, Customs, Indo Tibetan Border Police, Immigration and Traders.

The total volume of trade this year recorded export worth Rs 2,83,91,230 and import of Rs 70,96,750.

Deputy Secretary-Commerce and Industries Department, Tsewang Doma Bhutia, declared the trade to be closed for this season of 2017. Trade will resume for the next season on 01 May, 2018, it was informed.



### Pope uses 'Rohingya' word in public for first time on Asia tour



DHAKA, DEC 1 (PTI):

Pope Francis today apologised for the "indifference" of the world towards the plight of Myanmar's persecuted Rohingya community as he referred them by their ethnic name publicly here for the first time during his historic tour to Asia.

Over 620,000 Rohingya Muslims have fled to Bangladesh following a crackdown by the Myanmar military in response to attacks on security forces by Rohingya militants.

Francis, who is on a three-day visit to Bangladesh, met a group of 16 Rohingya refugees who

were brought to Dhaka from their makeshift camps in Cox's Bazar, bordering Myanmar.

In a moving encounter, Francis blessed them, held their hands and intently listened to their heart-rending tales of escape from the Buddhist-majority nation, in an apparent show of public solidarity towards Asia's worst refugee crisis in decades.

"The presence of God today is also called Rohingya," the 80-year-old pontiff told the group.

He also apologised for the "indifference" of the world towards Asia's worst refugee crisis in

turn to pg03



## Attempts on to disrupt peace and security of Sikkim: SDF

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 01 DEC:**

Sikkim Democratic Front has condemned and criticized attempts to break social goodwill and harmony of the State. The party has said that an attempt was made to create confusion and spread misinformation in the Sikkimese society by using an audio clip in the social media.

It may be recalled that an audio clip of a purported phone conversation between Minister, RB Subba and an SDF functionary was doing the rounds of social media recently. In the clip, the Minister is alleged to have made some unpalatable comments about the Bahun-Chettri community. The Minister has refuted the allegations stating that the audio clip is fake and doctored.

In the release, SDF has said that Mr Subba has already refuted such allegations and now another conspiracy is being hatched on this issue with some trying to politicize the matter.

Ideal politics should be about conserving and taking forward the environment of brotherhood and communal harmony of Sikkim as inspiration and encouragement, the release adds.

## ECI extends ongoing Special Drive of Summary Revision '18

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 01 DEC:**

The Election Department, Gangtok has extended the ongoing Special Drive during Summary Revision 2018 through house to house visit by Booth Level Officers from 01-15 Dec, 2017 as per the directive of the Election Commission of India, a press release issued by Election Department, Gangtok informs.

## SC notice to govt on PIL to ban... contd from pg01

named several top political leaders who have been convicted or have charges framed against them and were holding the highest political posts and "wielding political power."

It claimed that now even a person who has been convicted for heinous crimes like murder, rape, smuggling, money laundering, loot, sedition, or dacoity can form a political party and become its president.

It also said that proliferation of political parties has become a major concern as Section 29A of the Act allows a small group of people to form a party by making a very simple declaration.

# Farmers urged to practice round-the-year vegetable cultivation

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 01 DEC:**

Ward-wise awareness programme on round-the-year vegetable cultivation was organised at Middle Tarpin Ward, under Rhenock Rongli Sub-Division, in East Sikkim on 30 Nov. The programme was chaired by Additional Director-Spices, Horticulture & Cash Crop Development Department, TP Bhutia, who was accompanied by Deputy Director, T Chopel Bhutia, Head of Departments and other field functionaries, a press release informs.

The event aimed at encouraging farmers from the area to grow vegetables commercially and on a round-the-year



production basis. They were informed about the benefits and schemes which were available to

them. Benefits of vegetable cultivation and technical ideas were also shared during the programme.

Later, an interaction session was also conducted wherein farmers shared their needs and

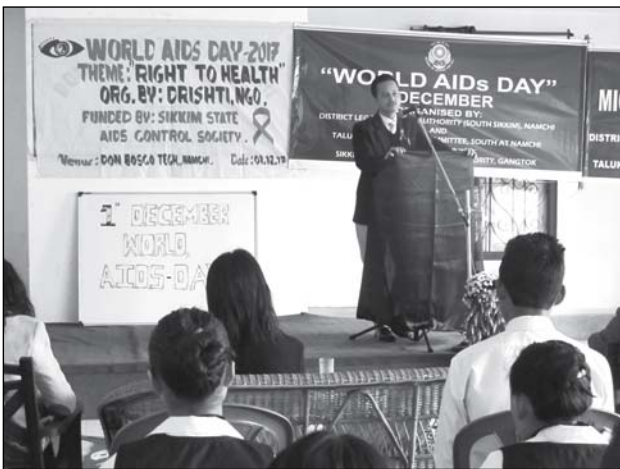
problems. The concerned departmental assured to provide all possible support for the same.

# Awareness on World AIDS Day at Namchi

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 01 DEC:**

An awareness programme was conducted today on the occasion of World AIDS Day at Don Bosco Tech in 12th Mile, Namchi. The programme was organized by District Legal Services Authority [South Sikkim], Taluk Legal Services Committee [South Sikkim] and Sikkim Legal Services Authority jointly in coordination with the NGO Drishti, Namchi, a press release informs.

Chairperson-DLSA South, Suraj Chettri, chaired the event along with Secretary, Sonam Denka Wangdi, Coordinator-Don Bosco Tech, Ag-



nes Nikitasha Pradhan, Project Coordinator-Don

Bosco Tech, Zeba Ansari, and PLV, Passang Bhut-

ia, as resource persons. NGO Drishti workers,

Don Bosco Tech students and staff were among the participants.

The resource persons covered various topics on AIDS, POCSO Act, SADA Act and Domestic Violence Act. The participants were also informed about NALSA [Victims of Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation] Scheme 2015, NALSA [Child Friendly Legal Services to Children and their Protection] Scheme 2015 and NALSA [Legal Services to the Victims of Drug Abuse and Eradication of Drug Menace] Scheme 2015.

Participants were also informed about the provision of free legal aid during the programme.

# Song Bing Festival to conclude on 02 Dec

**WANGCHUK BHUTIA  
DZONGU, 01 DEC:**

The second last day of the nine-day Song Bing Festival at Lingdem in Upper Dzongu, North Sikkim, today had the presence of MLA-Namthang Rateypani, Tilu Gurung, as chief guest accompanied by Deputy Speaker-cum-area MLA, Dzongu, Sonam Gyatso Lepcha, Sub Divisional Magistrate-Dzongu, Tshering Dorjee Bhutia, Block Development Officer-Dzongu, KR Limboo, Panchayat and Zilla members and other dignitaries.

Addressing the function, MLA-Namthang Rateypani, Ms Gurung, stressed that such festivals should be organised every year and appreciated the efforts of the people in growing organic produce in Dzongu on large scale.

The chief guest and other dignitaries also visited Mantam Lake and hot spring.

A colorful cultural programme was also presented by women's Self Help Groups and students of the area.

The nine-day festival featured traditional games, organic food stalls,



cultural programmes, hot spring dip at famous Lingdem hot spring and visits to Song Bing Cave near the venue.

President of the celebration committee, Karma Lepcha, has welcome all to be a part of the valedictory function of the festival to be held on 02 Dec.

The festival also featured Song Bing Festival Football Tournament, the final of which was held today at Lingdem.

Manik FC won the match defeating Lingdem by 3-1 goals and lifted the champion's trophy.

A total of 46 teams

had participated in the tournament which had commenced on 12 Nov. The winner of the tournament was awarded with cash prize of Rs 40,000 and Rs 25, 000 for runner-up team along with trophies.

A women's exhibition football match was also held which was sponsored by Social Justice, Empowerment and Welfare Department, under Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, Dzongu Block Task Force. In the match, Ruklu Kayam team defeated Laven team.

Child Development

Project Officer-Dzongu, Netuk Lepcha, also sensitized the public on gender

equality and urged women for their active participation in every field.

## Limboo group questions inauguration of Sirijunga statue

**VISHNU NEOPANEY  
GANGTOK, 01 DEC:**

Just two days before the formal inauguration of the statue of Mahatma Sirijunga at Hee Yumang Thegu at Hee-Bermiok in West Sikkim, some members of the Limboo community have expressed displeasure over the way the construction is being undertaken and questioned the inauguration of the project which is yet to be completed.

SP Subba [former Principal Director and member of the Construction Committee constituted by the state government on 26 March 2010] slammed the state government's decision to inaugurate what he insists is an incomplete project on which only 40% of work has been done.

According to Mr Subba, they were informed by the Cultural Affairs and Heritage Department that total amount of the fund for the project has already been released to the implementing agen-

cy, Rural Management & Development Department, and yet the project is still incomplete.

The foundation stone of the said project was laid on 03 Dec 2006 and even after so many years 60% of construction works is pending, he alleged.

The Construction Committee had pointed out several issues in the Joint Inspection carried out on different occasions from March 2011 to 2017 and submitted the same to the state government but they were all ignored, said Mr Subba.

The Joint Inspection Committee team had rejected some parts of the bronze castings works done and quality of the metals used for the statue at Ashangthang, Namchi and suggested recasting as per the specification, according to Mr Subba. He alleged that the same rejected parts and inferior metals were used in the statue without approval of the Construction Committee.

## Private companies endangering environment: SKM

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 01 DEC:**

Jatiya Ekta Sadhbhavana Yatra of Sikkim Krantikari Morcha led by working president, Navin Kar, received a warm welcome at Makha Bridge in East Sikkim on Friday. The rally covered areas of Sirwani, Singtam, West Pendim, Rangpo, Kumrek, Rorathang, Rhenock and finally concluded at Rongli today, informs an SKM press release of its vice-president, Birendra Tamling.

The release states that road condition between

Rangpo and Rorathang is in pathetic condition and local people have been facing problems due to the same.

It is added that private companies in the area have been dumping chemical waste in rivers which poses a threat to the aquatic life and environment. The release further alleges that the presence of industries has not benefitted local youth in any manner but has instead become a threat to the environment of the area.

## Visually impaired facing problems with new currency: HC

**NEW DELHI, DEC 1 (PTI):** Visually impaired persons are facing difficulty in using the newly introduced currency notes and coins, the Delhi High Court observed today and issued notice to the government and the RBI.

The court said the matter was of "very grave public interest" and should be addressed seriously.

A number of visually impaired people in the country were "facing problem with these new notes. In our interaction with such people, they told us that they are facing huge difficulty due to the change of size of notes also," a bench of Acting Chief Justice Gita Mittal and Justice C Hari Shankar said.

The court made the observation and issued notice to the Reserve Bank of In-

turn to pg03

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**Gangtok on  
Saturday,  
02 Dec**

**Temp:** 19°C / 06°C  
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**Sunrise:** 06:08 AM  
**Sunset:** 4:41 PM

## Sikkim boy in CBSE National Volleyball Competition

**SUMMIT REPORT**

**GANGTOK, 01 DEC:**

**1** 7-year-old Shreyash Pradhan from Sikkim who is pursuing his studies at BGS International Residential School in Bangalore is among the 12 players in under 19 boys' category participating in the CBSE National Volleyball Competition 2017 that commenced in Delhi on 26 Nov.

In a press release, Principal of BGS International Residential School, coach and teachers have expressed happiness on his achievement.

Shreyash's parents, Nirmal K Pradhan and Sushma Pradhan, have extended gratitude to the school for providing the opportunity to their son.

## Visually impaired facing problems...

**contd from pg02**

dia and Centre on a plea seeking to change the new currency notes and make them easily identifiable and differentiable for visually impaired people.

The court listed the matter for December 6.

During the hearing, central government standing counsel Sanjeev Narula, who also appeared for RBI, said this plea could be treated as a representation and be disposed of by the court.

The court, however, said the petition cannot be disposed of at this stage and asked the government and RBI if it was looking at this issue.



## SSACS CONDUCTS WORLD AIDS DAY RALLY

**GANGTOK, 01 DEC:** Sikkim State AIDS Control Society [SSACS] carried out a rally this morning on the occasion of the World AIDS Day 2017 here in the capital. The rally was flagged off from Deorali by the SSACS Project Director, Dr Uttam Pradhan. The rally had the participation of students and members of various rehabilitation centres and organisations showcasing banners and placards with awareness messages on HIV/AIDS. The rally finally concluded at Titanic Park in Gangtok after walking along the National Highway 10. [Sagar Chettri]

## United Brothers lifts 3rd Serenity Cup Football Championship Trophy

**SUMMIT REPORT**

**GANGTOK, 01 DEC:**

**U**nited Brothers became the champion of the 3rd Serenity Cup Football Tournament played here at Paljor Stadium. In a very contesting final match played today, United Brothers edged past Serenity Homes 4-3 to lift the champions' trophy.

Pema Wangyal scored a brace for United Brothers in the 11th and 38th minute, while his teammates, Nima Tamang [58th] and Lhendup Bhutia [62nd], added one goal each for the team. Evan Thapa [19th], Prashant Chettri [22nd] and Robin Chettri [50th] contributed one goal each for Serenity Homes.

Bhola Subba of Serenity Homes has been adjudged as the Man of the Match while his teammate, Ashish Timothy Lepcha, was awarded with the title of Man of the Tournament. Pema Wangyal of United Brothers received the Highest Scorer trophy for his 10



goals in the tournament and Yeshi Gyamtso of Freedom Facility has been adjudged as the Best Goalkeeper.

The final match had Director General of Police-Sikkim Police, SD Negi, as chief guest, while Sikkim State AIDS

Control Society Project Director, Dr Uttam Pradhan, SAATHI president, Tempo Bhutia, and SID-ICO Managing Director, Roger R Rai, were present as special guests. The winning and runners-up teams were awarded with individual medals

and trophies.

The tournament was organised by Gangtok-based rehab centre, Serenity Home, with the support of other rehab centres of Gangtok from 23 Nov. Nine teams from Sikkim, Darjeeling and Siliguri had participated

in the tournament.

The final day also witnessed an awareness musical play on HIV/AIDS by students of Red Ribbon Club of Deorali Girls Senior Secondary School and performances by other groups and individuals.

## Teesta-IV HEP organizes health check-up camp at Tingchim



**SUMMIT REPORT**

**GANGTOK, 01 DEC:**

**A** Cardiac, Paediatrics Acum General Medicine health check-up camp was organised by NHPCL Ltd, Teesta-IV HE Project, North Sikkim, under its CSR & SD initiatives for the Financial Year 2017-18 in association with Anandolke Multispecialty Hospital, Siliguri at Tingchim PHSC in North Sikkim today, a press release informs.

Zilla Upadhyaksha, T Bhutia, and Panchayat President-Tingchim Chandey, Sarki Bhutia, appreciated the activities taken up by NHPCL for the benefit of the local public and the initiative of inviting the best medical facilities available in Siliguri to the doorsteps of the people of Tingchim and nearby areas.

The inaugural session had the presence of Dr RR Pandey [DM-Cardio], Dr P Pandey [Pediatrician], Dr Samim Yousuf [Medicine] and Suvoodeep Mukherjee from Anandolke Multispecialty Hospital, Siliguri, the release adds.

Chief Engineer, Teesta-IV HE Project, Ramesh Mukhiya, briefed the gathering about ongoing CSR-SD activities and thanked the public for coming in large numbers for the camp.

About 168 patients from all around the Tingchim-Chandey, Mangshila GPU area were given consultation by the doctors and free medicines were also distributed by Teesta-IV HE Project.

The camp was appreciated by beneficiaries as well as local residents of nearby GPU.

## Pope uses 'Rohingya'...

**contd from pg01**

decades.

"I ask for your forgiveness for the indifference of the world," Francis told a group of Rohingyas at the archbishop's palace in Dhaka. "In the name of all of those who have persecuted you, hurt you, I ask forgiveness. I appeal to your large hearts to give us the forgiveness that we are asking," he added.

"Let us not turn away" from it, he further said. This is the first time Francis used the term "Rohingya" during his South Asia tour.

The Pope had been criticised by rights groups for not using the term in Myanmar, whose military has been accused of ethnic cleansing by the UN. He had used the term before his visit.

Myanmar's government rejects the term Rohingya, labelling the community "Bengalis". It says they migrated illegally from Bangladesh so should not be listed as one of the country's ethnic groups.

Francis also met Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the Vatican embassy in the capital while the premier's press secretary Ihsanul Karim said they held a 20-minute private conversation. Hasina was accompanied by her family members.

Francis also joined the interfaith conference of Muslim majority Bangladesh's Islamic scholars alongside Hindu, Buddhist and Christian clerics and civil society figures on the second day of his three-day tour here.

The interfaith meeting appeared significant as Francis frequently used such events to demand that religion must never be used to justify violence as Bangladesh, which has experienced a series of attacks blamed on Muslim militants in recent years.

Earlier in the morning, Francis traded his popemobile for a rickshaw and waved to crowds from the passenger seat of the pedicab to go to a park where he led an open air mass.



## THE LAST SHOEMAKER

**SINGTAM, 01 DEC:** 51-year-old 'Chacha' of Singtam Bazaar is perhaps the only shoemaker left in the state, a reminder of a bygone era when cobblers actually made shoes from scratch. The young today might not be aware that there were times when factory made shoes were not ubiquitous as they are today and 'Chacha' reminds us of such times. It has been four decades since he set up shop in Singtam and he still works out of an open stall. [Yogen Thatal]

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### ROADS & BRIDGES DEPARTMENT GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM MANGAN

Memo No:214/ND/R&B/2002-03/10

Date: 30/11/2017

**RESCHEDULE OF NOTICE INVITING TENDER NO:214/ND/R&B/2002-03/01 DATED 12.09.2017**

Reference above, the time schedule for the following work has been rescheduled as under:

The details of works and rescheduled time are as under:

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Amount put to Tender (in Rs.)	Earnest Money @ 2.50% (in Rs.)	Cost of Tender Documents (in Rs.)	Completion Time.
1	Up gradation, protective, drainage and carpeting work along Bop Village road Chungthang in North Sikkim (Km 1 <sup>st</sup> )	7030718.00	175768.00	15000.00	12 months.

#### TIME SCHEDULE:-

1	Date of submission of application with Bank receipt for issue of Tender Documents (excluding Tender Form)	2-3 <sup>rd</sup> January 2018 (10.00 am to 4.00 pm)
2	Date of issue of tender Form on submission of TDR (as Earnest money)	4-5 <sup>th</sup> January 2018 (10.00 am to 4.00 pm)
3	Last Date and Time for submission of Tender:	6 <sup>th</sup> January 2018 (10.00 am to 1.00 pm)
4	Date and Time for Opening of Tender	6 <sup>th</sup> January 2018 - (2.30 pm)

CONDITIONS OF CONTRACT: Remain same as published vide NIT No:214/ND/R&B/2002-03/01 dated 12.09.2017 and R.O. No. 305/IPR/PUB/Class/17-18 dated: 13.09.2017.

R.O. No. 443/IPR/PUB/Class/17-18 dt. 1.12.2017

Sd/- DIVISIONAL ENGINEER (NORTH)  
ROADS & BRIDGES DEPARTMENT, MANGAN.



# SummitTIMES

ON TOP OF THE NEWS

## As Another Academic Year Draws to a Close

*Think of expanding collaborations and inspiring participation*

Another year, hopefully one of improved learning, is drawing to a close for schools in the State. The students can take a well-deserved break for having persevered through another academic year, with many of them having struggled with a disinterested faculty and poor infrastructure, but the teachers and the department cannot afford to take any time off. In fact, it is now that the real work on formulating and implementing policy improvements begins. The year was mostly taken up with routine administrative works and now that the routine of schools in session is no longer the more pressing concern, more time and planning can be invested on addressing the recurring challenges of educating Sikkim. And while it is expected for government schools to receive special attention since most of the students are enrolled in them, it is also important for private schools to take stock and plan improvements because they carry an inspirational veneer with most parents wanting their wards in them if possible.

Sikkim has routinely performed well in all indicators for school education, and by that count the Human Resource Development Department has a reputation to live up to. At policy level and when it comes to funds commitments and policy intents on paper, Sikkim has proven is that it is focused on providing better education. What we also know, however, is that this focus is not always backed by the required diligence at the administrative level. Let's look at some aspects that are wrong with the way Sikkim seeks to educate in its schools. Routine matters which should have been streamlined a long time back continue to get stalled and delayed. Textbooks still take a longer time to reach schools should be acceptable any more. It is also not uncommon for some schools to hold the first term examinations for students who have not received teachers for some of the subjects. Why this continues to happen is difficult to understand. Then there is the unique situation of understaffed rural schools and still bursting-at-their-seams urban and suburban institutions.

Both these aspects have received some attention in the recent years, and every new academic year should see this process further refined and less influenced by political pressure and other influences. The winter pause is now being used for advanced teacher training sessions and workshops, and one hopes that this will now graduate to a level where the teachers are also invited to participate in the policy-refining initiatives. Teachers, after all, know best what the students still require and how their learning experience can be made more meaningful. For far too long, teachers have received directions and orders, but no concerted efforts have been made to take their counsel or even take them into confidence. That is a wealth of experience and understanding that Sikkim is not tapping into and should make an effort to source. Also left out from preparations for the next academic year is feedback from students. There might still be time to begin this process to inform at least some of the initiatives for the next session. A simple offer like inviting school clusters to send in recommendations for what the Department could do for them before schools reopen and for student clubs to send in wish-lists would be a good place to begin. Such a move would not only establish a better connect between the department and the schools, between officials and teachers and between the State and the students, but also seed a stronger sense of belonging and reinforce the urge to participate. That would be a good feeling to end an academic year and look forward to a new one.

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

# Sikkim has a lot to do before it can plate exclusively local veggies on tables here

SD TSHERING

The recent announcement of the Chief Minister to ban import of vegetables from next year is a decision which appears to be not based on ground realities. The organic fever that has enveloped the State appears to have given effect to a decision based on illusions. To begin with, the impression that only Sikkim is doing organic farming is misleading because many states in India are implementing organic farming on much larger areas and some started much before Sikkim.

As per data from the Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India, the use of chemical fertilizers in Sikkim in 2003-04 was barely 3.5 kg per hectare against the all-India average of 89.8 kg and use of pesticides was negligible. It can thus be said that Sikkim was already organic before the SDF government started the organic movement and what the present government has achieved has been the branding of the movement as organic which has been very successful and must be commended.

The ground reality of achieving full vegetable self sufficiency, however, is a mirage still in the horizon. The land use pattern in the State clearly indicates that the net sown has significantly diminished over the years and no program to either reclaim waste lands or expand cultivable lands has been implemented thus far.

Various studies have shown that the only way to increase production of vegetables in Sikkim is by bringing more land under vegetable cultivation. It has been scientifically proven that production under organic farming tends to be lower than the fertilizer supported methods. The fact that soil fertility of the State is poor needs to also be borne in mind.

Manpower in agriculture has also been diminishing over the years, which is a worldwide phenomenon due to the low economic returns from this sector. The exodus of cultivators

Land Use	Area in 000ha	Percentage	2008-09	2012-13
Total geo-graphical area	710	100	710	100
Reporting area of land utilization	723	44.14	693	97.6
Forests	319	34.6	584	84.31
Not available for cultivation	250	34.6	11	1.54
Permanent pastures and other grazing fields	4	0.55	0	0
Land under misc trees crops and groves	5	0.69	8	1.13
Culturable wasteland	2	0.28	3	0.48
Fallow land other than current fallow	30	4.15	4	0.65
current fallow	5	0.69	5	0.72
Net sown area	107	14.9	77	11.17

source:Ministry of agriculture 2008-09

and laborers has risen sharply in India due to the poor financial returns from agriculture. Census data clearly shows that the number of cultivators has diminished over the last decade in the state as well.

A majority of land holdings in Sikkim are too small to be cultivated on commercial lines. At best they might be able to provide some food security for some months only.

The GSDP share of agriculture has gone down in the national and state level - from 16.04% in 2004-05 to 15% at the national level and from 16.39% to 8.61% in Sikkim over the same period indicating the move from this sector to other options.

The recent government decision must have been based on the data of production of vegetables submitted by the horticulture department. The data gives a very robust production of vegetables in the state which, if correct, justifies the recent decision to ban vegetables from outside. But this needs closer scrutiny and other aspects need to be taken into consideration as well.

The per capita consumption of potato by Sikkim, for instance, is equal to most European countries, and consumption of other vegetables is much higher than all India levels. This consumption data takes into consideration the 70 tonnes of vegetables coming to Lall Bazaar everyday from Siliguri and supplies to other districts which, if taken into consideration, will project a very high figure matching the consumption of very developed countries of the world. That is a tall supply

Residence	category	2001	2011	Change
Main+marginal	Total	100	100	
All Areas	Cultivators	31.7	24.6	-7.1
	Agri labours	26.5	30	3.5
	HHI workers	4.2	3.8	-0.4
	Other workers	37.6	41.6	4

Source: Census India

	Production In Kgs 2014-15	Per capita consumption Sikkim	Per capita consumption India	Price in Siliguri November	Price in Gangtok November
Potato	4,98,70,000	81.75 kg	15 kg	Rs 25	Rs 35
Cabbage	73,40,000	12 kg	7.9 kg	Rs 25	Rs 40
Tomato	90,80,000	14.88kg	10.4 kg	Rs 60	Rs 60
Cauliflower	42,30,000	6.93kg	6.99 kg	Rs 20	Rs 40
Radish	55,10,000	9.03kg	1.8 kg	Rs 20	Rs 60
Beans	56,10,000	9.19kg	2.5 kg	Rs 60	Rs 80

requirement to be met.

Development of agriculture depends on many factors other than just supplying fertilizers. Agriculture in India has not developed as it should have due to various causes like absence of agriculture credit, crop insurance, marketing support, government policies, irrigation etc.

Vegetable growers in Sikkim too lack marketing support with SIMFED, for instance, having failed to effectively market products like baby corn and dalley and the Govt Fruit Preservation Factory not being able to lift the Passion Fruit and Kiwi grown in the state.

Credit to farmers is completely missing and insurance cover for vegetables is absent. Land under irrigation in the state is low and irrigation in most of the vegetable-growing areas has been overlooked, forcing the farmers to depend on rain for growing their crops.

The weakest link in promoting organic farming in the state is the lack of funds. The state government has

which is already high compared to all India levels, will go up further and the cost of food here is already one of the highest in the country.

Sikkim still suffers from under nourishment and the ban on import will give rise to possible malnourishment since vegetables could go out of reach for most people depriving them of essential nutrients and vitamins.

Decisions based on whims and fancies could harm the economic growth of the state, the consequences of which will be irreversible.

To be fully sustainable in vegetable production, the government will have to take action on several fronts and allocate funds for well laid out plans. Indiscriminate banning will lead to benefit for a few like was the case of poultry and eggs. A holistic approach must be taken if organic farming is to really succeed in Sikkim.

*[The writer is ex-Secretary, Department of Economics & Statistics Monitoring & Evaluation, Govt of Sikkim]*

## There's an insidious strategy behind Donald Trump's retweets

JENNIFER MERCIIECA  
theconversation.com

On Nov. 29, President Trump retweeted a series of videos that purported to depict violence committed by Muslims. They had originated from the account of a far-right British ultranationalist who had been convicted for harassing a Muslim. The backlash was swift, with British Prime Minister Theresa May saying "the President is wrong to have done this."

But Trump's retweeting of controversial (sometimes outright false) content is part of a pattern.

For example, during the 2016 campaign, George Stephanopoulos asked Donald Trump about his retweet of a follower who insisted that both Marco Rubio and Ted Cruz were ineligible for the presidency.

Trump dismissed Stephanopoulos' question with "it was a retweet" – as if to say that retweeting someone else's claim meant that he wasn't responsible for the content.

When pressed, Trump continued:

"I mean, let people make their own determination. I've never looked at it, George. I honestly have never looked at it. As somebody said, he's not [eligible]...and I retweet things and we start dialogue and it's very interesting."

It's a response that can be reduced to I'm not saying it, I'm just saying it.

As a scholar of American political rhetoric, I've previously written about the ways that Donald Trump's rhetorical style mirrors that of polarizing figures like George Wallace and Joseph McCarthy.

But it's becoming increasingly clear that what sets Trump apart is his reliance upon paralipsis, a device that enables him to publicly say things that he can later disavow – without ever having to take responsibility for his words.

Just saying...

The art of rhetoric – or persuasive communication – can include any number of forms: speeches, essays, tweets, images, films and more.

Paralipsis (para, "side" and leipein, "to leave") is a Greek term that translates to "leave to the side." It's thought to be an ironic way for a speaker to say two things at once.

For example, say you wanted to imply that your coworker takes too many coffee breaks without actually accusing him wasting time at work. You might say something like, "I'm not saying that he drinks more coffee than anyone else in the office,

but every time I go to the break room, he's in there." You might also shrug and make a "something seems kind of off" facial expression.

Paralipsis is a powerful rhetorical device because it can also allow someone to make a false accusation – or spread a false rumor – while skirting consequences.

And Trump has become a master at wielding this tool.

For example, after he was widely condemned for retweeting a graphic of homicide data delineated by race, FactCheck.org found that "almost every figure in the graphic is wrong." His response on the Bill O'Reilly Show was:

Bill, I didn't tweet, I retweeted somebody that was supposedly an expert, and it was also a radio show...am I gonna check every statistic? ...All it was is a retweet. And it wasn't from me. It came out of a radio show, and other places...This was a retweet. And it comes from sources that are very credible, what can I tell you?

In other words: I'm not saying, I'm just saying.

Meanwhile, Trump has repeatedly used paralipsis to deflect criticism that he's courting white supremacists.

In January 2016, Trump retweeted a photo-shopped image of Jeb Bush from a user with the handle WhiteGenocideTM. In response to the backlash he received for retweeting a white supremacist, Trump simply shrugged: "I don't know about retweeting. You retweet somebody and they turn out to be white supremacists. I know nothing about these groups that are supporting me."

Likewise, he blamed a faulty earpiece for his unwillingness to disavow David Duke and the KKK in a CNN interview:

I don't know anything about what you're even talking about with white supremacy or white supremacists. So I don't know. I don't know – did he endorse me, or what's going on? Because I know nothing about David Duke; I know nothing about white supremacists.

I'm not saying, I'm just saying.

And when Gawker tricked Trump into retweeting a quote from Benito Mussolini during the campaign, his response was "What difference does it make whether it's Mussolini or somebody else? It's certainly a very interesting quote."

Accountability and responsibility

Certainly it's a good thing to "start dialogue." Trump knows that "interesting" content attracts

retweets, followers, audiences and media attention.

However, there's danger in circulating accusations and rumors, even if the purpose is to "start dialogue." Research shows that once an accusation or a rumor begins to circulate, it's very difficult to retract. Often, a retraction or clarification doesn't receive as much attention as the initial accusation. Meanwhile, the mere act of retracting misinformation can reaffirm the deceptive assertions as facts, even after the clarification.

So what does it mean when a political figure gains a devoted following and rises to prominence – yet consistently avoids taking responsibility for the content of his public messages?

Political theorists, rhetoricians and historians have grappled with this exact problem since the rise of the "demagogue" in Athens in 429 B.C., when Pericles' death created a vacuum for "unofficial" leaders of the people to rise to power.

The danger, according to political scientist Ernest Barker, was that "such a leader – having no official executive position – could exercise initiative and determine policy without incurring political responsibility, since it was not his duty to execute the policy which he had induced the assembly to accept."

In the Greek context, Barker described the danger of demagogues who weren't tasked with implementing the policies for which they advocated. In our current political context, Trump can argue that he can't be held accountable because he wasn't the one who originally posted the tweet. He can shrug and claim that he's simply giving a voice to an idea.

In both cases, the defining feature of demagogues is their refusal to accept responsibility for their actions.

Yet Donald Trump (the television star) routinely fired people on his show "The Apprentice" for failing to take responsibility for their team's failures. And he's often given lectures on "responsibility" to his Twitter followers, like on February 14, 2013 when he invited his followers to "take responsibility for yourself – it's a very empowering attitude."

To use the President's brand of paralipsis: I'm not saying that Trump's a hypocrite and a demagogue. I'm just saying that he doesn't exactly follow his own advice.

*[the writer is Associate Professor of Communication and Director of the Aggie Agora, Texas A&M University]*



## Emami Agro takes Inland waterways route to connect NE

**KOLKATA, DEC 1 (PTI):** Emami Agrotech Ltd has taken up the multi-modal transportation route leveraging Inland waterways to connect North East India from its Haldia refinery in West Bengal.

The company sent its first shipment of 250 tonnes of packed edible oil from Haldia Port to Agartala via the Brahmaputra river and Bangladesh.

The vessel has already reached Ashuganj Port in Bangladesh and the finished good stocks have now started moving through trucks to Agartala, the company said in a statement. The company expects to ship around 6,000-7,000 tonnes of packed edible oil per annum using this route. A tie-up with IWAIP had been forged, the company added.

Emami Agrotech CEO Sudhakar Desai said the company would continue to explore innovative ways of transportation using the vast inland waterways within India and has plans to extend this model to Guwahati, Patna and Allahabad.

The recent floods in Bengal which resulted in derailment of road and rail transportation due to track and bridge damages on the Siliguri corridor prompted the company to adopt Inland Waterways.

## Six Ind MLAs have indicated desire to join Cong:

### Meghalaya CM

**SHILLONG, DEC 1 (PTI):** Meghalaya Chief Minister Mukul Sangma has said six Independent MLAs have indicated their interest to join the Congress ahead of the 2018 Assembly poll.

Five Independent MLAs from Garo Hills region and one MLA from Khasi Hills region have indicated their interest to join the Congress, the chief minister told reporters here yesterday.

The chief minister's statement came after two Independent MLAs, Robinus Syngkon and Rophul Marak, who were supporting the ruling Congress all along, withdrew their support from the party on November 16 and November 29 respectively.

# CPI-M criticises BJP demand for Prez rule in Tripura

**AGARTALA, DEC 1 (PTI):** The ruling CPI-M in Tripura has criticised the opposition BJP for demanding imposition of President's rule in the state and termed it as "political bankruptcy".

The BJP had raised the demand for President's rule on the law and order issue following the killing of a BJP activist in the state's Gomati district yesterday by unidentified miscreants and alleged that CPI-M was responsible for the killing.

"The state secretariat of CPI-M vehemently opposed the allegation made by BJP that the party is responsible for the killing and demanded immediate arrest of the culprits", said a statement issued by CPI-M said here last night.

The demand for President's rule following the killing is an instance of political bankruptcy in BJP and "it senses what could be the result of the state assembly elections", it said.

Assembly election in Tripura

is slated for early next year in the state.

"We have submitted a memorandum to the governor today demanding immediate imposition of President's rule because law and order has collapsed in the state," the state in-charge of BJP Sunil Deodhar had told reporters last evening.

Alleging that CPI(M) has unleashed violence to create an atmosphere of terror before the assembly elections in Tripura,

Deodhar said that BJP activist Gahur Hari Molsom was shot dead by suspected miscreants of the Left party at Bagma in Gomati district yesterday.

"Earlier, at least five BJP activists were killed by CPI (M) goons and many of our leaders and workers have escaped from such attacks," he said.

Deodhar said those who raise their voice of dissent are being silenced and even journalists are not spared in Tripura.

## Seminar held to discuss child safety in schools

**KOLKATA, DEC 1 (PTI):** To secure safe environment for children in schools, all stakeholders should chip in equally, experts at a seminar on child safety have said.

The speakers at the 'Child first, Safety first' seminar, organised by the Bengal Chamber's Education Committee in association with 'Early Childhood Association' (ECA) here yesterday, said the contributions should be made by Child Welfare Boards, school authorities, psychologists, experts, parents and peers alike.

The seminar was organised to find possible steps to identify problems, prevent mishaps and ensure safety for young learners and improve the perception of schools as a safe place for knowledge, a press release said.

The release referred to recent incidents in some school premises in the country and how it had triggered concern among guardians, parents and citizens and felt

it was important that the rearing of a child be conducted in a loving, healthy and safe environment.

Pointing out that children are often bullied by peers, it said physical and sexual threats go unheard and unidentified leaving a deep scar on the tender minds. This leads to behavioural outbursts and rise in negative traits that can severely hamper normal growth and development of a child.

Therefore, the institutes involved in imparting early education have to ensure a secure and happy environment for the children who consider school as their second home, it said.

Kolkata Police Commissioner Rajeev Kumar, Territorial Head, Early Childhood Association Suman Sood, ECA Secretary Asha Verma, Aprajita Rai (IPS), socialist and eminent dancer Alokandara Roy were among the panelists, according to the press release issued by the Education Committee.



### JOURNOS BEAT SSACS IN FRIENDLY FOOTBALL MATCH

**GANGTOK, 01 DEC:** A friendly match was played between Press Club of Sikkim and Sikkim State AIDS Control Society [SSACS] here at Paljor Stadium today. Press Club of Sikkim won the match by 3-0. Milan Chettri scored a brace while Lakpa Sherpa added another goal for PCS. The friendly match was part of the final match of the 3rd Serenity Cup Football Tournament 2017 which was organised by Serenity Homes.

## Assam Lingzey scores a win at Inter Village Archery Tournament



**REBYNA RANA GANGTOK, 01 DEC:** Assam Lingzey defeated Rhenock by 44 points today at the ongoing Denzong Losoong Traditional [Bamboo] Inter Village Archery Tournament 2017 held

at Tathangchen ground in Gangtok. The tournament, which is being organised by the Yargay Association of Tathangchen [YAT], had commenced on 26 Nov with the participation of 24 teams from all four districts of Sikkim.

Assam Lingzey team will play against Rangpo Police in the quarter final of the tourney on 09 Dec. The final match of the tourney is scheduled to be held on 22 Dec at Tathangchen ground.

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### KUTSE ZHIPCHU SHERGU

*Say not in grief: "She is no more", but live in thankfulness that she was."*

Our Gratitude to all our Friends,Relatives and well wishers for their support and love during the time of our bereavement.

My Mother passed away peacefully at our home on the 16th of October 2017.

Her KUTSE ZHIPCHU SHERGU (49 day prayers) falls on TSE CHONGA (15th day of the 10th lunar month) corresponding to the 3rd of Dec 2017.

With all humility we request everyone whose lives my mother touched and connected them to her and her family, to please join us in prayer at our residence in Gyalshing.

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# Chief Minister Chamling urges Namchi youth...

contd from pg01

public of Namchi to extend their co-operation and to work collectively alongside the government to develop Namchi as one of the model smart cities.

The CM also expressed dissatisfaction over the ongoing extension work of Namchi beautification and said that the concerned department must utilize public money properly.

Addressing the youth, the CM strongly urged them to take keen interest in start-ups and become self-reliant. He proposed tapping employment opportunities relating to organic agriculture and mentioned the ban on import of vegetables in Sikkim from March 2018.

Expressing the struggles and hardships during his 23-year-long

governance in Sikkim, the CM said, "The agony of my life is that people of Sikkim have never tried to understand me and my work, my contributions, my words and my dream. I always look at this as my biggest challenge. If people of Sikkim think positively and cooperate with the government, my dream of making Sikkim the top State of the country shall soon come true."

He further highlighted that the peace and security of Sikkim is in danger as some opposition groups are playing politics of caste and religion and playing with people's sentiments. He, thus, alerted every individual to be aware and not to be misled.

Speaking about the ban on import of vegetables in Sikkim from 31 March next year, he urged people to practice cooperative farming in every agricultural land of Sikkim

so that it can be self reliant.

During the course of the programme, the CM was felicitated by 'Long Journey Calcutta' and the Namchi Mahotsav Celebration Committee.

The function also featured the release of a book, release of official logo of Mingma Lepcha's venture, opening of online registration of vehicles and driving license and felicitation of football star, Komal Thatal.

Earlier, the CM along with the dignitaries visited various stalls at DAC road. He also inaugurated the organic outlet of Horticulture & Cash Crop Development Department at Namchi Car Plaza premises.

The inaugural event saw a host of cultural song and dance presentations which formed the other highlights of the day.







## HC asks Arnab, Republic TV to respect Tharoor's silence

**NEW DELHI, DEC 1 (PTI):** The Delhi High Court today refused to restrain journalist Arnab Goswami and his Republic TV from airing news or debate on Shashi Tharoor's wife Sunanda Pushkar's death case but asked them to respect the Congress MP's "right to silence".

Justice Manmohan said the right to air the story cannot be taken away but a balance has to be maintained.

The high court also asked Goswami and Republic TV to send an advance notice to Tharoor for his views before airing any news in connection with his wife's death case.

"Every individual has a right to silence. He cannot be forced or compelled to speak on the issue," the judge said.

The court's order came on three different applications filed by Tharoor in his Rs two crore defamation suit against Goswami and the channel for allegedly making defamatory remarks against him while airing news relating to the mysterious death of his wife.

Pushkar was found dead in a suite of a five-star hotel in south Delhi on the night of January 17, 2014 under mysterious circumstances.

Tharoor has alleged that they continued to engage in "defaming and maligning" him despite an assurance given by their counsel in the court on May 29.

The court had on May 29 said the journalist and his news channel could put out stories stating the facts related to the investigation of Pushkar's death but could not call the Lok Sabha MP from Thiruvananthapuram "a criminal".

The Congress leader has sought a direction to them that they should not mention the expression "murder of Sunanda Pushkar" anywhere, since it is yet to be established by a competent court whether her death was a "murder".

# Mary Kom resigns as boxing's national observer

**NEW DELHI, DEC 1 (PTI):** Five-time world champion M C Mary Kom has resigned as the national observer for Indian boxing after Sports Minister Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore made it clear that active sportspersons will not be considered for the position.

"I resigned as national observer 10 days ago after having a word with Mr Rathore. I had been requested to take up the position, it was not something I had asked for," Mary Kom, who claimed her fifth Asian Championships gold medal last month, told PTI today.

"I had inquired about the rule on not having active athletes as observers with the then Sports Secretary Injeti Srin-



ivas when it was offered to me," she explained, reacting to insinuation that her appointment smacked of conflict of interest given that she is still an active national camper.

"But at that time, I was told that I should nonetheless accept the

position. I did so on insistence of the Ministry and I don't want unnecessary controversies about something that I had not asked for."

The 35-year-old Olympic bronze-medalist was among 12 national observers appointed by the then Sports

Minister Vijay Goel in March.

The list also includes the likes of Olympic-gold-medallist shooter Abhinav Bindra, double Olympic-medallist Sushil Kumar and former Commonwealth Games gold-medallist Akhil Kumar among others.

Of these, Sushil and Mary Kom are still active in their respective sports. Akhil, on the other hand, is no longer a part of the national camp after giving up amateur boxing.

He has already rejected the conflict of interest charge, saying that he is neither a beneficiary of government schemes nor a part of the national camp.

"I was never interested in this but accepted the position because I had been requested. I have my hands full with a lot of things. I am happy to let it go and have no complaints," said Mary Kom.

The decorated boxer is also a Rajya Sabha MP and is in contention for the Commonwealth and Asian Games next year.

# Happy opening dilemma as India brace up for another big win

**KUSHAN SARKAR**

**NEW DELHI, DEC 1 (PTI):** An infinitely superior India will be eager to carry out yet another demolition act on a below-par Sri Lanka when the two teams clash in the third and final Test starting here tomorrow.

India's dominance has made the series a lopsided affair and the aspect which will be most interesting to observe tomorrow is the opening combination that the home team would pick.

After the batting debacle in the first innings of the first Test, Indian openers Shikhar Dhawan and KL Rahul enjoyed a fruitful second innings with scores of 94 and 79 respectively.

Murali Vijay, who was surprisingly kept out of playing XI for the first Test, came into the side in the second game in Dhawan's absence to score 128.

Now with Dhawan back in the squad, it is indeed a happy problem for skipper Virat Kohli, who has to choose two quality openers among three.

Had Kohli himself opted out of the third Test, then it would have been easier to fit in all three knowing that Rahul can also play at the No.4 position.

But with Kohli playing, it would mean that one of the openers will have to sit out. If Karun Nair's example is taken, he had to sit out because first-choice middle-order batsman Ajinkya Rahane was making a comeback to the side.

If that policy is followed, then Dhawan and Rahul have a better chance but Vijay's tight-rope technique also makes him a strong contender.

A bold decision could have been to drop an out-of-form Rahane from the playing XI and accommodate all three but that could be detrimental to the In-



dian vice-captain's confidence as he will be a vital cog in the wheel for India in overseas conditions.

India are 1-0 up in the series which could have easily been 2-0 had Kohli and his men got an extra 45 minutes on the final day of the rain-curtailed first Test that ended in a draw.

With skipper Kohli himself questioning the need for such series in a roundabout manner, the unequal balance between the sides has been all too evident.

No wonder, India would be ideally hoping to put up another dominant show, aiming for a finish inside four days.

One aspect of this encounter which could be of some relevance is the fact that this will be India's last Test match at home for quite some time as the young team would embark on the toughest journey of their crick-eting careers come 2018.

Starting with three Tests against South Africa followed by the two marquee away series

-- five matches against England and four against Australia at the back-end of 2018 will define the character of Kohli as a leader and also the ability of his team.

Therefore it will be a good chance for the likes of Kohli, Cheteshwar Pujara and Ravichandran Ashwin to rack up some more enviable numbers which will do a world of good to their confidence.

Facing a Sri Lankan side, which has been nothing short of an embarrassment, is not the greatest of challenges but for world's No 1 Test side, it will be an opportunity to get some much required match practice, which they unfortunately won't get in South Africa save a two-day game.

Add to it, the absence of their injured veteran left-arm spinner Rangana Herath has left the island nation look like a rudderless ship.

Herath, with figures of 1/81 in 39 overs, was the only bowler who the Indians treated with respect during their innings and

239-run win in the second Test at Nagpur.

Even worse, Angelo Mathews, who was supposed to take Sri Lanka cricket to the next level, has been woefully out of form.

The Feroz Shah Kotla track may not be as flat as the one at Jamtha, where India scored 610/6 declared but it also won't be a green top like the one they got at the Eden Gardens.

Ishant Sharma, who had a match-haul of five wickets, would like to retain his place in the side even if Mohammed Shami gets injured.

The last time a Test match was held at the Kotla in 2015, it was rated as the best pitch as the match against South Africa went deep into the fifth day.

But the current Sri Lanka side does not possess the kind of guts and gumption that Hashim Amla, Temba Bavuma and AB de Villiers displayed, which precisely is the reason that all and sundry are bracing for a quick finish.



# All India Senior Ranking Badminton Tournament to be held at SMIT

**GANGTOK, 01 DEC [IPR]:** Sikkim will be hosting the All India Senior Ranking Badminton Tournament scheduled to be held from 04-09 Dec at Sports Complex of Sikkim Manipal Institute of Technology [SMIT] in Majhitar, Rangpo. The tournament is being organized by the Badminton Association of Sikkim [BAS], under the aegis of the Badminton Association of India [BAI] and is being sponsored by Sports and Youth Affairs Department, Government of Sikkim.

Addressing a press briefing here at Tourism mini conference hall, BAS president, C Zangpo, spoke on the importance of badminton which helps in the overall development of a person since fitness plays a huge role in the personality development of an individual. He also hoped that tournaments such as these would inspire more young players of the State and give a platform to the upcoming shuttlers.

"This time we have been given the opportunity by BAI to organize the All India Senior Ranking Badminton Championship in Sikkim where a total of 487 badminton players are taking part in the tournament. This ranking tournament is very important for national players as it will help them to get short-listed for International

tournaments," added Mr Zangpo.

According to BAS, top 10 Indian International players like Pratul Joshi, Ansal Yadav, Bodhit Joshi, Anura Prabhu Desai, Rasi-ka Rajee, Riya Mukerjee, Shika Gautam, Vignesh Deswalkar, Anil K Raju and Venkat Gaurava Prasad will be taking part in this ranking tournament.

The tournament will be in five categories including Men's singles, Men's doubles, Women's singles, Women's doubles and Mixed Doubles. A player can also take part in all three categories. It was also informed that cash prize of Rs 5.00 lakh will be given to the players in proportion as per the norms.

Shuttlers from various States namely Haryana, West Bengal, Jammu & Kashmir, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura, Nagaland, Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Mizoram, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Bihar and Sikkim will be participating in the competition. Besides that, players from boards like Railways and Punjab National Bank will also be among the participants.

Qualifying round of the tournament will be held on 04-05 Dec with the main tournament scheduled to commence from 06 Dec, 2017.

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# Kerala woman breaks gender stereotype to turn snake catcher

**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DEC 1 (PTI):** Watching a snake slither close by can be scary for many but not for 33-year old J R Raji for whom catching the reptiles is child's play.

Be it a hissing Cobra or poisonous viper or deadly python, Raji is never in fear as she is known to handle them with aplomb.

Hailing from Nanniyode village in nearby Palode located at the foothills of Western Ghats, catching snakes is more of a social service for her.

The woman, who grew up nurturing a passion to become a snake catcher, has rescued 119 snakes in the last nine months from various parts of Thiruvananthapuram and Kollam districts,



breaking the gender stereotype in snake-catching.

Cobras used to hiss ferociously, with their hoods spread and flicking their slip-

perry tongue out, when she tries to catch them.

Many deadly pythons and poisonous vipers have even tried to bite her as she held

them in her hands.

However, all these have not stopped the homemaker from continuing as a snake-catcher.

The woman, who took to snake-catching out of curiosity and a liking towards the reptile, has now become a saviour of serpents in the region which come out of its traditional habitat and stray into human settlements due to various reasons including climate change.

She has come to provide solace to local people who get jittery after seeing a snake in their backyard or room as they can call her for immediate help any time.

Over 70 cobras, 11 vipers, seven pythons, a handful of

kraits and other local varieties are among the serpents, which she rescued from human habitations and released into forest.

A degree drop-out, Raji said said catching a king cobra, one of the most dangerous and venomous snake variety, is still a dream for her.

"Ours is a forest fringe village and we have been seeing many types of snakes from early days. So I never had any fear of snake since my childhood," Raji told PTI.

"Instead, I was curious to touch it. That intense desire was the first urge to become a snake-catcher. Snake catching is more like a passion for me," the home-maker said after one of her missions during which she caught a viper.

Except attending an one-day coaching class some time back, she does not have any professional training in snake catching.

A mother of two school-going girls, Raji rides her scooter to each place from where she gets calls seeking help to remove snakes from their area.

Her husband accompanies her if she gets calls late at night, she said.

After catching each snake, Raji pats it on its back, kisses its hood and puts it in tiny sacks or plastic containers with holes.

If it is ferocious and venomous, she hands it over to the nearest Forest office and if non-poisonous, she releas-

es it at a safe place as per direction of Forest department personnel.

"I never ask for money to catch snakes. If people offer some donation, I accept it and never bargain. If those seeking help are poor and elderly, I never accept money even if they offer," she said.

A driver by profession, Raji drives a jeep and pick-up van to make both ends meet.

Though she has rescued over 100 snakes risking life, the woman said she has never suffered a snake bite so far adding no snake was also hurt.

"I consider snake-catching as a humble social service. It is helping people, risking life. I will continue it," a proud Raji added.



12 killed, 32 injured in terrorist attack in Pakistan

**PESHAWAR, DEC 1 [PTI]:** Burqa-clad Taliban militants today stormed an agriculture training institute in Pakistan's north-western city of Peshawar and opened indiscriminate fire, killing at least 12 people, half of them students, before being shot dead by security forces.

The three heavily armed militants, who arrived on an auto rickshaw, attacked the students' hostel of the Directorate of Agriculture Extension on the University Road in the city, the capital of the restive Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province.

The institute was closed for the Eid-e-Milad holiday, but about 70 students were present in the hostel.

The militants stormed the building by firing automatic weapons, creating panic, officials said.

The Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan claimed responsibility for the attack.

Police chief of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province Salahuddin Mehsud said 12 people including six students, a security guard and five civilians, were killed and 32 others injured in the attack.

Aerial surveillance of the operation was carried out by the army aviation division whereas armoured vehicles of security forces were also called on site.

He said three terrorists were killed by security forces after a gunfight which lasted for an hour. Police are trying to ascertain the identity of a dead person.

Bullets holes in building walls, broken glass scattered and blood stains could be seen on TV footage.

A huge cache of arms, including three unexploded suicide vests, 20 hand grenades, Klashnikovs have been recovered from the possession of terrorists.

The eyewitness, a student, said he and his colleagues ran as fast as they could but two of them were injured in the firing.

"We took them out with us and admitted them to the hospital," said Ariful Haq, adding that around 120 students live in the hostel but most had gone home due to the long weekend.

**TOKYO, DEC 1 [AFP]:** Japan's Emperor Akihito will step down on April 30, 2019, the prime minister announced today, the first retirement in more than two centuries in the world's oldest imperial family.

Shinzo Abe said he was "deeply moved" at the "smooth decision" taken at a special meeting of the Imperial Council to decide on the date for the popular 83-year-old to step down for health reasons.

"The government will make utmost efforts to ensure that the Japanese people can celebrate the emperor's abdication and the succession of the crown prince," added Abe.

Akihito's eldest son, 57-year-old Crown Prince Naruhito, is expected to ascend the Chrysanthemum Throne the next day.

The news was splashed across the front pages of the evening papers, with the Sankei Shimbun distributing a special abdication edition.

The abdication will bring to an end the current Heisei era which has lasted the 30 years Akihito has been on the throne.

The emperor shocked the country last year when he signalled his desire to take a



back seat after nearly three decades, citing his age and health problems.

There have been abdications in Japan's long imperial history dating back more than 2,600 years but the last one was more than two centuries ago.

Akihito is the 125th person to sit on the Chrysanthemum Throne since Emperor Jimmu, said to be a descendant of the legendary sun goddess Amaterasu.

Emperors have played a

crucial role in the country's native Shinto religion, conducting various annual rites and prayers for the prosperity of the nation.

There is no republican movement to speak of in Japan and the emperor and the royal family enjoy the admiration of the vast majority of the country.

The emperor and his wife Empress Michiko are seen as being the more accessible face of a monarchy that largely re-

mains in the shadows, unlike the British royals.

But Akihito's unexpected move presented a challenge since there was no law to deal with an emperor retiring from what is usually a job for life -- and it reignited debate about allowing women to ascend the traditionally male-only throne.

In June, the parliament passed a one-off rule allowing the ageing emperor to step down.

The abdication must take

place within three years and applies only to Akihito, who has been treated for prostate cancer and has also had heart surgery.

Some worried that changing the rule to allow any emperor to abdicate could put Japan's future monarchs at risk of political manipulation.

The status of the emperor is sensitive in Japan given its 20th century history of war waged in the name of Akihito's father Hirohito, who died in 1989.

Akihito was born in 1933 just as Japan was embarking on its militaristic sweep across Asia, and was 11 when the war ended in defeat.

His father was allowed to remain on the throne after Japan's defeat, but his status was downgraded from semi-divine sovereign to a figurehead with no political power.

Akihito embraced the role and tried to use it to help heal the scars of the war while remoulding one of the world's oldest monarchies for a democratic age.

Even before he assumed the throne, Akihito broke with tradition when he married the daughter of a wealthy flour magnate in 1959, becoming the first imperial heir to wed a commoner.

Akihito is barred from commenting on politics, but he has over the years hinted at his own anti-nationalist views.

Speaking at a memorial marking the 70th anniversary of Japan's surrender, Akihito expressed "deep remorse" for the country's actions in World War II.

The looming abdication has reignited concerns about a potential succession crisis.

There are no more eligible male heirs after the 11-year-old son of Crown Prince Naruhito's younger brother Akishino.

Japan's centuries-old succession would be broken if that son, Hisahito, does not have a male child.

In response, Japan's parliament has called for a debate on giving women a bigger role in the male-dominated monarchy.

The idea -- including the possibility of letting women ascend the throne -- is popular with ordinary Japanese, but it is vehemently opposed by traditionalists.

Female imperial family members lose their royal status upon marriage to a commoner, a point highlighted by the engagement of one of Akihito's granddaughters, Princess Mako, to her college sweetheart.

Trump donates third-quarter salary for combating opioid epidemic

**WASHINGTON, DEC 1 [PTI]:** In a noble gesture, US President Donald Trump today donated his third-quarter salary to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to help fight the opioid epidemic.

Trump's annual salary is USD 400,000. So, effectively his donation amount would be about USD 100,000.

"His decision to donate his salary is a tribute to his compassion, to his patriotism his and sense of duty to the American people. But it's his compassion above all that drives his interest in the issue to which HHS is going to devote his donation, America's devastating



opioid crisis," HHS Acting Secretary Eric Hargan, told reporters at the White House.

Hargan said since day one of this administration, Trump's leadership on this issue has driven action on it across federal government.

"The opioid epidemic kills 175 Americans every day. That means we'll lose seven of our fellow Americans to drug overdoses

during this press briefing alone. That kind of urgency is why President Trump delivered a speech back in October calling for HHS to declare an unprecedented nationwide public health emergency regarding the crisis," he said.

During his presidential campaign, Trump had announced that he will not take salary from the government. But as per the US laws, he cannot reject the salary due to him in his capacity as the President. As such he decided to donate his salary every quarter.

Trump donated his first-quarter salary to the National Park Service and the second-quarter to the Department of Education.

Suu Kyi visits China as crackdown criticism grows

**BEIJING, DEC 1 [AP]:** Myanmar civilian leader Aung San Suu Kyi was set to meet President Xi Jinping on a visit to friendly neighbor China starting Friday as international criticism over her country's persecution of Rohingya Muslims continues to grow.

China has studiously avoided criticizing the crisis and Suu Kyi can be expected to receive a warm welcome when she meets with Xi. China will also likely push for Myanmar to restart a dam project suspended after overwhelming local opposition.

Suu Kyi is in Beijing to attend a gathering of delegates from



more than 200 political parties from around the world hosted by China's ruling Communist Party. It wasn't clear whether the Nobel Peace Prize laureate would speak at the gathering or when she would meet with Xi, who was reappointed last month to a second five-year term as Communist Party general secretary.

China was a longstanding friend of Myanmar during the Southeast Asian country's isolation from the West, and has been helping shield it from criticism over the crisis that has seen more than 620,000 Rohingya flee Myanmar over the last few months.

Myanmar's military has conducted a scorched earth campaign against the Rohingya that the United Nations and United States describe as "ethnic cleansing." Refugees living in squalid conditions in camps in Bangladesh have described indiscriminate attacks by Myanmar security forces and Bud-

dhist mobs, including killings, rapes and the torching of entire villages.

Suu Kyi, who spent 15 years under house arrest during the nation's long era of military rule, has come under widespread criticism for not speaking out against the violence, with some calling for her Nobel prize to be revoked. While Myanmar elected a new civilian government in 2015 led by Suu Kyi, the military continues to wield ultimate power.

China's interests in Myanmar include the security along its southern border and access to natural resources.

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(Including Super Prize Amt)  
Cons. Prize Rs.9496/- 29967 (REMAINING ALL SERIALS)  
2nd Prize Rs.9000/-  
08725 19170 19451 26006 60984  
63390 69442 72266 81553 95060  
3rd Prize Rs.500/- 0114 0758 2791 2858 5069 6000 6617 7501 7814 8803  
4th Prize Rs.250/- 0370 6986 1952 4711 5179 5493 5599 6702 7039 7423  
5th Prize Rs.120/-  
0060 0183 0241 0411 0498 0651 0680 0743 0787 0793  
0809 1060 1075 1090 1289 1298 1385 1808 1875 1979  
2046 2054 2187 2205 2213 2331 2344 2406 2462 2501  
2519 2606 2701 2761 2884 2972 3230 3368 3489 3655  
3657 3676 3687 3931 3940 4004 4066 4134 4264 4285  
4340 4356 4406 4412 4521 4554 4835 5014 5139 5163  
5430 5487 5583 5687 5777 5935 6060 6346 6532 6580  
6849 6865 6905 6916 6998 7362 7590 7636 7745 7782  
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**SIKKIM STATE LOTTERIES**

DEAR ADMIRE MORNING  
Draw No:13 DrawDate on:01/12/17

1st Prize Rs.26 Lakhs/- 88A 82168  
(Including Super Prize Amt)  
Cons. Prize Rs.9498/- 82168 (REMAINING ALL SERIALS)  
2nd Prize Rs.9000/-  
05629 16468 23560 32307 52640  
55119 62238 84388 88467 90531  
3rd Prize Rs.500/- 0297 0620 1313 2431 3179 5720 7325 8880 8974 9859  
4th Prize Rs.250/- 1282 1939 2112 2487 4871 5225 5989 7235 8653 9954  
5th Prize Rs.120/-  
0060 0404 0698 0772 0812 0854 1139 1201 1251 1297  
1392 1421 1470 1719 1879 1909 2102 2137 2169 2328  
2510 2532 3042 3043 3247 3349 3360 3396 3484 3635  
3689 3861 3874 3965 3972 4037 4183 4202 4211 4391  
4448 4547 4596 4806 4948 5047 5107 5185 5245 5303  
5332 5446 5452 5458 5514 5530 5685 5728 6035 6077  
6085 6191 6242 6317 6388 6908 7120 7199 7287 7410  
7482 7513 7571 7574 7710 7726 7737 7770 7799 7863  
7957 7969 8063 8073 8152 8404 8462 8678 8833 8927  
8987 9040 9068 9253 9527 9549 9588 9640 9752 9863

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## Get Ready to Listen to Ed Sheeran and Beyoncé's "Perfect" Duet on Repeat

As if you needed another reason to listen to Ed Sheeran's song "Perfect" on repeat, the red-headed artist just dropped a new version of the hit featuring a duet with Beyoncé. Sheeran announced his collaboration with Queen B Thursday morning via Instagram.

"Perfect" is part of Sheeran's new album ÷. The two-time Grammy-winning artist first debuted the song in September and then released the official music video for the hit earlier this month. Not only did Sheeran star in the music video alongside Zoey Deutch but he also wrote the accompanying video script along with director Jason Koeing, who also



collaborated with Sheeran on "Shape of You."

The song has already seen great success. At the time of this writing, the video had more than 170 million YouTube views. According to an early

November press release, ÷ is a two-time platinum album.

Despite Sheeran's success with both the album and song, the singer received only two Grammy nominations—Best Pop Performance for "Shape of You" and Best Pop Vocal Album for ÷—leading some to think the artist was snubbed.

This isn't Beyoncé's only collaboration this year. The "Formation" singer released "Walk on Water" with Eminem earlier this month. This also isn't the first time she's collaborated with Sheeran. The dynamic duo performed together in February 2015 to honor Stevie Wonder.

## All you need to know about Wiz Khalifa's visit to India!

The 'king of everything' Wiz Khalifa and the 'undefeated' recording artiste Jason Derulo are visiting India for the first time ever in December. As they take stage for the Time Out 72 at Vagator, Goa, the duo are said to be keen on utilising the time exploring the locales and indulging in everything desi. Jason will perform on 27 Dece, while Wiz will entertain the crowd on 28 Dec.

# The big welcome: The first day of the visit will see the who's who of B-Town attending the sit-down private dinner to welcome the two international sensations. Invites have been sent out to Farhan Akhtar, Alia Bhatt, Vishal Shekhar, Monica Dogra, Sonu Nigam, Arijit Singh and the likes from the industry.

# The security detail: Security in Goa has been beefed up for the Tip Toe hitmaker Jason and Black and Yellow singer Wiz a month in advance, with hygiene checks at the venue, coastline, and festival arena. Though the artistes will both have their personal bodyguards, special security forces engaged for Justin Bieber's India visit will be flown in from Dubai.

# What they will see around: During the visit, Wiz and Jason will both be taking a tour of historical sites in Goa, including Fort Aguada, Basilica de Bom Jesus, Se Cathedral and of course, the flea market. A body massage and a private yoga session by the beach are also on the itinerary. Since the duo will be in India during Christmas, celebrations will include a special day for a charity session with lesser-privileged children.

# The food: For the health-conscious Jason, there

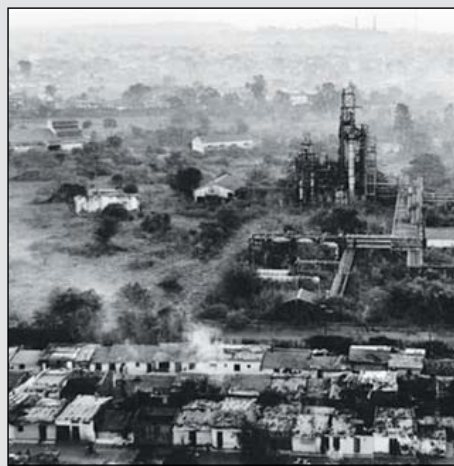


will be a specially-curated vegetarian menu, including Paneer Makhani, Hyderabad Biryani, Chole Bhature, Idli-Dosa, and so on. Wiz, on the other hand, will tuck into Goan food prepared by Chef Rego and also Dunkin Donuts. Backstage, Wiz will also be treated to apples, bananas, grapes, strawberry munchies and strawberry banana smoothie.

# The entourage: Both the artistes will be flying into India in their private jets and their entourage includes approximately 60 people — including their personal chefs, stylists and doctors being flown down. Their travel fleet will include six all-black sedans. Since December is peak season time in the land of sun and sand, the hotel where they are staying will be converted into their private villa to ensure privacy.

# The goodies: The desi hospitality will also include special souvenirs for Wiz and Jason and the goodies will include aromatherapy incense sticks, handloom jackets, and aryuvedic body essentials.

# For their entertainment: To keep the sports lovers suitably entertained, a special basketball court and pool parlour equipped with Sony PlayStation are being created in the artiste village where the performers generally hang post gig. Wiz will also be carrying his skateboard as part of his cargo! As for Jason, since he's an animal lover, there could be a fluffy pup to keep him company.



## THIS DAY IN HISTORY

02<sup>ND</sup> DECEMBER  
WORLD HISTORY

1697: The rebuilt St Paul's Cathedral is officially opened.

1804: Napoleon Bonaparte is crowned Emperor in Paris by Pope Pius VII.

1916: President Woodrow Wilson turns on the light of the Statue of Liberty for the first time.

1954: US President Eisenhower announces the signing of a pact of mutual security with the Nationalist Chinese Government.

1956: The yacht Granma arrives on the shores of Cuba, after travelling from Mexico where Fidel Castro, Che Guevara and 80 other members of the Cuban Revolution movement disembark to begin the Cuban Revolution.

1976: Fidel Castro becomes the President of Cuba.

1977: A demonstration erupts outside a South African court as a magistrate rules no police are to blame for the death

of the leader of the black consciousness movement, Stephen Biko.

1988: A bus full of school children and teachers is hijacked in southern Russia. The two armed men demand to have an airplane at their disposal.

1995: Nick Leeson is sentenced for six years for financial dealings which contributed to the fall of Barings, Britain's oldest merchant bank.

INDIAN HISTORY

1984: The Bhopal Gas Tragedy, one of the world's biggest industrial disasters, took place on the intervening night of 02-03 Dec, 1984. Deadly methyl isocyanate [MIC] gas and other poisonous substances leaked from the American firm Union Carbide's pesticide plant in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, killing around 3,800 people, according to government estimates. Other estimates have put the death toll at a minimum of 8,000 within two weeks of the disaster, and an equal number in the years to follow. Besides the thousands who died, more than 5 lakh people were affected by the gas leak.



**BEST FRIENDS FOREVER!** Selena Gomez celebrates health and friendship with Francia Raisa during the star-studded night out at Billboard's 2017 Women in Music Awards. Selena also joined a talented list of Billboard Woman of the Year honorees including Taylor Swift, Pink, Fergie and Beyoncé.

## Grace VanderWaal stuns Kelly Clarkson & Ciara with her Billboard Women in Music performance

VanderWaal delivered a stunning performance of 'Moonlight' then made EVERYONE cry with her touching speech!

Grace VanderWaal, 13, is just amazing! The teen singer/songwriter had everyone smiling at the Ray Dolby Ballroom in Los Angeles, CA on 30 Nov as she performed her song "Moonlight." Seriously, how good is she?

Grace looked luminous in a shimmering sleeveless gown, with her short hair twisted in adorable curls as she performed sitting on a stool. Of course, her best accessory was her trusty ukulele!



The America's Got Talent winner also received the "Rising Star" award tonight, and she proved she's wise beyond her years in her acceptance speech. "It's amazing what one year — this year has been unexplainably life-changing. There have been some rough

a blur and not even realize what's happening, and it's too easy to think about the negative side of it, but it's moments like these that help me reflect and realize this incredible blessing that's been given to me."

waters and this is dedicated to everyone who built bridges in those times to get across and continue on in my journey. It's so easy to look past it and let it all go into

Kelly Clarkson, was in tears by the end of Grace's speech, so was host Ciara when she returned to the stage!

Grace was certainly in good company at the big event! Selena Gomez was named Billboard's Woman of the Year and didn't let us down with her inspiring speech. Attendees were also treated to performances from Mary J Blige, Camila Cabello and Kehlani.

The Women in Music event is held in conjunction with Billboard's Women in Music issue, which honors the industry's most powerful artists and executives.

**ARIES:** Your mood will be up and down and back and forth over the course of the day. You're riding high from the past couple days, and you feel more bonded with the people at your side. You feel a nurturing love from someone who's keeping your heart happy and your mind at ease. Toward the end of the day you may feel that people aren't as sincere as they seemed at first. Stay on guard.

**TAURUS:** Be careful about opening your mouth in situations in which it isn't appropriate. When the conversation lags, you feel it's your duty to pipe up. By doing so, you may launch the conversation onto an inappropriate topic. You may want to say something just so you

can shift the focus to you. The better choice is to allow the silence to sit peacefully.

**GEMINI:** Get organized in the morning because later you're going to be more scattered. If you start with a solid plan for how to tackle the day's tasks, you're more likely to accomplish everything. If you don't remain strong and on task, other people will take advantage of your generous nature. You could end up doing more favors than work.

**CANCER:** There may be a frenzy of activity around you, but you'll be able to handle it. Your charm will get you through any door. You should be able to juggle many things at once, and others will look to you

for support. You'll have a level head and calm demeanor and handle things diplomatically and honestly. Don't be surprised if things get more insane as the day wears on, but this shouldn't faze you.

**LEO:** Be careful about blaming yourself for something that you aren't responsible for. Maybe you influenced someone to act a certain way and now that action is backfiring negatively. Remember that everyone makes his or her own decisions. Ultimately, you aren't responsible for decisions that someone else makes, regardless of any advice you may have given him or her.

**VIRGO:** You're at an emotionally climactic time, and your feelings

are erratic and perhaps unmanageable. Don't feel pressured into making logic out of anything. Your job is to take a deep breath and relax. Remember that life is an exciting adventure full of twists and turns.

Erratic, roller-coaster emotions are a reminder of that. Enjoy the ride.

**LIBRA:** Don't box yourself into a corner and shut out everything around you except your immediate concerns. The more you isolate yourself and insist that you don't need anyone else's help, the more frustrated and sad you'll become. If you're lonely, scared, or angry, admit this to yourself and others. Extend yourself outward instead of drawing further in.

**SCORPIO:** You're likely to take things to heart a bit more than usual. Dramatic changes in your environment and attitude will keep you on your toes. The wonderful thing about this is that you'll gain a great deal of insight and understanding of other people. You'll be more aware of other people's feelings and perspectives, helping you make more educated decisions in your affairs.

**SAGITTARIUS:** Unexpected people, especially women, will surprise you with what they say. Your mother may bring up an issue that you hadn't even considered. Perhaps your emotions get stirred when you recall something that a significant woman in your life said. Your feel-

ings are bouncing from your heart to your head and back again. Take the feelings into account, but don't let them dominate your decisions.

**CAPRICORN:** Today you want things done your way and your way only. Your mood is quite stubborn and others would be foolish to think they could change your mind about anything. You're the only person allowed to have that job. The truth is that you may change your mind several times today, and that's fine. Just don't expect anyone else to keep up with you!

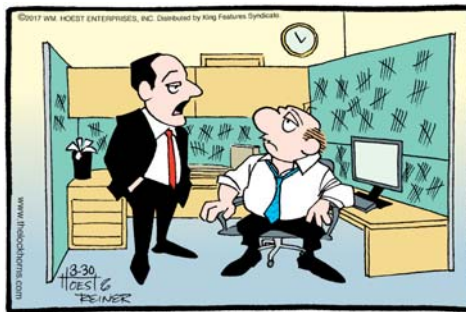
**AQUARIUS:** You may run up against a brick wall early today. Things should ease a bit by evening. Remember that the harder you push

against that wall, the more your head will pound, the more bruised your shoulder will become, and the more energy you'll expend. You'll be surprised at how easy things get when you step back. You'll see that you can go around the wall without charging through it.

**PISCES:** You may feel like a racehorse crammed in the starting gate. You're stuck in a small spot, stomping your feet, and anxiously waiting for the starting bell. You may feel powerless since you have no control over when the gate will open. Be patient. Don't waste all your energy fidgeting. The gate will open soon enough and you'll be up and running.

LOCKHORNS

- HOEST & REINER



"JUST HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN WITH US, LOCKHORN?"

ARCTIC CIRCLE

- HALLATT



BABY BLUES

- KIRKMAN & SCOTT

