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# SummitTIMES

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

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## CP Dhakal sworn in as State Information Officer



**GANGTOK, 18 DEC [IPR]:** Retired Secretary to the Government of Sikkim, Chewan Prasad Dhakal, was sworn in as the State Information Commissioner of Sikkim at a function held in Ashirwad Hall, Raj Bhawan today.

Governor Ganga Prasad administered the oath of office to the State Information Commissioner Designate in the presence of Chief Minister Pawan Chamling, Speaker KN Rai, Cabinet Ministers, Chief Secretary and senior officers of the State administration.

After signing of the oath/ affirmation relating to his assumption of office and attestation by the Governor, the State Information Commissioner was congratulated by all the dignitaries and guests present.

## State not Centre to blame on LT issue: BJP Sikkim SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 18 DEC:** Bharatiya Janata Party Sikkim Pradesh has alleged that it is not the Centre but the State Government that has deprived Limboo-Tamang communities of representation in the State Assembly. The party has alleged that during a recent meeting of Sikkim Democratic Front party in West Sikkim, Chief Minister Pawan Chamling stated that "the Centre has deprived Limboo turn to pg02

## SKM's Women & Youth Convention begins in Rolu



### SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 18 DEC:**

A six-day Women and Youth Convention of Sikkim Krantikari Morcha started at Rolu in South Sikkim today.

The convention was inaugurated by SKM chief coordinator, Sang-

ha MLA Sonam Lama and has been divided into two phases, of which the youth convention will be held till 20 December and the 10th Rolu Puja at Rolu Mandir on 21 December in the first phase and in the second phase, the party's wom-

en's convention will be held on 22 and 23 December, informs an SKM press release.

The release informs that youth in the thousands registered for the convention today.

The inaugural day featured cultural presen-

tations, a speech competition for the youth on 'Sikkim Ma Parivartan Huna Kina Khancho Cha', it is informed.

The release adds that the convention was also attended by senior leaders and workers of the SKM party.

## UNICEF ready to support Sikkim's efforts to become disaster resilient

**GANGTOK, 18 DEC (IPR):** Chief Secretary, A.K. Shrivastava inaugurated the second day of the Regional Consultation on Child Centred Emergency Preparedness for Response for North Eastern States being held in the capital. The workshop is being organized by Sikkim State Disaster Management Authority (SSDMA) in collaboration with UNICEF, NDMA and OXFAM, India.

The second day had Disaster Risk Reduction, UNICEF Chief, Lars Bernd as the guest of honor along with Vice Chairperson of SSDMA, Prof. V.K. Sharma and Special Secretary of Land Revenue Disaster Management Department, Rinzing Chewang.

Addressing the inaugural session of the day, chief guest, A.K. Shrivastava said that natural disaster cannot be stopped but there is a need to learn and understand how to manage the disaster as North Eastern states are



vulnerable to disaster situations. He lauded the effort of the organizing Department and partner agencies and stated that these types of Regional Consultation workshops help in taking the stakeholders a step ahead in disaster preparedness.

"I am sure that this type of dialogue will help us to understand what is needed to bring more focus on need and vulnerabilities of children and women and also to prepare complete comprehensive report for future references. This consultation will aid the government to build ca-

pacities of line departments, particularly the social sectors to reduce vulnerability of children and women to disasters," stated the Chief Secretary. He called for the need to take effective steps to mainstream child-women centred disaster risk approach and plan for ensuring continuity of services during disasters. He also mentioned the challenges posed by forest fires in the State in recent times.

Earlier, Vice Chairperson SSDMA, Prof. V.K. Sharma, informed about various steps and processes turn to pg02

## WSOS installs Reading Corner at Pacheykhani School



### SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 17 DEC:**

A Reading Corner installed at Government Secondary School, Pacheykhani by Wandering Souls of Sikkim was inaugurated by East Zilla Adhakshya, SS Bokhim, on 17 Dec, 2018.

Installed with the objective of imbibing a reading habit among the students, the reading corner has been appointed with a wide

range of books.

The Zilla Adhakshya congratulated WSOS for the initiative and called upon the students to take maximum advantage of the reading corner and use it as a storehouse of knowledge.

Headmaster DP Khatiwara also thanked WSOS for setting up the reading corner.

The inauguration ceremony was also attended by Chalamthang

Pacheykhani Zilla Panchayat, Leela Sharma, WSOS co-founder, Pranay Khatiwara, Gram Panchayats, SMC members, parents, school heads and teachers from various schools around Pakyong, students and others.

WSOS has thanked its sponsors for supporting the initiative and informs that they intend to set up similar reading corners in other schools as well in the future.

## Won't let PM sleep until all farm loans waived: Rahul Gandhi

**NEW DELHI, DEC 18 (PTI):** Addressing the country's distressed farmers directly from the doors of Parliament, Congress chief Rahul Gandhi Tuesday said he and other opposition leaders will not let Prime Minister Narendra Modi sleep until all farm loans are waived.

In a stinging attack on what he described as crony capitalism, Gandhi said the government has turned a blind eye to the loans given to 15 top industrialists of the country, including Reliance's Anil Ambani, but made no effort to alleviate the woes of the farmers in the last four years.

"We promised to waive loans in 10 days. In two states, we did it within six hours and we would do it in the third state very soon," he told reporters outside Parliament.

He was referring to the Congress' newly-formed governments

in Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh fulfilling promises made ahead of the assembly polls and waiving loans on Monday. A Congress government, led by Ashok Gehlot, was also sworn-in in Rajasthan.

Gandhi said the recent win of the Congress in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh is the victory of the poor, the farmers, the youth, labour and small shopkeepers.

"Modi ji has been prime minister for 4.5 years, but has not waived a single rupee of farmers' loans. I want to tell you that the Congress party and other opposition parties will unite till all farm loans are waived. We will stand up and fight against them, we will not retract a single inch, we will not let him (PM) sleep at night, till the time Indian farmers' loans are waived.

"I want to give this message and tell the farmers that this coun-

try is yours and not of 15-20 industrialists. That injustice being done to you, despite the hard work and toil that help provide food to the country. Your voice does not reach and we will help do it. We have done it in three states and you remember that we will exert pressure on Narendra Modi to waive farm loans," he said.

Taking to Twitter, he later said, "We have done what we said. The prime minister should draw lessons from this. The prime minister should know, till he waives loans of farmers across the country we will not let him sleep in peace."

He issued a challenge to the prime minister while addressing the reporters, saying, "If the Modi government does not waive farm loans, we guarantee to waive farm loans if voted to power in 2019."

turn to pg02



## NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Sealed tender invited from the interested firm/ individual for the Auction of the Vehicle belonging to Sikkim Tourism Development Department Corporation bearing the following description :-

Particulars of the Vehicle			
1	Make / Model	Toyota Innova	Year of Manufacture
	Engine No-	2KD 6401834	Nov-09
	Chassis No	MBJ11JV4007194845	
	Life of the Vehicle	09 Years	
Vehicle Registered No		SK-01-Z-0048	
Offset value as vaulted by SNT Division Transport Deptt, Govt of Sikkim:-Rs 2,10,000/-			
3	Make / Model	Toyota Innova	Year of Manufacture
	Engine No-	2KD 6402065	Nov-09
	Chassis No	MBJ11JV4007195018	
	Life of the Vehicle	09 Years	
Vehicle Registered No		SK-01-Z-0051	
Offset value as vaulted by SNT Division Transport Deptt, Govt of Sikkim:-Rs 2,10,000/-			
2	Make / Model	Toyota Innova	Year of Manufacture
	Engine No-	2KD 6403743	Nov-09
	Chassis No	MBJ11JV40071954567	
	Life of the Vehicle	09 Years	
Vehicle Registered No		SK-01-Z-0049	
Offset value as vaulted by SNT Division Transport Deptt, Govt of Sikkim:-Rs 2,10,000/-			

On "as in where is basis" Lowest amount of the tender should not be below then Rs 2,10,000/- (Two Lakh Ten Thousand Only) /-. Sealed tender should reach to the Office of Chief Executive Officer, Sikkim Tourism Development Corporation, Hotel Mayur, P.S.Road, Gangtok.

Duly accompanied by the earnest money in the form of TDR of Rs10,000/- (Rupees Ten Thousand Only) drawn in favour of Sikkim Tourism Development Corporation as on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2018.

The tender will be opened on the next day (i.e., 20<sup>th</sup> Dec 2018) between 15.00 hrs -16.00 hrs in the presence of Tender Committee and interested parties at Sikkim Tourism Development Corporation, Head Office, Hotel Mayur, P.S.Road, Gangtok

The Vehicle can be inspected at Burtuk Helipad with the permission of the Assistant Manager, Burtuk Helipad during working hour between 10.00 hrs to 15.00 hrs. Sikkim Tourism Development Corporation reserves the right to reject any or all tender without assigning any reason thereof.

Tender forms could be collected by paying Rs 1000/- (Non Refundable) from below mentioned addresses (During working hour between 10.00 hrs to 15.00 hrs.)

1. Sikkim Tourism Development Corporation, Head Office, Hotel Mayur, P.S.Road, Gangtok

2. STDC, Travel Division Office, M.G.Marg, Gangtok

3. STDC Burtuk Helipad

Sd/-

Chief Executive Officer,  
Sikkim Tourism Development Corporation  
Hotel Mayur, 1st Floor  
P.S. Road, Gangtok



**Gangtok on Wednesday, 19Dec**

**Temp:** 10°C/06°C  
**Forecast:** Sunny to partly cloudy with a little rain in the evening, then a shower in spots

**Sunrise:** 06:30 AM  
**Sunset:** 03:42 PM

**HAVE A STORY TO SHARE?**

email us:  
**news@summittimes.Com**

# Vermicompost training held for Khaniserbong farmers

**SUMMIT REPORT, GANGTOK, 18 DEC:**

**M**evedir, in collaboration with Krishi Kalyan Abhiyan, organized a GPU-level training on Vermicomposting at Khaniserbong GPU, West Sikkim, in the presence of Ward Panchayat, VLV of Khaniserbong GPU and with Bhisma Pradhan (SMS of KVK), Nabin Gurung (BTM of ATMA), along with Mevedir Master Trainer, Ganga Ram Chettri as resource persons.

The first session was facilitated by Mr. Pradhan who explained nutrients in vermicompost and its benefits while Mr. Gurung explained the usage and dosage and method of vermicomposting.

In the next session,



farmers were taken to the field where Mr. Gurung demonstrated the process of making vermicompost.

Before concluding Mr. Chettri detailed the organic norms and how the land in the GPU was be-

ing certified under NOP and NPOP norms, what it means and how the farmers can contribute to the various organic norms and principles set by the certification bodies.

He also stressed the need for regular internal

and external inspections that are being conducted in all the farms and why it was important to maintain the integrity of organic farming in the GPU.

More than 30 farmers participated in the training.

## Janta Raj Sthapna Diwas celebration concludes in Dzongu



**WANGCHUK BHUTIA DZONGU 18 DEC:**

**D**zongu has always had a special place in the heart of Chief Minister Pawan Chamling which is why the area has seen rapid development in all spheres, said Deputy Speaker SLA cum MLA Dzongu, Sonam Gyatso Lepcha while addressing the public at Lingdem in Upper Dzongu, North Sikkim today on the last day of the Janta Raj Sthapna Diwas.

The people of Dzongu constituency celebrated the event for Lingthem-Lingdem, Safo Passingdang GPUs and two wards of Mangan Nagar Panchayat which falls under Dzongu constituency.

The opposition parties are always blaming the SDF government,

levelling baseless allegations, said Mr. Lepcha further adding that the politics of 21st century should be the politics of prosperity not propaganda.

The Deputy Speaker further stated that whoever the party chooses as the candidate for the next election, people should support it. Only senior citizens of Dzongu are aware of the plight of Dzongu before SDF came to power, he said.

Youth Convenor Dzongu, Tshering Gyatso Lepcha underlined the development initiated by the government in Dzongu and further stated that the public of Dzongu will stand with the party. Now it is our turn to lend support to the party, he added.

Likewise, Zilla member Tingling GPU,

Chungden Lepcha, highlighted about the rights and dignity of women being provided under the SDF government.

Chairperson SNT cum North District President, Pintso Namgyal Lepcha said that election is round the corner and people should not follow aspiring candidates blindly until the party's high command awards tickets.

Earlier, the function was welcomed by Zilla member, Lingthem-Lingdem GPU, Nimkit Pakimoo.

Also in the function, Pem Tshering Lepcha of Ramong joined SDF after quitting SKM.

The function was attended by people from all walks of life, panchayat and Zilla members and party workers.

## Principal held after school wall collapse kills two children in Noida

**NOIDA, DEC 18 (PTI):** The principal of a private school in which two children were killed and three injured in a wall collapse was arrested here Tuesday, police said.

Two kids, aged 10 and 7, were killed when a wall of the school in Salarpur village collapsed Monday, prompting Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath to order a magisterial-level inquiry.

KM Public School principal Sanjeev Kumar Jha was held on Tuesday near

his house in Sector 107 by officials of the Sector 49 police station, they said.

This is the first arrest in the case in which six people have been booked for culpable homicide not amounting to murder, endangering life of others under the Indian Penal Code and for cruelty against children under the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015.

"Working on a tip-off, Jha was held by the team from the gate of Arogya

Dham Maharishi Ashram in Sector 107," Station House Officer Girija Shankar Tripathi, who led the police team, said, adding that searches were underway to nab the other accused.

The wall of the private primary school collapsed at around 9.30 am Monday allegedly due to the impact of some construction activity, involving use of a heavy machine (JCB), in the adjoining plot in Salarpur village, the police had said.

The FIR in the case named school's principal Sanjeev Jha, its manager Raghvendra Solanki, owner Amit Bhati, his relative Deshraj Bhati and Sumit Bhati (Deshraj's son) and an unidentified JCB operator.

According to the FIR, the school building was "too old and deteriorated" while the construction work in the plot adjoining it was being done "without any official approval from the authorities concerned".

## Namchi business community condemns Shanker Agarwal's claims



**SUMMIT REPORT, NAMCHI, 18 DEC:**

**A** section of the business community of Namchi has condemned claims made by contractor Shanker Agarwal on 14 Dec at Jorethang. Mr. Agarwal had recently joined Sikkim Krantikari Morcha and during the inauguration of SKM party office at Jorethang, South Sikkim on 14 Dec, had claimed that he had support of

90% of the business community of Namchi.

At a press conference held in Namchi yesterday, Muslim community [resident, Javed Ansari, said that Mr. Agarwal made a personal decision to join a party and that while they had no objections to his making political decisions for himself, to drag all members of business community from Namchi for his political gain was unacceptable.

All members of the Muslim business community of Namchi condemned his claims and advised him to not to issues such statements in the future.

Similarly, Namchi Bhiari Jagaran Manch general secretary, Binod Gupta, also condemned the statement and remarked that Mr. Agarwal has no right to extend his political affiliations to the entire community.

## KVK-South conducts pre-Rabi campaign



**SUMMIT REPORT, NAMCHI, 18 DEC:**

**K**rishna Vigyan Kendra (KVK), South Sikkim, conducted a daylong programme as part of its Pre-Rabi Campaign 2018-19 on 18 Dec for the farmers of South Sikkim.

The programme commenced with awareness on dairy care and management through presentations made by

Subject Matter Specialist (Animal Husbandry), Dr. Chewang Norbu Bhutia.

Special Guest, Agriculture Development Officer (Soil Testing Lab In-charge), Yograj Pradhan, spoke on the importance of soil sampling, soil reclamation, soil health management, and the different measures taken up by the state department for the benefit

of farmers.

Chief guest, Horticulture Development Officer, Purnima Theengh, spoke about the different schemes of the department and upcoming programmes.

Around 50 farmers participated in the Pre-Rabi Campaign and also took an exposure visit to the farm of very successful progressive farmers.

## Dry Christmas, New Year's in Mizoram as Zoramthanga takes steps for total prohibition

**AIZAWAL, DEC 18 (PTI):** Christmas and New Year's celebrations in Mizoram would happen without alcohol as Zoramthanga government Tuesday decided to declare dry days from Friday to January 14 and shut all liquor shops operated by state agencies.

Zoramthanga's MNF, which stormed to power in the state, promised total prohibition ahead of the polls. However, as a new legislation would require time, the new government decided to

declare dry days in the christian-majority state.

The decision was made in the first meeting of the council of ministers, Zoramthanga told reporters. "Efforts would be made to legislate prohibition law by early next year," he added.

Total prohibition was imposed in the state on February 20, 1997 by the then Congress government. However, it was lifted in early 2015. Following this, wine shops were opened in the state from March 16, 2015.

In the run up to the November 28 assembly polls, alcohol emerged as a major political issue. While the Congress was against total prohibition, the MNF wanted a complete ban.

The BJP had taken a middle path by proposing to ban alcohol coming from outside the state and encourage only locally produced ones.

In the elections, MNF ousted Lal Thanhawla's Congress government and bagged 26 seats of the 40-member state legislature.

## Zaheer appointed Mumbai Indians' Director of Cricket Operations

**MUMBAI, DEC 18 (PTI):** Three-time IPL champions Mumbai Indians Tuesday appointed former India speedster Zaheer Khan as Director of Cricket Operations.

The announcement was made by the franchise on its website.

Zaheer was also part of the Mumbai Indians in the IPL seasons 2009, 2010 and 2014.

He has 29 wickets to his name from 30 outings for the franchise.

Zaheer took to Twitter to share his thoughts and said it was a pleasure to be back with the Mumbai Indians.

"Complete pleasure



to be back in my home city with the Mumbai Indians squad. Looking forward to be a part of the dressing with @

ImRo45 and @mipal-tan. Cant wait for the season to start," the former left arm pacer tweeted.



# Meeting resolves to enhance quality of education at Sanskrit Pathshalas

## SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 18 DEC:

A coordination meeting was held today in the office of the Additional Director, HRDD, Sanskrit, with officials from Ecclesiastical Affairs Department with the objective to discuss quality education at Sanskrit Pathshalas and SREDA.

The meeting also emphasized on the introducing modern subjects

like Mathematics, English, Science and Social Studies at these pathshalas.

The meeting directed the eleven members of the committee constituted by the State Govt to prepare and draft a suitable syllabus for the development of the Sanskrit language in Classes I to VII which are also to be taught in the monastic schools.

The introduction of the new subjects and proper preparation of text books, especially in Sanskrit language, will definitely improve learning and teaching and enhance the understanding of proper dharma, said HP Dhakal.

The committee expressed confidence that these changes will give a huge boost to students and parents across the

state and definitely provide wider knowledge in understanding the Sanskrit language.

Mr. Dhakal, the chairperson of the committee to draft the syllabus, is confident that the new books with fresh syllabus will be at hand for the next academic session.

He informs that the committee has almost completed its task and is under discussions

with experts from various monastic and Sanskrit Pathshalas.

The meeting was also attended by the Research Scholar, Ecclesiastical Affairs Department, Dr Hissey Wangchuk, Member Secretary and Principal of Samdong Sanskrit Mahavidyalaya, GP Subba, Assistant Director Sanskrit of HRDD and various Monastic Schools.

## Vijay Mallya faces bankruptcy proceedings in UK High Court



### ADITI KHANNA

LONDON, DEC 18 (PTI): Embattled liquor tycoon Vijay Mallya's legal troubles continue to mount as he is set to face bankruptcy proceedings in the UK High Court next year, brought by a consortium of Indian banks in their attempt to recoup unpaid debt worth nearly 1.145 billion pounds.

TLT LLP, the UK-based law firm which had won a landmark case for the 13 banks led by State Bank of India (SBI) earlier this year, confirmed on Monday that their bankruptcy petition against the 62-year-old businessman has been transferred to the insolvency list in London's High Court of Justice for a hearing in the first half of 2019.

"We can confirm that we presented a bankruptcy petition against Dr Mallya on behalf of the banks on 11 September 2018," said Paul Gair, partner at TLT.

"This was issued in Dr Mallya's local court, Northampton County Court, and has now been transferred to the insolvency list in the High Court of Justice in London for the hearing. The hearing is expected to take place in the Spring," he said.

In a ruling in May, a UK High Court judge had refused to overturn a worldwide order freezing Mallya's assets and upheld an Indian court's ruling that the consortium of 13 Indian banks were entitled to recover funds amounting to nearly 1.145 billion pounds.

TLT LLP has been representing the banks in their efforts to recover their dues as part of the worldwide freezing order, with the bankruptcy petition aimed at seizing his assets to recover dues.

Besides SBI, the 13 Indian banks include Bank of Baroda, Corporation bank, Federal Bank Ltd, IDBI Bank, Indian Overseas Bank, Jammu & Kashmir Bank, Punjab

& Sind Bank, Punjab National Bank, State Bank of Mysore, UCO Bank, United Bank of India and JM Financial Asset Reconstruction Co Pvt Ltd.

They have secured follow-on High Court orders to recover some of the funds owed to them as a result of unpaid loans by Mallya's now-defunct Kingfisher Airlines.

Mallya, meanwhile, remains on bail after his extradition was recently ordered by Westminster Magistrates' Court in London, an order which now awaits a sign-off by UK home secretary Sajid Javid.

Chief Magistrate, Judge Emma Arbuthnot, had ruled last week that Mallya does have a case to answer in the Indian courts over substantial "misrepresentations" of his financial dealings, in a boost to India's efforts to bring back the businessman wanted for alleged bank fraud and money laundering charges amounting to an estimated Rs 9,000 crores.

"There is clear evidence of dispersal and misapplication of the loan funds and I find a prima facie case the Dr Mallya was involved in a conspiracy to launder money," the ruling noted. Mallya has indicated that he plans to appeal the verdict in the High Court.

"My legal team will review the judgment in detail, consider various options and then I will decide going forward. There is a process ahead," he told reporters.

He will have 14 days to file an appeal once Javid has made his decision on the extradition order, which rarely goes against the Chief Magistrate's conclusion.

In separate legal proceedings, Mallya is also set for a trial in May next year to prevent his posh London home, overlooking Regent's Park, from foreclosure by Swiss Bank UBS.

## Press Club wins friendly against Sikkim Christian Sports Committee



### LAYMIT LEPCHA

GANGTOK, 18 DEC:

A friendly match was played between Press Club of Sikkim and Sikkim Christian Sports Committee [SCSC] here at Paljor Stadium on Tuesday afternoon. In a well contested match, Press Club of Sikkim team defeated SCSC by 5-4.

The match was part of the ongoing 7th Sikkim Inter Church Football Tournament 2018 here at Paljor Stadium, which is being organised by SCSC.

Despite the chilly weather and low visibility due to dense fog, enthusiastic players of both

teams exhibited a good match and played their hearts out. The first half of the match ended 3-1 in favour of SCSC. However, Press Club of Sikkim bounced back in the second half winning the match 5-4.

Speaking to SummitTimes, SCSC president Pastor Bhupal John Basnett mentioned that the main objective of this friendly match was to build a healthy relationship with the press fraternity and also to encourage youngsters to live a healthy and productive life through sports.

"Although we lost the match, we are very

happy to play against the fourth pillar of democracy to build a friendly relationship," he expressed.

Regarding the ongoing inter-church football tournament, Pastor Basnett mentioned that this was the 7th season of Sikkim Inter Church Football Tournament and this year's theme is 'Play for Glory'.

"The main purpose of the football tournament is to create and foster brotherhood amongst the youth of the State and to provide a wider platform to youth to showcase their hidden talents and to promote football as well. Our main aim is to motivate the youth," he added.

## LOST

I Sonam Palzor Lepcha, DOB: 15.03.1983, S/o. Mr Aching Lepcha, R/o. Mangan North Sikkim have lost my hand bag in which my class X passed Certificate of CBSE Board bearing Roll No: 3120242 passed out in the year 1999 and Serial No: 00305268. So if found kindly contact on: 9609861871.

## FLAT AVAILABLE FOR RENT

Fully furnished, 3 Bedroom flat available for rent at Church Road, Near Diesel Power House. Conveniently located by the roadside and a 5-minute walk from M.G. Marg. Suitable for Corporate Office and Guest House.

For further details please  
Contact: 9434117687 / 9083826462

## LAND FOR SALE

BL Plot, 60x60, both side road, Lower Syari, Near Ranipool, Land is almost flat. Contact 7384620040, 7477406169.

## KUTSE SHEGU

The Kutse Shegu of Late Namgyal Dolma who left for her heavenly abode on 03 Nov falls on 21 Dec. All well-wishers, friends and family are invited to attend the prayers at our residence, Tumin Kothi, Tumin, East Sikkim. We also take this opportunity to thank all those who stood by us in our time of bereavement and regret our inability to do so individually.

**Karma Tenzing Namgyal [son] and family**  
9933441234

## Afghanistan appreciates US' flexibility towards exempting Chabahar port from Iran sanctions

UNITED NATIONS, DEC 18

(PTI): Afghanistan has voiced appreciation for the "flexibility" shown by its "strategic partner" the US in exempting the Chabahar port project, being developed by India, from its tough sanctions against Iran.

Last month, the Trump administration exempted India from imposition of certain sanctions for the development of the strategically-located Chabahar Port in Iran, along with the construction of the railway line connecting it with Afghanistan.

The US had imposed "the toughest ever" sanc-

tions on a defiant Iran aimed at altering the Iranian regime's "behaviour". The sanctions cover Iran's banking and energy sectors and reinstate penalties for countries and companies in Europe, Asia and elsewhere that do not halt Iranian oil imports.

However, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo had said that eight countries -- India, China, Italy, Greece, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and Turkey -- were temporarily allowed to continue buying Iranian oil as they showed "significant reduction" in oil purchase from the Persian

Gulf country.

"The Chabahar Port remains an important gateway for providing commercially viable access to the sea linking the Indian Ocean with Afghanistan, Central Asia and beyond. In this regard, we appreciate the collaboration and flexibility of our strategic partner, the United States to work with Afghanistan, Iran and India towards exempting the port from its Sanctions, Afghanistan's Permanent Representative to the UN Mahmoud Saikal said Monday at a Security Council on the situation in Afghanistan.

## "WITH SINCERE GRATITUDE"

There are really no words to express our heartfelt thanks for the sympathy & support you all have extended towards our family during the sad demise of our beloved father. Your moral support everyday brought us peace & your bereaved concern helped us pass through our difficult time.


Though we could not thank you all individually but through this small note we would like to extend our gratitude to all who have come to visit us from far & flung places to condole us and who joined in the funeral procession upto Decheling on 14th Dec 2018. We all are deeply touched by your kind gesture, love & support.

The death of our beloved father, Lakpa Tsering Ethenpa at the age of 88 years is a big loss for the family & friends but at the same time we want to celebrate Pala's life as he lived live to the fullest to the extent that he could see & bless his Great Grand Children as well.

We also believe that he must have been very happy to see all his well wishers making sure that his funeral farewell wasn't amiss. All your presence was what made us stronger and again, mere words wouldn't justify our immense gratitude for this.



**Mrs. Pasang Lhamu Ethenpa (wife)**  
**Menla Ethenpa (son) & family**  
**Dr. Sonam T. Ethenpa (son) & family**  
**Diki Yangzum Ethenpa (daughter) & family**  
**Chopel S. Ethenpa (daughter)**  
**Sangay Pema Ethenpa (daughter) & family**  
**& hosts of grand children & Great Grand Children**  
**Ethenpa Villa, Lower Tadong, Gangtok-737102**



### ADMISSION OPEN

STUDY ZONE  
Mr. Dawchung Lepcha (Chairperson)

**OUR COURSE OUTLINES:**

1. Winter Crash Courses running successfully for classes X, XII (CBSE, ICSE, ISC)
2. Study Materials provided according to the standards of the board.
3. Mock Test and Pre Board examinations for the students
4. Revision notes for the students to make them much more effective
5. Doubt clearing Sessions held by respective teachers
6. Separate hostel facilities for boys and girls.

**OUR COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

1. To give clear concept of the chapters
2. To give the students proper guidance to excel in their examinations
3. To Prepare and deliver answers effectively and efficiently
4. Greater emphasis would be to excel.
5. Last minute suggestion tips as per board requirements

For further details please contact: 9002163719, 7319565616, 7432036651  
Address: P.N.G Road, Opp. City press, Gangtok

Entel Motors (P) Ltd | Finance | MGA | Exchange

# 5 GREAT REASONS

TO BUY YOUR FAVOURITE MARUTI SUZUKI, THIS DECEMBER.

- Beat the Price Hike
- Highest Savings of the Year
- 100% On Road Finance
- Highest Exchange Bonus of the Year
- Best Exchange Price for your Existing Car

## BETTER THAN BEST

*Offers*

The Best Time to Buy your favorite Maruti Suzuki car with highest ever offers

Maruti Suzuki to increase vehicle prices from January

Maruti Suzuki India Wednesday said it will increase prices of its vehicles across various models from next month as offset adverse impact of increase in commodity prices and foreign exchange rates.

The company, however, did not specify by how much the prices of its vehicles would increase.

At present, the company is working to keep its prices as low as possible.






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# SummitTIMES

## Hold Us Accountable, Please

*News requires reader-engagement to stay the course*

Journalists live a charmed life. Those outside the clique have an inflated perception of our effectiveness and readers in general believe media persons to be much better informed than they actually are. This fiction, when it circulates too widely and for too long, can start convincing those who wield the pen [hammer keyboards nowadays] that they are indispensable, and with that comes the arrogance which, at least in our country, has also caused substantial damage to politics and administration. There is a fine line dividing standing up for something and becoming overbearing, but it is an important marker still, and over-stepping it can compromise the best of intentions. If the news-media is indeed seen as the fourth estate/ pillar in a democracy, then hollowing it out weakens the overall structure, so, as much as it needs to be supported and backed, it also needs to be held accountable. A free press, after all, is a necessity to ensure real progress.

It goes without saying that the right environment needs to be created for press to be free, and this is provided by institutional and civil-society support systems. It is also obvious that such an environment is always under constant pollutions by agencies which are threatened if journalists are allowed genuine freedoms. But new-media cannot be shackled only by a repressive systems, it can also be compromised by unethical practitioners. It is always a bad idea to pass the correctional cane into the hands of the powers-that-be, because they will definitely misuse it, so, it becomes important for every person with a stake in world affairs or national developments and also Sikkim to start reading newspapers [because more readers will mean more power, more independence for newspapers] and more importantly, start sending in more letters. At present, most letter writers are inspired by personal reasons to write. What is required for a more accountable media is to have a wider response base. Not eulogies, please write in hate mail, letters that point out errors, letters that demand clarifications, letters that complain of half-truths and incomplete reportage, letters that mention that readers notice the personal agendas of editors, publishers and reporters being packaged as news. The media needs feedback to stay on course, battle somnolence, remain relevant, and most importantly, remain accurate. The willingness to admit mistakes is an important part of being accurate. This has become even more significant in the age of online archives, although it has always been the case that mistakes in old newspaper cuttings could be repeated and result in an inaccurate report being circulated again years later. Accuracy, it needs no further stressing, is essential if journalism is to inform the public debate. And if public wishes to be served well with accurate information, significant perspectives and intelligent opinions, they need to engage, maintain a pressure which inspire excellence. Do that often enough, and even if newspapers do not publish them, the editors will be forced to read them and soon, the guilt will lead to more responsible, more accountable journalism.

This, in case you have forgotten how media peddled outright lies in how the Kanhaiya episode at JNU was reported, or how a Hindi news channel dredged the bottom of the ignorance barrel to claim and explain the nano-microchips they believed to be embedded in the new currency notes, or the comatose disinterest with which the northeast continues to be reported, or how when a certain national party wins state elections it becomes about local issues but when another national party wins in states it is credited to the charisma of The Leader... all of these should convince any consumer of "news" of how the sector requires more professionalism. In Sikkim's case, the news-media admittedly needs to evolve beyond the incident-based reportage and press release/ press conference-driven political reporting that currently pack our pages, in colour. These happen because the readers remain aloof consumers. Much more and much better will arrive if readers became more engaged and started demanding better.

**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.

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# Are memories reliable? Expert explains how they change more than we realise

ROBERT NASH  
*theconversation.com*

Your memory probably isn't as good as you think it is. We rely on our memories not only for sharing stories with friends or learning from our past experiences, but we also use it for crucial things like creating a sense of personal identity. Yet evidence shows that our memory isn't as consistent as we'd like to believe. What's worse, we're often guilty of changing the facts and adding false details to our memories without even realising.

To understand a bit about how remembering works, consider the "telephone game" (also known as "Chinese whispers"). In the game, one person quietly whispers a message to the person beside them, who then passes it on to the next person in line, and so on. Each time the message is relayed, some parts might be misheard or misunderstood, others might get innocently altered, improved, or forgotten. Over time the message can become very different from the original.

The same can happen to our memories. There are countless reasons why tiny mistakes or embellishments might happen each time we recall past events, ranging from what we believe is true or wish were true, to what someone else told us about the past event, or what we want that person to think. And whenever these flaws happen, they can have long-term effects on how we'll recall that memory in the future.

Take storytelling for example. When we describe our memories to other people, we use artistic license to tell the story differently depending on who's listening. We might ask ourselves whether it's vital to get the facts straight, or whether we only want to make the listener laugh. And we might change the story's details depending on the listener's attitudes or political leaning. Research shows that when we describe our memories differently to different audiences it isn't only the message that changes, but sometimes it's also the memory itself. This is known as the "audience-tuning effect".

In one study on the audience-tuning effect, participants watched a video of a bar fight. In the video, two intoxicated men get into a physical confrontation after one man has argued with his friend, and the other has seen his favourite football team lose a match. Afterwards, participants were

asked to tell a stranger what they had seen.

The study's participants were split into two groups. One group was told that the stranger disliked one of the two fighters in the video. The other group was told that the stranger liked this same fighter. Unsurprisingly, this extra informa-

tion shaped how people described the video to the stranger. Participants gave more negative accounts of the behaviour of the fighter if they believed the stranger disliked him.



More importantly though, the way people told their story later affected the way they remembered the fighter's behaviour. When participants later tried to remember the fight in a neutral, unbiased way, the two groups still gave somewhat differing accounts of what had happened, mirroring the attitude of their original audience. To an extent, these participants' stories had become their memories.

Results like these show us how our memories can change spontaneously over time, as a product of how, when, and why we access them. In fact, sometimes simply the act of rehearsing a memory can be exactly what makes it susceptible to change. This is known as "retrieval-enhanced suggestibility".

In a typical study of this effect, participants watched a short film, then took a memory test a few days later. But during the days between watching the film and taking the final test, two other things happened. First, half of the participants

took a practice memory test. Second, all of the participants were given a description of the film to read, which contained some false details.

The aim of these studies was to see how many of the false details people would eventually reproduce in the final memory test. Hundreds of studies already show that people will unwittingly add false details like these to their memories. But these studies found something even more fascinating. Participants who took a practice memory test shortly before reading the false information were more likely to reproduce this false information in the final memory test. In this case, practice makes imperfect.

Why might this be? One theory is that rehearsing our memories of past events can temporarily make those memories malleable. In other words, retrieving a memory might be a bit like taking ice-cream out of the freezer and leaving it in direct sunlight for a while. By the time our memory goes back into the freezer, it might have naturally become a little misshapen, especially if someone has meddled with it in the meantime.

These findings teach us a lot about how our memories are formed and stored. And they might lead us to wonder how much our most treasured memories have changed since the very first time we remembered them.

Or perhaps not. After all, my research with other colleagues shows that people are generally pretty unwilling to invest time and effort in checking the accuracy of their memories. But whether or not you ever actually discover any small or large changes that have occurred, it's unlikely that your treasured memory is 100% accurate. Remembering is an act of storytelling, after all. And our memories are only ever as reliable as the most recent story we told ourselves.

*[the writer is Senior Lecturer in Psychology, Aston University]*

## COP24 shows global warming treaties can survive the era of the anti-climate 'strongman'

RAPHAEL HEFFRON  
*theconversation.com*

New leaders have emerged over the past few years who have changed the highest levels of political and diplomatic discourse. After divisive elections, both the US and Brazil are among the countries to have succumbed to the "strongman".

The modern strongman is a leader who rules by force and bluster, and who shuns cooperation in favour of an isolationist and protectionist foreign policy. This attitude is usually reflected in a very dim view of climate action. The US president, Donald Trump, and Brazil's president-elect, Jair Bolsonaro, are both doubtful about climate science and have both suggested they would eventually like to withdraw from the Paris Agreement on climate change. At the latest COP24 climate talks in Poland, the US hosted a pro-coal side event, while Brazil has pulled out of hosting next year's talks, COP25.

Yet the two countries are a vital part of any fight against global warming. The US remains the world's largest economy, and is the largest consumer and one of the largest producers of fossil fuels. Brazil also has a huge population and its wealth of natural resources – including the world's largest rainforest, the Amazon – are under threat.

In this context, with these leaders, what hope is there for the future of climate treaties and conferences? **WHY COP24 MEANS THERE'S STILL HOPE**

Yet despite Trump, Bolsonaro and a few other awkward parties, delegates at COP24 have reached agreement on most of the "rulebook" for implementing the Paris Agreement on climate change. It is important to remember that Paris had 197 signatories with 184 countries ratifying it. This agreement is about more than just a couple of nations.

Countries, it seems, are still working together. A significant reason for this is money – and, as the old adage goes: "money makes the world go round". Many nations are still feeling the effects of the 2007-2009 financial crisis, and money remains in short

supply. Any chance to create jobs and new investment will be welcomed by governments across the world, and investing in clean energy is one solution. Political leaders everywhere, including strongmen, are still motivated by money.



For example, in many countries, public health has become a key climate change issue. Just look at China, where leader Xi Jinping shares some characteristics with classic strongmen yet his government has realised that fossil fuel use comes at a growing cost to public health, tourism and labour productivity. The Lancet estimates the welfare costs from pollution to be equivalent to 6.2% of global GDP – and these costs are rising. One way of negating the effects is to adopt a more climate change-friendly economic policy as China has been developing – for example, improving regulation, introducing environmental taxes and developing sustainable development zones.

**CLIMATE JUSTICE?** One key issue to emerge from the Paris Agreement was the idea of a "just transition", which seeks to ensure that moving from a society based around fossil fuels to a new

low-carbon economy is done fairly and with adequate support for workers. The Paris Agreement refers to:

"Taking into account the imperatives of a Just Transition of the workforce and the creation of decent work and quality jobs in ac-

cordance with nationally defined development priorities."

This issue of a just transition remained relatively dormant but has risen to prominence over the past year. It was highlighted in the communiqué produced from the recent G7 talks in June this year. And notably, at the start of COP24, in a country dominated by coal, the Polish prime minister even announced a declaration on support for workers in rapidly-changing industries.

There is no doubt that strongmen can distract from the global movement on climate change. But ultimately the movement has already gathered sufficient pace for continued cooperation by other countries, as evidenced by the numbers signed up to Paris. It is unfortunate that certain leaders will slow progress on climate action, perhaps particularly in their own countries, but nevertheless investment data shows that

more and more low-carbon energy projects are receiving financial support globally.

In following data trends, it is also clear that the cost to public health systems, the loss of worker productivity and the loss of tourism all from

pollution is becoming more costly to societies than to reorient themselves to a low-carbon economy. In particular countries are acting on energy infrastructure issues and are developing strategies to deliver new low-carbon infrastructure.

Finally, there is recognition through the just transition movement that the labour force of our current fossil fuel-dominated economies needs to be transitioned to a labour force that builds a low-carbon economy – currently Scotland, Ireland, Germany and several states in the US and Australia are establishing commissions to deliver this policy.

Money talks and, with finance now being geared towards low-carbon investments, it will supersede even the interests of media-savvy strongmen.

*[the writer is Professor of Energy Law & Sustainability, University of Dundee]*



## Former Nepal Prime Minister Tulsi Giri passes away



**SHIRISH B PRADHAN KATHMANDU, DEC 18 (PTI):** Tulsi Giri, Nepal's two-time prime minister and senior politician, passed away on Tuesday, according to family sources.

He was 93.

He died, after a prolonged battle with liver cancer, at his home in Budhanilkanta, on the outskirts of the Himalayan nation's capital, they said.

He was recently discharged from the hospital, they added.

Born in 1926 in Siraha district, Giri started his political career from Nepali Congress party. He reached to the post of the general secretary.

A die-hard supporter of the Panchayat system after the then King Mahendra Shah imposed

it, Giri was appointed as the vice-chairman of the Council of Ministers in 1962, soon after the King took charge of the power and introduced the party-less polity by putting a ban on political parties during a coup.

He then served as the country's Prime Minister twice during the tenure of slain King Birendra Bir Bikram Shah in 1975 and 1977. Birendra, the eldest son of King Mahendra, was the King of Nepal from 1972 until his death in the 2001 Nepalese royal massacre.

After the country eliminated the Panchayat system and absolute monarchy through the 1990 People's Movement during the rule of King Birendra, Giri left the country and was living in Sri Lanka.

He returned to Nepal

in 2005 when then King Gyanendra Shah, who took over the reigns following the royal massacre, appointed him the vice-chairman of the Cabinet (equivalent to the Prime Minister's post).

Giri is survived by his wife, two sons and two daughters.

Meanwhile, Nepal's Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli, former Prime Minister and Nepali Congress President Sher Bahadur Deuba and other senior political leaders, have condoled Giri's demise.

"I am very sad to learn the passing of the former Prime Minister Tulsi Giri. I convey my heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family and relatives," PM Oli wrote in his tweet.

## Bandhan Tod 2.0: Mobile app to raise voice against sexual harassments in rural areas

**PATNA, DEC 18 (PTI):** Seeking to give girls and women in rural areas a platform to raise voice against sexual harassments, a mobile app has been developed by a group of city-based activists, for such victims, who otherwise do not have much access to social media.

The app is slated to be officially launched here Wednesday, in the presence of renowned international activist Paula Donovan, co-director of AIDS-Free World and its Code Blue Campaign; and noted lawyer Indira Jaising, among others, Patna-based Gender Alliance, said.

Bandhan Tod 2.0 app is an upgrade of its earlier version, which only catered to cases of child marriage and domestic violence. The main, new additional feature of the app is 'Chuppi Tod', meant for airing grievances related to sexual harassment.

"We have now completely

revamped our old app, and especially after the #MeToo movement in the country, so many people opened up about their previous cases, on Twitter and Facebook. But, that is only a very select urban sample of the cases, such incidents are also happening in rural areas," a senior official of NGO told PTI.

And, this new app seeks to give girls and women in rural areas, "a voice, a platform to vent their angst and frustration", when they feel helpless, she said.

"But, how many in rural areas are social media-savvy or use Twitter or Facebook, the way an urban population does. So, we felt the need to overhaul the app, and thus 'Chuppi Tod' feature was born. As it was in the old app for child marriage cases, a sexual harassment victim can raise an SOS through a button," she said.

The official said the app,

now available in Hindi only, can be downloaded by any user of a smart phone, rural or urban, adding, smart phone penetration is there in rural areas too, so "we expect an outreach".

Plan is also to launch an English version to target non-Hindi-speaking states, another official added.

"The 'Chuppi Tod' feature (tab) has three components, a user can discuss an issue in a public forum; message privately after which a counsellor will call her back and offer guidance; or raise SOS, which then comes to us," she added.

"We will then first vet the allegation, and then actions accordingly, which could either be a legal intervention or counselling in person or connecting her with the National Women Commission," the official said.

The Gender Alliance official said, its team has already met with the Bihar police chief and

he has encouraged its use to address such cases, adding seven cases have already been reported through 'Chuppi Tod' before the formal launch of the app.

Users can also know about what constitutes sexual harassment, the act, mannerisms and innuendos, so that they can become alert when faced with such situations.

"People using it can also take a quiz to see if they have understood the issue," she said.

Bandhan Tod app, launched in 2017, in its previous avatar had helped save a 13-year-old schoolgirl in a village in Bihar's Darbhanga district from becoming a victim of child marriage, after she had raised an alert.

The girl, Rinki from Benipur block, about 30 km out of Darbhanga district headquarters, was later felicitated by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar for bravely resisting the evil practice.

## Humanitarian obligation to give refuge to migrants: Mamata

**KOLKATA, DEC 18 (PTI):** West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee Tuesday said that it was a humanitarian obligation to give refuge to migrants.

On International Migrants Day, she stated that her government to the best of its abilities would take care of anyone seeking shelter in West Bengal.

"Today is International Migrants Day. It is our humanitarian obligation to give refuge to migrants. In #Bangla we will take care of anyone who seeks shelter in our state, to the best of our abilities," Banerjee tweeted.

Banerjee, the Trinamool Congress supremo had been critical of the the BJP-led Central gov-



ernment after over 40 lakh people were left out of the complete draft of Assam's National Register of Citizens (NRC).

She had also expressed her willingness that people whose names were not included in the list can come and stay in West Bengal. International Migrants Day is observed on December 18 in accordance with Resolution 55/93 of the United Nations General Assembly, adopted on December 4, 2000.

## Lalduhoma to vacate Aizawl West-I constituency seat

**AIZAWL, DEC 18 (PTI):** Zoram People's Movement (ZPM) leader Lalduhoma, who won from two seats in the recent Assembly elections, would vacate the Aizawl West-I constituency seat, the party said Tuesday.

Lalduhoma would retain the Serchhip seat, a ZPM press statement issued here said.

It said that ZPM block leaders of the Serchhip and Aizawl West-I were consulted by the party high command before the decision was made.

A meeting of the ZPM caucus on Monday decided that in view of the future of the party, it would be better to retain the Serchhip seat, the statement said.

Lalduhoma, who was the chief ministerial candidate of the ZPM during the hustings, defeated five-time chief minister Lal Thanhawla, in the latter's home turf in the November 28 Assembly polls.

Lal Thanhawla had won from the Serchhip seat seven times since 1984 and lost only once in 1998.

Lalduhoma also defeated sitting legislator and former minister K Sangthuma of the Mizo National Front (MNF) in the prestigious Aizawl West-I seat.

Assembly officials, however, said that they were yet to receive any official communication from Lalduhoma.

## Survivors of human trafficking run to raise awareness

**KOLKATA, DEC 18 (PTI):** As hundreds took to the streets to run the Tata Steel Kolkata Marathon, a group of survivors of human trafficking joined them seeking passage of the Trafficking of Persons Bill 2018 in the Rajya Sabha.

Nearly 50 survivors of trafficking and activists associated with several grassroots and community-based organisations working on the issue in West Bengal participated in the "Ananda Run" category of the Trafficking of Persons Bill 2018 in the Rajya Sabha.

Their objective was to deliver the message that human trafficking is a very serious issue not only in the state but across the country, and a stronger and comprehensive legislation was needed to combat the crime.

"We want the Trafficking of Persons (Prevention, Protection and Rehabilitation) Bill, 2018 which is pending its passage in the Rajya Sabha



to become a law since it not just recommends stringent punishment for traffickers, but also provides for time-bound trials, repatriation and rehabilitation of the victims," a survivor said.

The bill was passed in the Lok Sabha during the Monsoon Session of Parliament in July.

If passed, it will be India's first comprehensive law that would address all forms of trafficking, be it for forced labour, slavery or servitude, or commercial sexual exploitation, and the Central government will monitor interstate and

transnational investigation of cases.

The survivors, who are associated with an anti-trafficking project called "Taftesh", also raised several other issues impacting their lives such as proper rehabilitation services, legal services for victim compensation, protection from traffickers, health services for recovery.

"It was a great platform for the survivors," said Shaswati Mallick, a leader from Goranbose Gram Bikash Kendra, who also ran with the survivors in the marathon.

## Travel agents oppose AI's switch to solo distributor platform

**KOLKATA, DEC 18 (PTI):** Over 100 members of two travel associations held a demonstration in the city Tuesday in protest against Air India's decision to shift to a single platform for ticket sale and distribution.

The airline has recently switched to a single Global Distribution System (GDS), giving it exclusive access to its entire inventory.

GDS is computerized network that enables transactions between travel industry service providers, mainly airlines, hotels and tourism agencies.

The protesters - members of Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI) and Travel Federation Association of India (TAFI) - gathered outside Air India office around 11.30am with posters and placards, seeking a review of the new policy.

"The recent decision of the AI to work with just one Global Distribution System (GDS) partner will harm the inter-



est of scores of travel agents as well as the national carrier," TAFI (East) Chairman Anil Punjabi told reporters.

In October, AI chose UK-based firm Travelport for its ticket distribution services, severing ties with two other platforms, Amadeus and Sabre.

The national carrier has already removed its inventory from the Amadeus network.

Earlier this month, Air Passengers Association of India (APAI) had approached the Civil Aviation Ministry against AI's decision, terming the move "unwise". Punjabi explained during Tues-

day's protest that opting for just one GDS, "would effectively reduce the number of air passengers" of AI, harming its overall interests.

"Those working with two other platforms will be automatically debarred from the national carrier as result of which the AI will lose out on its customer base. The move will also hurt the business interests of travel agents," he said.

A charter of demands from TAAI and TAFI has been handed over to the AI office after the protest, with a request that the message be conveyed to the airline's headquarters, Punjabi added.

## Tripura imposes restrictions on creating new govt jobs

**AGARTALA, DEC 18 (PTI):** Tripura government has imposed a set of restrictions on the creation of new government jobs and advised abolition of vacant posts, in case new posts are created.

A memorandum issued by the Finance Department on Monday stated that Tripura already has the highest level of government employment in the country, in proportion to its population.

Tripura has roughly 200,000 government employees, including 60,000 pensioners. The estimated population of the state is 4,000,000.

"The need for this provision arises due to the fact that salaries and wages constitute the largest item of expenditure and it is absolutely necessary to exercise financial prudence and discipline while committing expenditure under these heads.

"Hence, whenever a depart-



ment submits a proposal for post creation, it should be accompanied by a proposal for surrender/abolition of posts with equivalent financial implications, the memorandum signed by Chief Secretary L K Gupta, who also holds the Finance portfolio, said.

Restrictions were imposed on filling up of vacant posts say-

ing all government departments must ensure that no process of filling up vacant posts is initiated without prior concurrence of the Finance Department and violation of the newly laid out plans would invite disciplinary action against concerned officers, it said.

"Some departments have a wrong notion that the Finance

Department has unlimited funds for salaries and wages and that it is their entitlement to fill up all the vacant posts and create new ones. This is not the case," the memo said.

The Department of School Education has violated these instructions and was asked to explain their action.

Earlier this year, the department announced recruitment in over 14,000 teaching positions to fill up vacancies, that were to be created by the retirement of 10,323 school teachers, who were terminated by the Supreme Court in 2017.

As per the new rules, the Finance Department would monitor expenditure on salary and wages by each department on a monthly basis and impose cuts from non-salary budget for departments which exceed their approved funds.





# Landmark year for weightlifters but no getting away from dope shame either

**APARAJITA UPADHYAY**  
**NEW DELHI, DEC 18 (PTI):** Records shattered, a teen star discovered and a best-ever medal haul at a marquee event -- it could well have been the perfect year for Indian weightlifting but for a dope case that took some sheen away.

If world champion Mirabai Chanu stood for a secure present, Jeremy Lalrinnunga emerged as the one for the future in what was a memorable 2018 if not for Commonwealth Games gold-medallist Sanjita Chanu's failed dope test.

The 16-year-old Lalrinnunga scripted history by giving India its first ever Olympic gold in the sport with his Youth Games gold. Before that, the senior lifters produced the country's best ever Commonwealth Games performance with records to boot.

A medal-less below-par performance at the Asian Games was a blip but it was never expected to be otherwise.

The big moment came in October when Lalrinnunga etched his name into history books when he scooped the gold in the men's 62kg category at Buenos Aires.

The Mizo sensation lifted a total of 274kg (124kg +150kg) in the Argentine capital, his personal best.

Such was the 16-year-old's supremacy that the silver medallist -- Turkey's Toptas Caner finished 11 kgs behind him.

"I feel very proud that I was able to get the first gold medal for my country at the Youth



Olympics. I worked really hard for it. We had heard about the youth Olympics in 2014 and I was working on it ever since," Lalrinnunga told PTI.

"It wasn't easy for me to reach the youth Olympics, there were a lot of problems. A couple of months before going, I got chicken pox. It was a struggle to recover from that.

"But the people around me -- my coach and family members -- really motivated me and I was able to compete. They instilled the confidence in me for which I am thankful. The senior lifters also inspired me," the teenager reflected.

Earlier in April, the senior weightlifters set the ball rolling at Gold Coast with Mirabai Chanu going on a record-smashing spree after P Gururaja opened the country's account with a silver medal.

The 24-year-old Mirabai first smashed the Commonwealth and the Games record in the

snatch category. The Manipuri then went on to lift more than double her body weight to claim the clean and jerk as well as the overall Games record.

Records continued to tumble with Sanjita Chanu leaving competitors far behind. She claimed her second successive CWG gold medal, obliterating the Games record with a total lift of 192kg (84kg+108kg).

Indian weightlifters bagged a total of nine medals, including five golds, two silvers, and as many bronze.

While Mirabai (48kg), Sanjita (53kg), Sathish Sivalingam (77kg), Venkat Rahul Ragala (85kg) and Punam Yadav (69kg) took home gold medals, Gururaja (56kg) and Pardeep Singh (105kg) fetched silver medals, and Vikas Thakur (94kg) and 18-year-old Deepak Lather (69kg) added a shade of bronze.

The tournament saw India topping the medals tally in the sport despite

being let down by the system.

Due to the Indian Olympic Association's (IOA) inability to submit the required documents on time, the lifters were devoid of the services of a full-time physiotherapist for the entire duration of the CWG with almost every member of the squad carrying niggles of various degrees.

This year's CWG performance was a touch better than the 2014 Glasgow edition where although India won more medals (14) -- three gold, five silver, and six bronze -- Nigeria topped the tally because of higher gold count.

But controversy lurked in the form of the dreaded dope shame. Sanjita tested positive for a banned anabolic steroid and was provisionally suspended by the International Weightlifting Federation (IWF).

The case took a dramatic turn when the IWF admitted to committing a mistake in giving the

exact sample number of Sanjita in its report of her failed dope test. This prompted the embattled weightlifter to demand an inquiry.

In the build-up to the Asian Games, a mysterious injury to star lifter Mirabai piqued everyone's attention but although there was an improvement in her condition, the Manipuri was not completely fit to compete at the continental event.

The Asian Games was a stark contrast to the Commonwealth Games. The four-member team, sans Mirabai, put up a listless campaign at Jakarta.

In the 77kg category, Ajay Singh finished a creditable fifth with a personal best effort while his senior compatriot Sathish suffered a thigh injury. Vikas finished eighth in the 94 kg and Rakhi Halder failed to register even a single lift in the women's 63 kg category.

It was also a landmark year for weightlifting as the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports rewarded the teacher-pupil duo of Vijay Sharma and Mirabai with the country's highest sporting honours.

Mirabai shared the Khel Ratna with Indian cricket team captain Virat Kohli. While Sharma, the head coach of India, was presented with the Dronacharya award.

"I am really delighted that my coach and I were recognised for our achievements. To get the award with Vijay sir is great," Mirabai said.

## India crash to 140 all out, Australia draw level with big win



**CHETAN NARULA**

**PERTH, DEC 18 (PTI):** India crumbled in the face of Australia's remarkable metamorphosis and crashed to a 146-run defeat in the second Test here Tuesday, surrendering a rare hard-earned ascendancy in a series Down Under.

The hosts levelled the four-match series 1-1 after India were bowled out for 140 runs in 56 overs in their second innings on the fifth and final day. Starting from overnight 112 for five, India lost their last five wickets for 28 runs and it was all over within 65 minutes of play.

This was Australia's first Test win since the ball-tampering scandal broke out in South Africa earlier this year.

Having won the opening game by 31 runs to go in front a week ago, India had been talked up as a threat coming into the capital of Western Australia, but they wilted as the pace-spin duo of Mitchell Starc and Nathan Lyon worked in tandem at the Optus Stadium.

Starc (3-46) and Lyon (3-39) finished with three wickets apiece, while Josh Hazlewood (2-24) and Pat Cummins (2-25) took a brace each.

While Starc and his pace colleagues were expected to thrive on the lively track, it was off-spinner Lyon's exceptional outing that gave

Australia the edge. He finished the match with eight wickets, including a five-for in the first innings and a deserving Man-of-the-Match award.

India surely missed a trick in not playing a specialist spinner, something that was admitted by one of their own at the end of fourth day's play.

Hanuma Vihari (28) and Rishabh Pant (30) had continued their overnight partnership, and batted out only six overs before the first wicket fell on this day. Overall, they added 21 runs for the sixth wicket.

Vihari was the first to go, lobbing a catch off Starc to short point. Pant then tried to play a few more attacking strokes, but he didn't comprehend the situation well and was confused whether to farm the strike at all.

In doing so, he attacked Lyon and holed out to mid on, with Peter Handscomb taking a low diving catch.

It hastened the end for India, with Umesh Yadav (2) returning a simple catch to Starc.

Ishant Sharma (0) was caught behind off Cummins, and Jasprit Bumrah (0) hit a skier for another return catch to the pacer as Australia sealed their first Test win since Durban before the ball-tampering scandal hit the headlines.

Australia had scored 326 runs in their first innings, and India replied

with 283 runs, thanks to Virat Kohli's 25th Test hundred, thus conceding a lead of 43 runs. The hosts scored 243 runs in their second innings to post a 287-run target.

Captain Virat Kohli's 25th Test ton in the first innings that should rank among his top five went in vain as his lower-order batsmen refused to wag one more time. With a very useful average of 21.00, Australia's number 8 to 11 have so far contributed 252 runs while facing 519 balls in the series, but their Indian counterparts have managed only 63 runs from 228 deliveries (average 5.25).

Kohli though put up a brave front at the post-match ceremony.

"As a team I think we played well in patches which we can hold onto. Australia played much better than us with the bat. 330 on that pitch we felt was a bit too much. They deserved to win," the India skipper said.

Australian captain Tim Paine said, "It was a difficult Test, both games were tough. Two really competitive sides and two really good fast bowling attacks. It's been hard work for batsmen and it was a great contest, because the ball was flying through here."

India had won the first Test in Adelaide by 31 runs. The third Test starts in Melbourne on December 26.

## To motivate students to become entrepreneurs, Delhi government schools to get special curriculum

**NEW DELHI, DEC 18 (PTI):** To motivate students to become entrepreneurs, the Delhi government will launch a special curriculum for city schools from next session, Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia said Tuesday.

Sisodia said students need to become job providers and this curriculum will train them before they begin college.

"We had launched the 'happiness curriculum' in government schools. Now we will launch the entrepreneurship curriculum from the next session onwards for secondary and senior secondary students," he said at the first convocation of Indira Gandhi Delhi Technical University for Women.

"At such events (convocation) we should also celebrate those students who did not take up jobs and instead chose to provide jobs to others. The definition of patriotism should be extended to those who provide jobs," he said.

Around 1,100 students were awarded degrees at the convocation.

Delhi's Lieutenant Governor Anil Bajjal, who is the chancellor of the varsity, congratulated the students and also suggested that entrepreneurs should be supported by the government when they start out.

## We never thought about spin option: Kohli

**PERTH, DEC 18 (PTI):** Skipper Virat Kohli Tuesday said the thought of having a spinner for the second Test against Australia never crossed his mind as he believed India's four-pronged pace attack would do the job.

India lost the match by 146 runs. The visitors were outdone by a second successive eight-wicket haul by off-spinner Nathan Lyon, who was adjudged the man-of-the-match, on a pitch that favoured the seamers. "When we looked at the pitch, we didn't think about the (Ravindra) Jadeja option. We thought four quicks would be enough," said Kohli after India were bowled out for a paltry 140 in their second innings on the fifth and final day.

"Nathan Lyon bowled really well. We never thought about the spin option to be honest."

Asked about his 123-run innings in the first innings, Kohli said: "When you don't win you don't really rank your performances so it's irrelevant because we didn't get the result we wanted."

"I am focused on the next game and I hope I can contribute on a winning note."

The India skipper praised Australia for the win, saying the hosts were relentless in their bowling and also outshone the visitors in batting. "As a team I think we played well in patches which we can hold onto. Australia played much better than us with the bat. 330 on that pitch we



felt was a bit too much. They deserved to win," he said. "We had the belief we could do it, but they were more relentless and put us in trouble."

Talking about India's bowling performance, Kohli said: "(Our bowlers) are outstanding as a pack, to see them dominate was really good to see and something we want to build on. They are relentless even if they aren't getting wickets which is a great quality."

Asked about his controversial dismissal in the first innings, Kohli: "It was a decision made on the field, it stays there."

Australian skipper Tim Paine was a relieved man after his team won their first Test since the ball-tampering scandal in South Africa had plunged the game into crisis. "It was a decision made on the field, it stays there."

Asked about his controversial dismissal in the first innings, Kohli: "It was a decision made on the field, it stays there."

Uzman Khawaja scored a valuable 72 in the second innings after flopping in the opening Test and Paine hoped a big hundred is round the corner for the star batsman.

"Uzzie (Uzman Khawaja) has been batting well for a long time. He's in a really good space. If he keeps batting the way he is right now, I am sure some big runs are going to come."

He also praised Lyon for his exploits.

"It's great to have Lyon in our team. Every team would want to have him in their team. You

can throw him the ball in any condition, at any end, any time against any team and he loves bowling to the best players in the world."

It was also his Paine's first win as a captain.

"It's a huge honour to captain the Australian side. Now to do it at the MCG for the Boxing Day Test is a special feeling. We all can't wait to get to Melbourne," he said.

Lyon was ecstatic to play a role in Australia's win. "It's amazing to play a role in a victory, haven't had one in a while. It's fair to say we've been in a drought, so good to break. Was special to wrap the tail up quickly," he said. "My role probably changed a bit, attacking in Adelaide to a defending on here. But luckily they ran down to the wicket to create a few footholes."

"When you come up against the best players, to compete against Virat and take his wicket was pretty special. Big thanks to my brother, I'm not a very good batter so just trying to play my role."

## Pakistan seek batting form in South Africa tour opener



**JOHANNESBURG, DEC 18 (AFP):** Pakistan's batsmen will seek form when they open their tour of South Africa with a three-day match against a South African Invitation XI at Willowmoore Park in Benoni Wednesday.

It is the only game for the tourists before the first of three Tests starts in Centurion on December 26.

Pakistan twice suffered fourth-innings batting collapses in losing a recent Test series against New Zealand in the United Arab Emirates.

Both captain Sarfraz Ahmed and coach Mickey Arthur acknowledged on arrival in South Africa that posting competitive totals was crucial, if they are to match the hosts in what is shaping as a battle between two teams with strong bowling attacks.

With the warm-up match clashing with the resumption of South Africa's four-day franchise

competition, the Invitation XI is drawn from the country's second-tier provincial competition.

The opposition is unlikely to be especially challenging, but it is an opportunity for the Pakistanis to get used to local conditions at a ground just 60 kilometres (37 miles) from the venue for the first Test.

Arthur, who coached South Africa from 2005 until 2010, told journalists he believed his young batsmen will cope better with conditions in South Africa than the low, slow pitches of the UAE.

"There are some very talented young batsmen there. They don't stand on leg stump anymore. Our batsmen get to off stump, they cover the bounce, they cover the pace and they cover the swing."

Even so, the Tests are likely to be a major challenge in a country where Pakistan have won only two Tests while losing nine on five tours.

South Africa's bowling will be spearheaded by Kagiso Rabada and fit-again Dale Steyn, although the hosts will be without the retired Morne Morkel and Lungi Ngidi, who has a long-term injury.

Vernon Philander is a serious doubt for the first Test because of a hairline fracture on his right thumb.

Pakistan have their own injury concerns, with fast bowler Mohammad Abbas and opening batsman Fakhar Zaman undergoing treatment in a bid to get them fit for the first Test.

The Tests will be followed by five one-day internationals in which both teams will be looking to settle on combinations ahead of the Cricket World Cup in England and Wales, starting on May 30.

There will also be three Twenty20 internationals -- a format in which Pakistan top the international rankings.



*Lanka Parliament to convene on Tuesday for first time after PM Wickremesinghe's reinstatement*

**COLOMBO, DEC 18 (PTI):** Sri Lanka's Parliament is set to convene on Tuesday for the first time after the reinstatement of Ranil Wickremesinghe as prime minister that ended the 51-day political standoff in the country, but he and President Maithripala Sirisena are yet to agree on Cabinet positions.

Sirisena, whose controversial actions plunged the island nation into an unprecedented political turmoil for nearly two months, reinstated Wickremesinghe as Prime Minister on Sunday, after sacking him on October 26 and appointing ex-president Mahinda Rajapaksa in his place and also dissolving Parliament, some 20 months early.

Sirisena was left with no other option following two separate decisions by the Supreme Court, which nullified his illegal moves.

Speaker Karu Jayasuriya is scheduled to chair a meeting on Tuesday to decide on the business of Parliament this week.

As Cabinet ministers are yet to take oaths, only the Prime Minister will be assigned a seat in the Chamber, Parliament Deputy Secretary General Neil Iddawela said.

"We are hopeful that the list can be finalised soon. We are also looking at some of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (Sirisena's party) members to join," Nalin Bandara, a parliamentarian from Wickremesinghe's United National Party (UNP), said.

The UNP sources said Sirisena is demanding the ministries of law and order and mass media.

It has been reported that the UNP has been assigned seats in the government side and Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) and United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA) MPs have been assigned seats of the Opposition.

A final decision has not been taken on the opposition leader's position. State newspaper Daily News reported that about 10 UPFA MPs are expected to join the UNP side.

"The SLFP members decided last night that none would join the government," Nishantha Muthuhettigama, a Sirisena loyalist said.

The Sirisena camp now is divided between the SLFP and Rajapaksa's SLPP. They are to join together to form a united alliance at the next election.

Parliamentary officials said that seats would be allocated based on the seniority this afternoon when parliament meets for the first time since the crisis ended. Sirisena and Rajapaksa loyalists, who have been boycotting parliament since mid last month, are set to return to Parliament on Tuesday.

**UNITED NATIONS, DEC 18 (AP):** The UN General Assembly on Monday condemned North Korea's "systematic, widespread and gross violations of human rights" and its diversion of resources into pursuing nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles over the welfare of its people.

It noted "with concern" that over 10 million North Koreans are estimated to be undernourished and that there is "an unacceptably high prevalence of chronic and acute malnutrition" in the reclusive northeast Asian nation.

The resolution, sponsored by Japan and the European Union, was adopted by consensus, though countries including Russia, China, Cuba and Venezuela disassociated themselves from it.

Many expressed opposition to assembly resolutions singling out specific countries and said the Geneva-based Human Rights Council should deal with rights issues.

North Korea's UN ambassador, Kim Song, said his country "categorically rejects" the resolution, calling it "a product of (a)



political plot and hostile forces."

He accused Japan of "provoking confrontation" with North Korea "by going back against the main trend in (the) Korean peninsula" when delicate political negotiations are underway.

Since North Korean leader Kim Jong Un reached out to South Korea and the United States early this year, the two Korean leaders have met several times and Kim

held a historic summit with President Donald Trump with another one expected in the new year. But there has been no significant progress on Kim's commitment to nuclear disarmament, and as a result no lifting of UN or US sanctions against North Korea.

The resolution's approval followed the US failure to get enough votes to discuss North Korea's human rights record in the Security Council a

week ago. It had succeeded for the last four years, and diplomats said the US is likely to try again in the new year when five new members join the council.

A statement released Monday by North Korea's UN Mission noted opposition to the US move and asserted again that the Security Council "is neither a place for discussion on any human rights issue nor a platform where a human rights issue is politicized to flare

up confrontation."

Whatever the change in the Security Council's composition, North Korea said it shouldn't be used as a platform "where U.S.'s high-handedness and arbitrary practice would prevail."

The General Assembly resolution adopted Monday expresses "very serious concern" at reports of torture, detention, rape, public executions, the imposition of the death penalty, the

absence of the rule of law, and "collective punishments extending up to three generations."

It also expressed concern at forced labor in North Korea and its "extensive system of political prison camps where a vast number of persons are deprived of their liberty and subjected to deplorable conditions" as well as "all-pervasive and severe restrictions, both online and offline, on the freedoms of thought,

conscience, religion or belief, opinion and expression, peaceful assembly and association."

The resolution condemns "the systematic abduction, denial of repatriation and subsequence enforced disappearance of persons, including those from other countries, on a large scale."

It "acknowledges" the findings of the U.N. commission of inquiry on North Korea in 2014. The commission said testimony and information it gathered "provide reasonable grounds to believe that crimes against humanity have been committed in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, pursuant to policies established at the highest level of the state for decades and by institutions under the effective control of its leadership."

The General Assembly strongly urged North Korea "to immediately put an end to the systematic, widespread and grave violations of human rights" by fully implementing UN resolutions and recommendations including closing prison camps and releasing all political prisoners.

## China will 'never seek hegemony,' Xi says in reform speech



**BEIJING, DEC 18 (AP):** China will never pursue hegemony, President Xi Jinping said Tuesday as global concerns persist over the country's growing economic influence.

During a speech to mark 40 years of market reforms, Xi repeated China's commitment to a multilateral trading system and further opening of its economy. However, he did not announce any new initiatives to counter a slowing economy and trade frictions with the United States.

The Chinese leader said China would not develop "at the expense of other countries' interests." China's expanding footprint worldwide from Asia-Pacific to Africa and beyond through a broad network of infrastructure projects called the Belt and Road Initiative has led some nations to raise the alarm over what they call China's long arm of influence, which has been criticised for being political as well as economic.

While Xi said China is "increasingly approaching the center of the world stage," he also noted that the country pursues a defensive national defense policy.

"China's development does not pose a threat to any country," Xi said. "No matter how far China develops, it will never seek hegemony." Xi chronicled at length the country's

recent achievements, giving special credit to former leader Deng Xiaoping, whose reforms Xi said saved China from the brink of economic collapse following the tumultuous Cultural Revolution.

Other celebrations of reform and opening up have been criticized by scholars for downplaying the role of Deng, widely considered the architect of the changes, in order to elevate Xi.

This time around, Xi spared no praise for Deng, as he began by remarking on the significance of 1978 the year Deng implemented his first reforms.

During the ceremony, 100 individuals were recognized as pioneers of reform. The eclectic slate included NBA player Yao Ming, Alibaba founder Jack Ma and Nobel prize-winning scientist Tu Youyou. They received their medals to the tune of "Story of Spring," a patriotic ballad paying tribute to Deng.

Throughout, Xi emphasized the absolute rule of the Communist Party and its upholding of Chinese sovereignty.

"No one is in a position to dictate to the Chinese people what should or should not be done," he said.

"We will resolutely reform what can and needs to be reformed, and we will resolute-

ly uphold what cannot and does not need to be changed." Xi's speech espoused "above all else," said Julian Gewirtz, an international affairs scholar at Harvard, "the distinctiveness and absolute correctness of China's path under the party's leadership."

"This was a broad attempt to provide a really positive, confidence-building story of China's past 40 years and its future," said Gewirtz, who has written a book about China's economic reforms.

The address won't assuage concerned private entrepreneurs and foreign businesses, who had hoped Xi would use the occasion to announce concrete industry-opening measures to shift dominance away from state corporations.

China's push to dominate the high-tech industry by 2025 is a sore point with Washington and a contributing factor in trade tensions that have seen the world's two largest economies slap billions of dollars in punitive tariffs on each other's products this year.

In a move welcomed by global stock markets, President Donald Trump agreed Dec. 1 to postpone more U.S. tariff hikes on Chinese imports for 90 days while the two sides negotiate over American complaints about Beijing's technology policy.

## Clashes erupt in Yemen's Hodeida in truce violation: official

**DUBAI, DEC 18 (AFP):** Clashes erupted Tuesday morning in Yemen just minutes after a ceasefire deal took effect in the country's flashpoint port city of Hodeida, a pro-government official said.

The official told AFP that sporadic clashes in the east of the Red Sea city -- whose port serves as a crucial gateway for humanitarian aid -- are ongoing despite a truce

deal that was to be implemented at midnight local time (2100 GMT).

The United Nations said on Monday that the country's flashpoint port city of Hodeida, a pro-government official said. The official told AFP that sporadic clashes in the east of the Red Sea city -- whose port serves as a crucial gateway for humanitarian aid -- are ongoing despite a truce

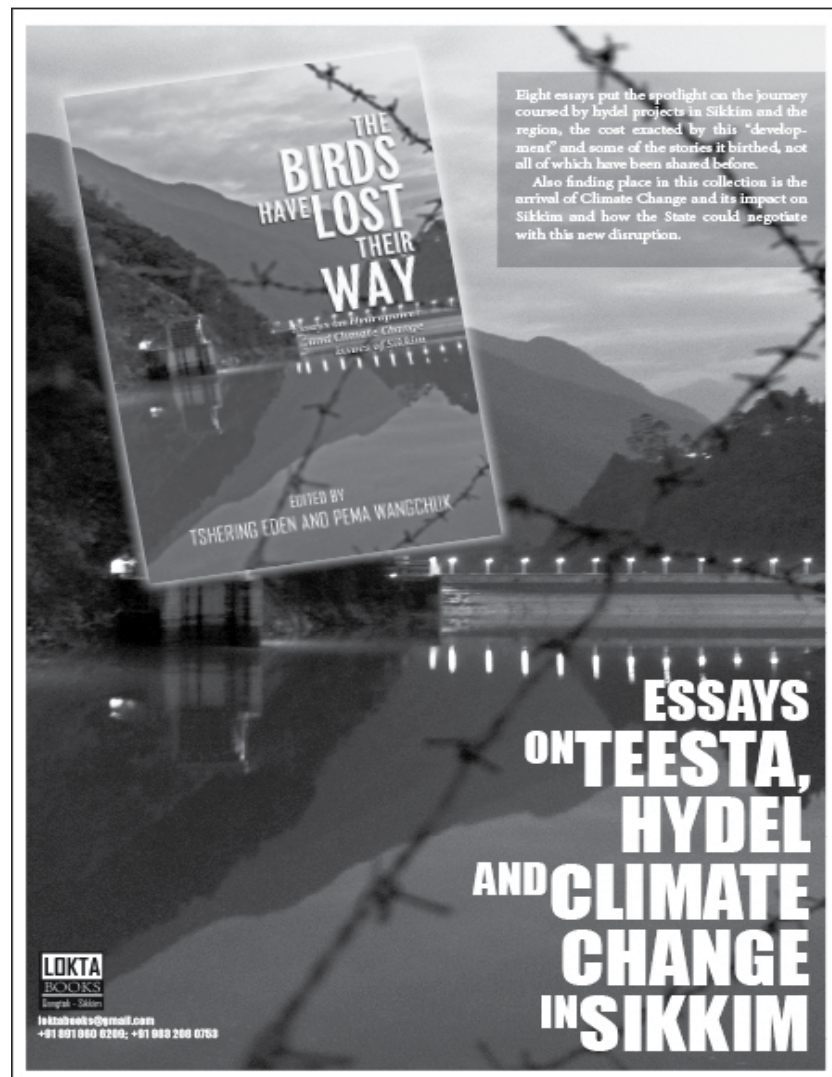
Shortly before the agreement was to take effect on Monday, Yemen's internationally-recognised government called on its forces to "cease fire in Hodeida province and Hodeida city", according to a copy of a statement received by AFP.

The Huthi rebels also said would commit to the agreement.

Impoverished Yemen has been mired in fight-

ing between the Huthi rebels and troops loyal to President Abedrabbo Mansour Hadi since 2014. The war escalated in 2015 when a Saudi-led military coalition stepped in on the government's side.

The conflict has since killed nearly 10,000 people, according to the World Health Organization. But some rights groups believe the toll to be far higher.







**STREET STRUT!** Singer/actress Rita Ora was seen strutting down in NYC looking fashionable in an all black ensemble.

## Jeff Bridges to be honoured with Cecil B deMille Award at Golden Globes

**LOS ANGELES, DEC 18 (PTI):** Veteran actor Jeff Bridges is set to receive the Cecil B deMille honour at the 76th annual Golden Globe Awards, the Hollywood Foreign Press Association (HFPA) has announced.

The Cecil B deMille award is given annually to a talented individual who has made a lasting impact on the world of entertainment.

"The Hollywood Foreign Press Association is delighted to bestow the 2019 Cecil B deMille Award on Jeff Bridges. Bridges' brilliant body of work across diverse genres has captured the hearts and minds of audiences worldwide for more than six decades.

"We look forward to celebrating 'the Dude' and his remarkable career and philanthropic achievements at the upcoming Golden Globe Awards," said HFPA President Meher Tatna.

Bridges' first Golden Globe nomination came in 1984 for best actor in "Starman". Seven years later he received his second Golden Globe nomination for his performance in "The Fisher King", which also starred Robin Williams. He got another Golden Globe nomination in 2001 for his role in "The Contender", Rod Lurie's political thriller, co-starring Gary Oldman and Joan Allen, in which Bridges played the president of the United States.

In 2017, he received another Golden Globe nomination for best supporting actor as a retiring Texas Ranger in "Hell or High Water", a modern action bank heist thriller



set in West Texas.

Past honourees of Cecil B deMille Award include George Clooney, Robert De Niro, Audrey Hepburn, Harrison Ford, Jodie Foster, Sophia Loren, Sidney Poitier, Martin Scorsese, Steven Spielberg, Meryl Streep, Barbra Streisand, Denzel Washington, Robin Williams, and Oprah Winfrey.

Golden Globes award ceremony, which will be hosted by Sandra Oh and Andy Samberg, will take place on January 6, 2019.

## In India we assume we are talented, don't learn acting: Shah Rukh Khan

**S**uperstar Shah Rukh Khan says he wants his daughter Suhana to learn the craft of acting before venturing into films as he does not want her to simply assume that she is talented.

Shah Rukh says Suhana came on the sets of his latest "Zero" and observed how things function.

"She came on sets because learning acting has a lot to do with spending time on the sets and learning production. She did the same in London and while she was here.

"She said she still has two weeks to go back to London and we were shooting a song for 'Zero' in the coming two weeks. So she came here to have that experience," Shah Rukh said in a group interview.

The "Raees" star said he wanted his daughter to observe a film set, including his co-stars Katrina Kaif and Anushka Sharma, and learn the nuances.

"I wanted her to see Anushka and Katrina perform live as both are such different kind of actors. Katrina has her own charm and Anushka has her own way of enacting things. So I wanted her to spend time (on sets). So what they did is they put her onto me as an assistant director.

"But I think ground experience is good for actors or any kind of job, only as an internship. But you have to finish your

education first. If you have the opportunity to study, it formalises and makes your craft better. So, I want her to study first for some time." Shah Rukh says Suhana will train for three-



four years more, doing plays and theatres. "In India, I think we don't learn acting, we just assume that we are talented. Like if you drive very first, it first mean you are going to become a Formula 1 driver. You'll have to finally learn it. So I want her to have a formal training in acting. The experience matters a lot," he added. "Zero" is scheduled to release this Friday.

## We will definitely work together: Rohit Shetty on collaborating with Akshay

**MUMBAI, DEC 18 (PTI):** Filmmaker Rohit Shetty says he has discussed a few ideas with Akshay Kumar but the duo has not locked what exactly they will do next.

There were reports that Rohit has

he has a huge fan following."

The "Chennai Express" director says Ranveer has no pretence and the way he works, he is on his way to become the next biggest superstar.



signed Akshay for his next, which will go on floors post the filmmaker's "Simmba".

When asked about the same, Rohit told PTI, "I've always been open about what I am doing. We have bounced one or two ideas. I would love to work with him and definitely we will be coming together.

"But at present we have just tossed an idea and we just had a few meetings on what can be done and what we should do. Everybody is saying our combination will be good."

The director is currently awaiting the release of his next, cop-action-drama "Simmba". The film features Ranveer Singh in the titular role.

Rohit has worked with stars like Shah Rukh Khan and Ajay Devgn previously and the director says Ranveer's energy is "totally different."

"I haven't seen a guy with so much positivity. A boy who is a superstar at this young age. His mentality, his thinking is still middle class. Hence he is media's favourite, the audience loves him,

"I've spent almost everyday with him for the last six months and you come to know if somebody's fake. He is genuinely what he is. What you see is what you get. By now the world knows about how hardworking, honest, emotional he is. He is the next biggest superstar."

Also starring Sara Ali Khan, "Simmba" is scheduled to release on December 28. The director says, though he is aware he has a loyal film audience, he is happy the way "Simmba" has shaped up.

"People feel my films are theirs. They have this ownership which works for me.. But I am happy with the film. How big it'll be, the numbers it'll do, that's secondary. What matters to me is if I was honest. I can't lie to myself.

"We have really worked hard on this one and given it our all. I make films every year and few films just fall on point, like 'Singham', 'Chennai Express' or 'Golmaal 3' and I know with 'Simmba' too this has happened. The beats are perfect."

## 'Elementary' to end with season 7 on CBS



**LOS ANGELES, DEC 18 (PTI):** "Elementary", CBS' modern-day Sherlock Holmes and Watson drama series, will end its run with its upcoming 13-episode seventh season.

The final season, which is set to air in 2019, will bring "Elementary" to its natural end.

According to Variety, the production on the show starring Lucy Liu and Jonny Lee Miller wrapped Friday.

"A lot of parties came together and talked about their positions on the show both in terms of business and in terms of creative and we all decided that this was an opportune time to say goodbye to a show that has been very, very good to us," CBS Entertainment President Kelly Kahl said. "Elementary" becomes the second CBS series to wrap its run in 2019, joining the comedy "The Big Bang Theory" (ending with season 12).

**ARIES:** Lather, rinse, repeat? As much as you dread routines, they're a "necessary evil" in the journey to mastery. Resist the temptation to toss aside a laborious task. Today's moon in Taurus helps you persevere and keep plugging away while a helpful trine to Saturn gives you major powers of concentration. One thing that might help with the process: breaking down the job into more manageable segments. You'll get the satisfaction of reaching mini-milestones, which will buoy your confidence along the way.

**TAURUS:** Today's moon in Taurus puts "me, myself and I" back at the top of the priority list. Are you running on an empty tank or verging on burnout? Take mini self-care breaks throughout the day. Get a massage or a mani-pedi, pick up sushi for lunch and catch up with a friend on the phone. With power-generator Saturn nudging the moon from your ninth house of travel, working from a remote location (like a chic hotel lobby or a cafe) could make you extra-productive, even if you can only squeeze in a couple hours out of office.

**GEMINI:** While you shouldn't make ex-

cuses for people's bad behavior, today, your ultra-high standards could cause some breakdowns. If someone in your world has ruffled your feathers, obsessing over the "how dare they!" drama won't improve the situation. Take the high road and initiate a dialogue. The offending party may be clueless that they've caused you so much grief.

**CANCER:** Collaboration will make everything easier today—if you choose the right co-players. The moon in your teamwork house is forming a helpful trine to stabilizer Saturn, which will encourage you to join forces for mutual gain. Considering an investment? Instead of draining your savings, explore creative ways to pool your resources with others on a similar mission.

**LEO:** Will you ascend the ladder faster on your own or with a partner in crime? Today's moon hovers in your career zone and forms a helpful trine to wise Saturn, encouraging you to assess a recent collaboration. Is teaming up the right trajectory for you? You might want to break

away from a joint venture, but before making any rash decisions, discuss whether there's room for renegotiation. If not, let your inner maverick take the wheel.

**VIRGO:** Today's moon in your expansive ninth house nudges you to try something new, which is fine as long as you don't throw out the baby with the bathwater. Steady Saturn is also in the picture, reminding you to be patient with a process that might be slower than you'd prefer. If you need a jolt of inspiration, you don't have to rush off to do something radical. Instead, seek wisdom from the masterful movers and shakers in your field.

**LIBRA:** When you compare, you despair, Libra, so careful not to measure yourself against other people's standards. With status-conscious Saturn getting in rhythm with the sensitive moon, you can't help but notice social dynamics and power structures. It's perfectly understandable that you might be feeling a little intimidated as you stretch out of your comfort zone.

**SCORPIO:** If an important partnership has felt more like a power struggle than

a source of support, today's steadfast moon-Saturn trine can help you restore balance. But first, look at your role in the matter. Have you been stewing inside instead of speaking up? You have a tendency to swing to extremes, giving 110 percent then withdrawing out of the blue when you feel slighted or unappreciated.

**SAGITTARIUS:** Don't even think of spewing excuses as to why you bailed on a commitment (with no advance notice) or failed to meet a deadline. While you may have every "good" reason in the world, your justifications won't reduce people's disappointment; in fact, they might aggravate them. The only way to get back in their good books is to make amends. Fortunately, today's steadfast moon-Saturn trine supports you in restoring personal integrity.

**CAPRICORN:** oBragging might not be your style, but save the humble pie for another day, Capricorn. With a charismatic moon in your fame sector beaming your ruler, masterful Saturn, in your sign, it's okay to play PR agent for yourself. Let

the world in on your latest achievements. Step into a leadership role that you know you can handle—and that you've earned!

**AQUARIUS:** Slow your pace under today's restorative meetup of the moon and steadfast Saturn. Your schedule has been packed to the brim with everything but R&R. Aquarius, you can only keep up this pace for so long before your body starts a full-on rebellion. Take a raincheck on tonight's plans and settle into the sofa with a stack of magazines or a season of your favorite show.

**PISCES:** No more biting your tongue, Pisces! Today's moon-Saturn trine can help you diplomatically air your feelings. You've been careful not to cross a line or offend anyone, perhaps at your own expense. By keeping mum, you might actually do more harm than good. It may not be easy to speak your truth, but your conscience will torture you if you don't. Just choose your words carefully so you don't end up the scapegoat in a "shoot the messenger" scenario. Is an exciting project or opportunity floating around?