



**AUTHORITIES REPORTEDLY FIND  
DRUGS AND GUNS ON PLANE THAT  
LIL WAYNE WAS ON (UPDATE)**  
*Page 08*

**THE NEUROSCIENCE OF  
CHRISTMAS CHEER 'EMOTION'**  
*Page 04*

**BABA RAM DASS,  
SPIRITUAL GURU AND LSD  
PROPONENT, DIES AT 88**  
*pg 08*



# SummitTIMES



Vol 04 | Issue 340 | Gangtok | Wednesday | 25 December 2019

ON TOP OF THE NEWS

RNI No. SIKENG/2016/69420

Pages 8 | ₹ 5

## Protests against CAA across Assam

**GUWAHATI, DEC 24 (PTI):**

Tens of thousands of people hit the streets across Assam on Tuesday at the call of AASU, Congress and several other groups to peacefully protest against the contentious Citizenship (Amendment) Act.

The largest gathering was in Dibrugarh, the hometown of Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal. A large number of people assembled at Chowkidinghee playground at a programme by All Assam Students' Union (AASU), which is spearheading the protests.

The town observed a total and spontaneous bandh to express solidarity and shops, banks and business establishments remained closed. Though schools and offices were open, attendance was very thin as people from all walks of life joined the anti-CAA protest.

Noted educationist and Sahitya Akademi awardee Nagen Saikia, who participated in the agitation, said "The MPs and MLAs should clear their stand whether they are representing Assam or Delhi." AASU General Secretary Lurinjyoti Gogoi demanded immediate withdrawal of the Act and warned the government not to suppress peoples' movement.

"We also demand immediate release of KMSS leader Akhil Gogoi. The way he was arrested is totally condemnable," he added.

Akhil Gogoi, an RTI activist and peasant leader, was arrested on December 12 in Jorhat district as a preventive measure amid violent protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act across the state. He was taken into custody to avoid any "untoward incident".

Another large rally was organised by AASU in Tezpur in which the gathering.

*turn to pg 02*

## Aho Shanti School celebrates platinum jubilee

**PAKYONG, 24 DEC [IPR]:** The Platinum Jubilee of the Aho Shanti Government Secondary School was celebrated at the school today with Chief Minister PS Tamang [Golay] as the chief guest.

In his address, the CM expressed happiness and applauded the school authorities for successfully conducting and organising the Platinum Jubilee event and for continuously providing education and discipline among the children for the past 75 years.

Addressing the students, he stated that school life was a golden period and the most important phase of one's life. He urged the students to pursue excellence and make the best out of their schooling.

The CM further mentioned that the present Government has introduced Chief Minister's Free Scholarship, CM UPSC coaching camp, and added that already around 70 aspirants were receiving coaching under the guidance of expert lecturers, scholars and academicians.

He added that the present Government will leave no stone unturned to help and



support meritorious and underprivileged students and appealed to them to make the best use from the various schemes initiated by the Government and added that the Government was creating a feasible environment to harness the talent pool in the state and ring the best out of the individuals in the state.

He further encouraged the teachers to educate students

on the lines of humanity and morality and added that education was the basis for successfully evolving humanity.

The CM also informed the gathering that the Government has initiated the construction of youth hostels in metropolitan cities of Bengaluru, Kolkata and New Delhi for the convenience of underprivileged students from Sikkim.

Furthermore, the CM as-

sured the gathering that the government would meet up all their demands and grievances on priority basis. Regarding the upcoming Sikkim Garib Awas Yojna, the CM specifically reiterated that only the most in need and genuine citizens will be given preference and allotments on priority basis.

Regarding the upgradation of Aho Shanti School to senior secondary level, the

CM directed the Headmaster to prepare a viable report and stated that the Government will look at all the possible options and do the needful at the earliest.

He also directed the concerned officials from engineering cell of line departments to prepare the proposal and overall estimate for the construction of a Multipurpose Auditorium hall and the extension of

school play ground, gallery and pavilion at Aho Shanti Secondary School.

The CM also appealed to all the interested ministers, party functionaries, officers, businessmen and entrepreneurs to come forward and adopt a school each and also villages for the overall development of schools and villages at subdivision and district level.

The CM further stated that the MP Local Area Development fund will be diverted towards rebuilding and reviving the education sector in the state.

He also highlighted the Sports & Youth Affairs Department's efforts to scout for sporting talent in the state further encouraging the students to focus equally on extracurricular activities along with their academics.

The CM also announced with pride that three students from Dentam will be representing India soon in the upcoming under-17 Women's Football World Cup along with two other students who have been selected through a talent hunt initiated by the

*turn to pg 02*

## SPCC condemns BJP Sikkim's statement against anti-CAA protests

**All hope now  
rests on ruling  
party: Basnet**

**SAGAR CHETTRI**

**GANGTOK, 24 DEC:**

Sikkim Pradesh Congress Committee president, Bharat Basnet, today condemned all allegations of Bharatiya Janata Party state-unit against political parties and organizations of the State for opposing Citizenship Amendment Act and National Register of Citizens.

Addressing a press conference today, Mr Basnet mentioned that not only political parties and organizations in Sikkim but the entire country is protesting against

the CAA and NRC.

"We will oppose and protest the CAA and NRC till we die. Congress Party will support all movements against the CAA and NRC," he said.

He also questioned the validity of the verbal assurance of the Union Home Minister regarding CAA in Sikkim in view of what happened in Jammu & Kashmir.

The result of Jharkhand election is the victory of secularism and the Constitution of the country and the countdown for BJP has been started, said Mr Basnet.

"The ruling party and 32 MLAs in the State Assembly will have to play the

*turn to pg 02*

## Namprikdang Namsoong festival to be a 'Confluence of Stories' this time

**SUMMIT REPORT**

**GANGTOK, 24 DEC:**

Namprikdang Namsoong Festival will be held from 02 to 04 January 2020 at Namprikdang ground in Dzongu, North Sikkim. This time the festival will be organized on the theme 'Confluence of Stories' with cultural, traditional, musical and other colorful events. The celebration committee has included story-telling sessions of folktales and stories mainly related to Namprikdang as a new attraction in the festival.

Addressing a press conference here today, celebration committee member, Lhakpa Lepcha mentioned that Namprikdang Namsoong



Festival is a popular and established festival of Sikkim. He mentioned that members of Lepcha community have been celebrating the festival since 1976 at Namprikdang in Dzongu and with time the

festival has become grander with series of cultural, traditional, musical and other events.

"We have been gathering together to celebrate the festival to keep our culture and tradition

alive and pass it on to the new generation. This is also an occasion to create awareness among young generation and to involve them in such cultural and traditional activities," he said.

*turn to pg 02*

## Is Sikkim Sharing Sovereignty with India?

**SUNIL PRADHAN**

In essence, mobilization of indigenous people in the Americas in the early 1990s created counter hegemonic spaces for marginalized section to envision autonomy exclusively from community perspectives. In doing so, indigenous communities advocated non-cooperation as techniques of proscribing top down agendas of modernizing settler nation states in the developed west. The communities' insistence of adopting this organic approach as a way forward for realizing autonomy meant reverting to community assembly of self government as the first line of indigenous governance. This posed obstructions for state from making incursions into community territorial spaces despite the state exercising significant monopoly over violence. Through these efforts communities were able to envision autonomous spaces as counter hegemonic spaces to offset top down governance of nation-state at local level through municipal laws. For the communities, this was a momentous opportunity for advocating self-governing rights through community customary institutions of relaying dialogue, dissent, and franchise entirely based on community subjectivities.

India's recent jumble of protests against

the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) particular in the North East highlights the plight of cultural communities inhabiting the region. The CAA as it emerges from local indigenous contexts fracture India's commitment of recognizing indigenous peoples' constitutional rights of self-determination without conceding its territorial sovereignty. So far, this constitutional principle has mandated India's democratic credentials for yielding concessions for differentiated citizenship rights for its numerous cultural communities of the region. So far, this constitutional parameter has revitalized convergence of communities' interests within the framework of 'liberal' Indian Constitution. This constitutional characteristic has bridged innovative political, economic, socio-cultural gaps between state and its diverse cultural communities.

Sikkim, initially tied to India through a 1950 bilateral treaty agreement stands out as a distinct state of the Union. In 1975 Sikkim Subjects (as nationals of Siikim), who went on to become Indian citizens retained its subject status (domicile as permanent resident) while becoming modern citizens of Indian democracy. The promise for autonomy was envisioned through the framework of shared sovereignty

between two entities. This testifies multiple trajectories of India's inauguration as sovereign nation-state. The insertion of Article 371 F principally determined a sense of belonging, identity and private attachments for legal descendants of Sikkim Subjects. For Sikkim Subjects, the becoming and being Indian citizen actualized Sikkimese account and aspirations for human equality with individual as the basic unit of citizenship practice. While this Indian project made way for fresh thoughts on equality with the procedural progression of monarchical subject to individual citizen of Indian democracy. Equality has figured ass the basic tenet of fundamental rights under the Indian Constitution promised to its citizens. Additionally, the Indian Constitution while implementing a system of inclusion through citizenship regime also made exceptions under this project. As it appears from 1973 May Agreement, signed between the Chogyal, political parties and Government of India, Sikkim's linear nationhood in India remains mediated by historical circumstances first as an Associate state and full fledged state of the Union in 1975.

Clause K under Article 371 F of the Indian Constitution which allows for the persever-

ance of Kingdom of Sikkim's legal and customary laws (OLD LAW) is therefore analogous provisions as in 370 (1) (b) meant for erstwhile J&K which override application of parliamentary laws in the state. The 1973 May Agreement signed between India, ruler of Sikkim and the political parties actually drew road map for Sikkim's governance on the basis of popular government. As a result, the Government of Sikkim Act, 1974, the Representation of Sikkim Subject Act, 1974, Sikkim's central bank—State Bank of Sikkim and bilateral treaty between India and Sikkim in 1950 remains safely preserved under clause k of Article 371 F as Sikkim's Old Law. This analogous provision under clause k forms a blueprint of recognizing Sikkim's sovereign status in India. The Government of Sikkim Act, 1974 the Constitution of Sikkim and State Bank of Sikkim—central bank of Sikkim prevents application of parliamentary laws in Sikkim. State Bank of Sikkim is the only bank in India which functions independently of Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) functional operation. SBS mediates Sikkim's fiscal autonomy.

Recently, when a retired honourable judge of the Supreme Court

*turn to pg 02*

## Youth organisations join hands against CAA, NRC

**NEW DELHI, DEC 24 (PTI):**

Over 70 student and youth organisations across the country joined hands on Tuesday under an umbrella body to intensify the ongoing protest against the contentious citizenship law and the proposed nationwide NRC and updating of the National Population Register (NPR).

On New Year's Day, members of the National Young India Co-ordination and Campaign and those supporting the movement will take a pledge to save the Constitution and have also coined a slogan: "New Year's Resolution -- Defend Constitution".

Addressing a press conference here, they demanded withdrawal of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act before the upcoming 71st Republic Day.

"We had over 50 organisations supporting us when we did the press release for the launch of National Young India Co-ordination and Campaign. Now the number is 70 and counting," said N Sai Balaji, member of the Young India National Coordination Committee (YINCC).

"Our purpose is to develop the coordination between protesting students/organisations/unions on a national scale and enhance its scope and impact," the former Jawaharlal Nehru University students' union president said.

*turn to pg 02*



## ATMA opens farm school at Duga



**NITESH R PRADHAN  
DUGA, 24 DEC:**

A farm school was opened by ATMA (Agriculture Technology Management Agency) at the farm of Karma Sonam Bhutia at Sumin Linzey under Duga block in the presence of the ward panchayat, Karma Chopel N Bhutia and about 28 farmers of the surrounding area.

The farm school is based on organic integrated farming system and its implementation. The program was conducted by the block technology manager ATMA Duga block along with

assistant technology manager Duga block.

Along with them present were Darshan Upreti [Block Technology Manager], Darshan Upreti [Assistant Technology Manager], Tik Bahadur Gurung, field assistants and marketing assistants of Sumin Linzey GPU.

The farmers were made aware of the Kisan call centre helpline bearing the number 18001801551 which they could contact to resolve their problems through telephonic conversation, informed BTM, Darshan Upreti.

### SPCC condemns...

main role in stopping CAA and NRC from being extended to Sikkim otherwise the ruling party should invite all political parties and stakeholders to discuss the matter," Mr Basnet expressed.

He added that the Congress Party gave Article 371F to Sikkim and it is the only safeguard of Sikkim.

### Namprikdang...

Mr Lepcha appealed to the people of the State to come and be a part of the celebration.

Another member of the celebration committee, Chewang Rinchen Lepcha mentioned that the celebration committee has tried to infuse new idea and concept in the celebration this time. Speaking on the theme, he said that story-telling sessions will be another highlight of the celebration this time.

"This is a platform for people to share their stories and folktales especially related to Namprikdang. This is the first step towards collecting these folktales and stories and to document it for coming generation," he said. He mentioned that the logo of the festival also signifies the idea of telling stories.

Likewise, another member of the celebration committee, Phurba Doma Lepcha mentioned that the three-day festival will be full of traditional, cultural and musical events. She added that the festival will have performance by local bands and artists, traditional games, traditional attire fashion show and other events along with traditional food stalls and DJ Night.

The festival will also have experience sharing sessions by personalities of different fields to encourage youngsters, she added.

### Is Sikkim...

in his personal and individual capacity opined (widely circulated in social media sites) that CAA is a parliamentary law applicable in Sikkim cited absence of analogous provision for Sikkim as in Article 370 (1) (b) meant for erstwhile J&K. This takes us to rescind recent opinion of the retired honourable judge in favour of better clarity by evoking former Chief Justice of India, Justice Mohammad Hidayatullah's opinion on Sikkim's sovereign status. He maintained that India's action in Sikkim could have no effect of change to Sikkim's sovereign status as an international personality. The constitutional amendments legislated to ensure Sikkim's inclusion in India is a matter fact as an imperative of municipal (domestic) law with no modification on Sikkim's status in international law. From the perspectives of international law, Sikkim continues to be India's protectorate state since bilateral treaty had been contemplated between two or more sovereign entities. Hence, the 1950 treaty now preserved under clause K of Article 371 F (Old Law) maintains Sikkim's distinct international personality but sovereignty remains shared. Evidently, Sikkim Subject Regulation, 1961 continues to be a register of Indian citizens of Sikkimese origin. The nationwide exercise of National Register for Citizens (NRC) as proclaimed is farce as a far Sikkim is concerned. As for CAA is concerned, the legal status of Sikkim Subject maintained by enforcing COI as the basis of Sikkim Subject Certificate is used for dual purposes for indicating nationality (former Sikkimese nationals) and domicile (relationship of an individual as a permanent resident with a territory). The implementation of CAA in Sikkim means dilution of the legal status of Sikkim Subject and the notion of shared sovereignty.

India's track record of shared sovereignty goes back to the era of nawabs and maharajas when sharing sovereignty was as a result of emergent rivalries between divergent sub-continental territories and kingdoms. Over a period of time, the East India Company not only mastered the political process of sharing sovereignty but also imposed its rule over petty rulers. The British consolidation followed by subsequent colonial acts such as Indian Council Act, 1861, Morley-Minto reforms, Montague-Chelmsford Reforms, GOI Act, 1935 remains a precursor of shared sovereignty in India.

Many provisions of the GOI Act, 1935 which guid-

## IPR Minister attends Annual Function at Berfok

**GYALSHING, 24 DEC (IPR):** Government School Najoor Berfok (W) celebrated its Annual Function at the School auditorium, today.

Minister-cum-MLA of Gyalshing Bermiok constituency, Lok Nath Sharma attended the function as the chief guest.

Addressing the Annual Function, Minister Sharma called for joint responsibility and co-operation between the Teachers, Students and Parents to ensure improved career building of the students and better education system in the Government Schools. Teachers of the Government Schools are well trained and qualified while the schools still need to develop English speaking environment to produce more efficient and capable students to clear competitive exams.

The government shall implement new education policy to reform the education system, he added. Minister informed that the state government will begin construction of much awaited house under Garib Awas Yojana to the most deserving beneficiaries and house upgradation at the earliest. He also underlined various ongoing developmental activities within Gyalshing Bermiok constituency and also shared the plannings for the mega project of Establishment



of Animal Husbandry University, Orchidarium, New Road connectivity, Establishment of Public Ground, Residential School and other developmental works for sustainable growth of the region.

He also informed that the State Government under the leadership of the Chief Minister, PS Tamang is working tirelessly round the clock for the welfare of the people.

Speaking in the context of Model Village Chingthang Minister said that the state government has already distributed various facilities of more than Rs 50 lakh and further the GPU will receive more benefits of every schemes and programmes.

He spoke on the Integrated Process Unit of Sikkim IFFCO Organic Limited and urged farmers to produce surplus Turmeric, Buckwheat, Ginger and Cardamom and assured to enhance farmers income manifold by providing global market with the tag of Green Economy: Sikkim Himalaya for their

processed products after its establishment.

He also informed that the farmers will receive financial assistance of Rs. 6000 under PM Kriishi Samman Nidhi Yojana and State Government will provide financial incentives to the Milk Producers from the next financial year.

Dy Director, Tshering Panzo Sherpa expressed his happiness on the notable improvement shown by the school in different fields and further congratulated entire school family for their impressive yearlong performances. He also expressed concern over decreasing ratio in enrolment in the school advised to mitigate school drop-out rate in general. He also enlightened parents on the fundamental rights of education to their children.

Headmaster, DP Sharma presented School Annual Report and elaborated various initiatives and activities accomplished by the School

round the year. Later the activities were highlighted through power point presentation. A short film "Padhega India Tabhi Toh Badhega India" was also presented.

On the occasion School Founding Member, Garjama Gurung and Bal Bdr Gurung were also honoured and felicitated for their contributions in school establishment.

Minister also handed over the annual mark-sheet of the top scoring students.

The programme also saw colourful cultural performances of various communities presented by the students.

The programme also had the presence of Deputy Director Education, Dentam Sub Division, Tshering Panzo Sherpa; Assistant Director Martam BAC, KC Namgyal, Vice Principal of Yangsum Sr Sec School, Dilip Kr Rai, Coordinator Martam BAC, JB Basnett, Founding members of School, teachers, students, parents and other locals.

## Lingi Payong School holds result distribution ceremony

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 24 DEC:**

Lingi Payong Secondary School organised its felicitation cum result distribution ceremony on Tuesday. The programme was attended by SMC Chairperson, Yogesh Bhandari as chief guest along with other Office Bearers of GPU, SMC members, parents and guardians along with students and teachers.

The programme began with celebration

of Pre-Christmas and Pre-Namsong by the students. Former Head Lepcha Teacher of Lingee SSS, NT Lepcha was the guest for the Namsong celebration.

A carol team from Nagaland who were on a visit to the village also attended the programme and performed in front of the audience along with the students of the school.

The School family felicitated Lingmoo Payong GPU for providing

support to the school in developing infrastructure. Speaking on the occasion, Yogesh Bhandari thanked the school family and assured his full support to the school in future too.

Prakash Subba defeated Manoj Gautam to win the House Badminton tournament which was sponsored by S Singh.

In the second half of the day, result distribution and felicitation of

students was organised in which parents of topper students felicitated their wards and handed over the certificate, medals and trophies.

Bidhya Koirala was adjudged as the Student of the year 2019. SMC member, Shiva Nath Chapagai also spoke on the occasion and expressed his happiness over the performance of the school. The programme was hosted by CR Khatiwara and Arjun Koirala.

### Youth organisations...

The organisation supporting the movement includes FTII students' union, Pune; Bhil Pradesh Vidhyarthi Morcha, Rajasthan; Ashoka University student government, Delhi; Democratic Students Organisation, Punjab; Bhim Army, All Adivasi Assam students' union and IIT Gandhinagar students among others.

YINCC member Kawalpreet Kaur underlined that their movement would continue till the Centre rolled back the CAA and the National Register of Citizens (NRC).

"We should all remember that it was the student community, be it Jamia Millia Islamia or Aligarh Muslim University, that came out first to protest against the CAA and NRC," Kaur said.

"And now we all coming together today to tell the government that we have and we will always stand for country's Constitution and its secularism," she added.

### Protests against...

vowed to continue the agitation till the Act is repealed.

"We do not understand their (BJP government at the Centre) peculiar formula. One hand they say safeguarding language, culture, identity and land of Assamese people, on the other hand they want to bring illegal Bangladeshis through the CAA," AASU chief adviser Samujjal Kumar Bhattacharya said at the rally.

Popular singer Zubeen Garg said as all political parties in Assam have betrayed the state so people should think about "alternate ways to grab the power" in future. A huge gathering was reported from Golaghat town also.

The Congress, which kicked off a 800 km 'padyatra' from Sadiya to Dhubri on Sunday, reached Narkatiya with thousands of people taking part in it.

Peaceful protest continued across all the districts in Brahmaputra valley.

Assam witnessed one of the worst violent protests by the public in its history since December 9.

After the Rajya Sabha passed the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill on December 11, the state erupted in uncontrolled protests in which agitators engaged in pitched battle in almost every major city or town.

Five persons had lost their lives during the protest, including four in firing by security forces.

The curfew, which was imposed to control the situation, has been lifted from several cities and relaxed in the rest with the return to normalcy

### Aho Shanti...

Sports & Youth Affairs Department to represent India under the Khelo India initiative.

He added that the CM's chair is there to help and serve the public and stated that the CMO will always work to provide necessary support and assistance to the needy and underprivileged students.

The CM also announced that all government employees will soon be able to avail medical insurance up to Rs 10 lakh and added that around one lakh families will be covered under the scheme initiated by the State Government.

He further stated that the teachers should be given much needed respect and importance for their immense contribution towards the society and state at large.

Lastly, he extended warm greeting on the occasion of Christmas, Lossong, Namsong, Tamu Lochar and the New Year to the people of the state.

Also present for the celebration were PHE Minister Bhim Hang Subba, are MLA Em Prasad who is also the chief patron of the platinum jubilee celebration committee, Confidential Secretary to CM Bikash Basnett, school principals, senior officials from line departments, students, teachers and other staff members from Aho Shanti school.

In his welcome address, Principal Issac Lepcha presented a brief report on the school and highlighted the achievements of the school in various sectors over the last 75 years and thanked the teaching and non teaching staffs for their dedication and persistent efforts.

The area MLA also extended his warm welcome and expressed his gratitude to CM on attending the Platinum Jubilee celebrations. The area MLA placed forth the demands and grievances of his constituency before the CM, stressing on the need for maintenance of the Aho Shanti school ground, its extension and repair of the roads on priority basis.

Earlier, the CM distributed prizes to the participating students and felicitated the land donors, teachers and school authorities for their contributions toward the establishment of the Aho Shanti School.

## ~ SummitTIMES ~ CLASSIFIEDS

### GENERAL LAND FOR SALE

Roadside plots for sale at Adampool, Ranipool-Rumtek highway.

**For details contact: 9083826462**

### FLAT FOR RENT/LEASE

Fully furnished 3BHK flat available for rent/lease at Church Road near DPH. Roadside and five minutes walking distance from MG Marg.

**For more details: 9083826462 /9832556698**

### GENERAL LAND FOR SALE

General land 30X40 (3 Plots) available for sale at Tadong 6th Mile next to Harka Maya College.

Flat Land no cutting required. Price 30 Lakhs (negotiable).

**Contact: 9800201335**

### LAND FOR SALE

A land measuring an area for 50x32 1/2 at Roadside just below housing colony is for sale. It is just a one minute walking distance from Namchi bazaar taxi stand. Interested party may contact 9593373387 and 9434406761

*[the writer is Assistant Professor, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi]*



## Chief Minister's Christmas greetings

**GANGTOK, 24 DEC (IPR):** Chief Minister, Prem Singh Tamang has extended his warm greetings and best wishes to the people of Sikkim on the occasion of Christmas.

The festival of Christmas marks the birthday of Lord Jesus Christ and is celebrated with merriment and joy. Jesus Christ is the very personification of Divinity who brought transformation to people's life. His message was revolutionizing, simple yet profound.

On this joyful occasion, The Chief Minister conveyed his heartiest greetings and best wishes to all our Christian brothers and sisters and appeal to the people of Sikkim to follow the preaching of Lord Jesus to spread love and promote brotherhood.

His teachings go beyond all barriers and his everlasting message of love, mercy and compassion holds true for all. Let us all celebrate the birth of Christ, the messenger of peace by co-existing in harmony and by following his values. May this auspicious festival of Christmas be a moment of hope and happiness as well as an opportunity to celebrate the spirit of sharing and caring.

## Governor's greetings for Kagyed Dance

**SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 24 DEC:** On the occasion of Kagyed Dance, Governor of Sikkim, Ganga Prasad has extended warm greetings and good wishes to the people of Sikkim, a Raj Bhavan release informs.

In his message the Governor has said, "This traditional Sikkimese Cham performed in monasteries depicts the destruction of evil forces and seek peace, prosperity and protection for Sikkimese people from the guardian deities.

May this auspicious occasion reinforce the harmony and brotherhood among all Sikkimese and bring peace, progress and happiness for all."

## Singtam celebrates Christmas

**YOGEN THATAL, Gangtok, 24 Dec:** Singtam witnessed Searly Christmas celebration with digital light show along with gathering of hundreds of Christians today.

The celebration programme was organized by United Christian Fellowship, Singtam, wherein all the nearby churches were invited for the grand celebration.

Dance and songs (solo and group) along with prayers were also part of today's program which was held near the Singtam police station.

# Governor meets Navey Shotak Panchayats

**SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 24 DEC:**

Governor of Sikkim, Ganga Prasad, today granted audience to Gram and Zilla Panchayat members and public of Navey Shotak Gram Panchayat Unit in East Sikkim at Raj Bhavan. He also distributed blankets to 60 needy elders from five wards of the GPU, a press release informs.

Conveying his greetings for Losoong, Namsoong and New Year 2020, the Governor urged the Panchayat representatives and elders to focus on education and skill development of their children for better employability and productivity.

## SBS hands over dividend to CM



**GANGTOK, 24 DEC (IPR):** Chairman SBS, DB Gurung accompanied by Secretary cum MD, HK Chettri, CGM, P. Wangdi Bhutia and GM (L/R), SR Karki called on the Chief Minister, PS Tamang at Samman Bhawan, Gangtok, today.

During the meeting, Chairman SBS presented the dividend cheque to-

wards the interim dividend on the share of Government of Sikkim for the financial year 2018-19.

The Chief Minister thanked the SBS team led by the Chairman, DB Gurung, applauded their dedication and encouraged the officials to work hard and to achieve more outstanding outcome.

## Capacity Building of SHGs on Mushroom cultivation



**SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 24 DEC:**

A day-long Capacity Building of SHGs-cum-Training on Oyster Mushroom cultivation was held at Barbing under Rey Mindu GPU, Ranka Block today for farmers and members of Self Help Groups of the area, a press release informs.

The programme organized by ATMA [East], Agriculture Department was co-ordinated by BTM, Geeta Sharma and was attended by Horticulture Inspector, Sangay Bhutia and ATM, Laten

Tshering Bhutia as the resource persons.

During the programme, 20 farmers including members of the Nine Star SHG of Barbing Chubathang were trained on cultivation, harvesting and marketing of the mushroom. The resource persons apprised the farmers that mushroom cultivation will give well economic benefits but the farmers should give their utmost dedications.

VLW, Ranka, Amrita Rai along with OFAs and MAs also attended the programme.



ity and productivity.

He also asked the Panchayat functionaries to take maximum advantage of the programs of Central and State Government and

ensure the benefit reach the intended person.

The Governor further asked the Panchayat representatives to take lead in transforming rural

economy through organic farming, dairy farming cottage industries and handicrafts so that the GPU develop into an Aadarsh GPU in near future.

## Governor's Christmas greetings

**SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 24 DEC:**

On the joyous occasion of Christmas, Governor of Sikkim, Ganga Prasad has extended warm greetings and good wishes to the people of Sikkim.

The Governor has said, "Christmas being the joyous occasion commemorating the birth of Jesus Christ is time to celebrate and rejoice with relatives and friends.

The occasion reminds us the life and teachings of Jesus Christ and how it has shaped the destiny of mankind over centuries. It also reminds us of the love and compassion of Jesus Christ towards mankind.

May the ideals of Jesus Christ show us the way of living and continue to spread the message of love, affection, peace and harmony."

## National Consumers Day celebrated in North

**MANGAN, 24 DEC (IPR):** Minister for Roads & Bridges, Samdup Lepcha attended the program on National Consumers Day, 2019 here at the conference hall, North District, Zilla Panchayat Bhawan, North Sikkim, today.

The programme is being organized by the Department of Food & Civil Supplies (North).

During the programme, the participants were made aware about Consumer Protection Act 2019, National Food Security Act 2013 and other related issues by the Resource Person, Tshering Wongyal Bhutia, learned Advocate and Palden N Lachungpa, DCSO/N, Food & Civil Supplies Department.

Minister Samdup in his short speech appreciated the resource person for their interesting and informative presentation and complimented the staff of food and civil supplies of north district for discharging their duty with full dedication.

Talking on rights and duties of consumer, Minister asked the shopkeeper to provide an authentic receipt along with sold goods and vice-versa, on the other side he also directed to the concerned government

official to make timely inspection of shops as to protect the consumer against unfair trade practices by checking quality, quantity, potency, purity, standard and price of goods.

Lastly, Minister Samdup urged to the Panchayats and ULBs to work in tandem with government for the Development of Sikkim.

Zilla Adhakshya, Smt Lepcha stated that Panchayat members a big role on making an individual aware of his/her consumer rights and duties thus she urged the house to imbibe information as explained by the resource person and disseminate the same among masses. Further, she asked the panchayat members to choose genuine and needy household while identifying any Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) member.

DC/N, Mr Kaleon asked the shopkeeper to provide proper cash memo to the consumers and other hand all consumers to seek receipt of any purchased items. He also opined that there is need to augment digital knowledge among the masses of the district as to know the procedures of banking and taxation.

# Second silver for Vivek Yonzone in National Philatelic Exhibition

**SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 24 DEC:**

For the second consecutive year, Vivek Yonzone from Singamari, Darjeeling, won a silver medal at National Philatelic Exhibition at World Trade Centre, Mumbai, on 22 Dec, a press release informs. INPEX 2019 was organized by the Philatelic Congress of India from 18-22 Dec, 2019.

Mr Yonzone is the general secretary of ALPINE Philatelic and Numismatic Society. He had displayed five frame exhibits on Element of Music. His exhibition had



both Indian and foreign materials on music. He is also a member of Sikkim Philatelic and Numismatic Society.

The society was represented at the exhibition by Surya Kanta Biswas,

Patron from Murshidabad and Vivek Yonzone from Singamari, Darjeeling.

The event witnessed a display of more than 500 frames of Philatelic materials with competition on many groups like Traditional Philately, Postal History, Indian Pre and Post-Independence Stamps, Thematic Philately and others.

Through this press release, president, ALPINE Philatelic and Numismatic Society, Sushil Karthok, has congratulated Vivek Yonzone for bringing recognition to Darjeeling Philately at the national level.

## Forest Minister flags off new forest fire tender

**GANGTOK, 24 DEC (IPR):** Minister of Forest & Environment, Karma Loday Bhutia flagged off a forest fire tender today at the Forest Secretariat premises in Deorali in the presence of Principal Secretary cum Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, ML Srivastava, Project Director, Sikkim Biodiversity Conservation & Forest Management Project, NW Tamang, CCFs, CFs and other sectoral heads of the department.

It may be mentioned here, the new forest fire tender vehicle procured under JICA assisted SBFP has been allotted to South Territorial sector on a pilot basis keeping in view the frequent reports of forest fire cases in South district.

Minister, Karma Loday Bhutia, in his address, said that the JICA



funded fire tender vehicle will be provided to all four districts of the State phase-wise in order to augment field management during forest fire season. He added that since cases of forest fires are reported mostly in South district during dry winter season, the vehicle has been handed over to the district on a priority basis.

He stated that the utility vehicle provided

will facilitate the department to attend to reports of forest fires immediately in a shorter period of time on narrow roads in remote forest areas. He further informed that the vehicle will also be utilized for watering avenue plantation in dry areas.

The Forest Minister handed over the documents along with the keys of the vehicle to Assistant Conservator of Forests (T), South, TT Lepcha.

## Aditya Golay adopts Chakung School



**SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 24 DEC:**

Chakung Senior Secondary School celebrated its annual day with zest and vigor. MLA Soreng-Chakung constituency, Aditya Golay was the chief guest of the day while Political Secretary to CM, Jacob Khaling, former Deputy CM, PT Luksom officials, HODs, Teachers, Students & Parents

were also present.

National awardee from Chakung School were SL Gurung, Lt KB Gurung, Lt GB Gurung were felicitated during the programme. Similarly, Yash Palzen Gurung who had established school library was awarded during the ceremony. Lastly, mountain biker, Asim Sharma, was also felicitated.

Addressing the occasion, Aditya Golay stressed that most of the teachers are willing to work in and around urban areas which is affecting education in rural areas.

Further, Mr. Golay decided to adopt Chakung School. The programme ended with distribution of trophies and certificates.

## To book ad-space, contact SummitTIMES at

**GANGTOK:** For circulation details Contact: (Sandeep) 9734152451 & for Advertisement booking at 9933427505 or at office no 03592 208698. Mail us at advertise@summittimes.com  
**SILIGURI:** Mr. Mani Rai, M/s. Space Ads, B.R. Ambekar Building, Room No.7, 1st floor, Opp. Ganga Hotel, Hill Cart Road, Siliguri - 03. Ph. 9832318644/ 9800682989/ 9153035100 or mail at mani\_siliguri@yahoo.co.in.  
**KOLKATA OFFICE:** Irshad Ali/ Inteevaz. Synapse, 6, Madan Street, Mezzine - 2, 2nd floor, Kolkata - 700072. Ph. 033-22124348/ fax 033-22124337/ mob. 9830547774/ 983108397. E-mail: contact.synapse@gmail.com/ irshad\_ali123@rediffmail.com



## SIKKIM POLICE

### NOTICE INVITING TENDER

SIKKIM POLICE invites bids from eligible vendors for the RFP "Tender for purchase of Hardware, Software, Tools and setting up of Cyber Forensic Training Lab in Sikkim Police under CCPWC scheme". Total estimated cost of the above item is 148.00 lakhs (Rs One Hundred Forty Eighty Lakhs). Interested bidders may visit and download RFP comprising of details from https://www.sikkimpolice.nic.in or https://www.sikkim.gov.in. The submission of bids starts from 26/12/2019 and last date of submission is 24/01/2020.

**R.O. 311/IPR/Pub/Classi.19-20 dt. 24.12.2019**

	ALTO (P)	ALTO K10 (P)	SWIFT (P)	SWIFT (D)	VITARA BREZZA (D)	DEZIRE (P)	DEZIRE (D)	CELERIO (P)	RECCO (D) (SEATER)
CONSUMER OFFER	₹14,000	₹15,000	₹15,000	₹15,000 + 5% Warranty	₹40,000 + 5% Warranty	₹15,000	₹15,000 + 5% Warranty	₹10,000	₹15,000
EXCHANGE OFFER	₹15,000	₹15,000	₹15,000	₹15,000	₹15,000	₹15,000	₹15,000	₹15,000	₹15,000
CORPORATE OFFER	₹15,000	₹15,000	₹15,000	₹15,000	₹15,000	₹15,000	₹15,000	₹15,000	₹15,000
TOTAL SAVINGS as %	₹14,000	₹15,000	₹15,000	₹15,000	₹40,000	₹15,000	₹15,000	₹10,000	₹15,000

ALTO ALTO K10 SWIFT BREZZA DZIRE CELERIO RECCO

E-BOOK TODAY AT WWW.MARUTISUZUKI.COM OR VISIT YOUR NEAREST MARUTI SUZUKI DEALERSHIP

## Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year 2020 in advance

From Intel Motors Pvt. Ltd. (Maruti authorized Sales-Service Department) one and only in Sikkim

**ENTEL MOTORS (P) LTD.**  
GANGTOK | JORETHANG | MANGAN

JUST DIAL: 9933009930/ 9933009943/9933009926  
Email: entelb901@yahoo.com

**HAVE A STORY TO SHARE?**

email us: news@summittimes.com



## Empowered Women

*Since they vote more, shouldn't they be listened to more as well?*

The 50/50 power-sharing arrangement between the sexes has been instituted in Sikkim at the panchayat and urban local body levels, with even the top posts being equally apportioned between the men and women. Just as the 50% seat reservation for women in Sikkim panchayats marked a new milestone for rural empowerment in Sikkim, so does their equal representation at the top panchayat level. While the verdict is still awaited on how effectively this mandated by law empowerment has been leveraged, what is significant is that women in Sikkim have consistently embraced their stake in Sikkim, an involvement they have proven with how enthusiastically they have turned out to vote.

By turning out to vote in larger proportions than men, Sikkim's ladies have displayed that they are keen to have a larger stake in governance and policy-making. Election 2014 was for the second consecutive election that women voters outperformed men in Sikkim. In 2009, against an 81.46% male voter turnout, Sikkim's women posted 82.77%. In 2014, 81.40% of the women voters exercised their franchise to help decide the government for the last term against 80.57% male voters.

This is one statistic that should make every Sikkimese sit up and take notice because make no mistake, stepping out, braving the heat and the rain later in the evening to vote, is a sign of empowerment. What is more, this is no flash in the pan episode, but appears to be a process which has sustained and grown over the past decade and a half. In Elections 1999, women voter turnout was five percentage points lower than men [79.10% versus 84.36%], and as women's empowerment efforts progressed in earnest [and the SDF government deserves credit for it], in Elections 2004, male and female voter turnout were almost level – 77.01% against 77.99%. As already mentioned, the women turned the tables on male voters in 2009, and have retained the bragging rights for the last election as well. Even as the women voters rank higher in percentage turn-out, they are not very far behind when it comes to absolute numbers either. Against a total of 1,53,425 men who voted in Sikkim in 2014, slightly over 1.46 lakh ladies pressed the EVM buttons.

The numbers prove the heightened involvement with which women in Sikkim have taken to participatory democracy.

Generalisations, admittedly, are by nature inaccurate and unscientific tools to draw conclusions, but if one were to surmise on what factors led to more women voting in Sikkim, there would be a multitude of factors, but one of the most substantial motivators must have been the increased attention being paid to women in Sikkim which convinced them that they had a stake in governance and the need to sustain it. Factors such as improving literacy, increased representation [in panchayat and urban bodies] and a slew of other women-centric interventions contribute to this increased voter turn-out, and even as one frowns at sops and quotas, these must be working towards empowerment because that is what the data is posting. This is perhaps also a trend whose time has come, and one which would automatically require political planners to position there stands with improved consideration of women interests. Because women's participation in voting is on the rise, their mandate will require delivery more than rhetoric. There are however still many politicians, who, even if they have shed overt male chauvinism, remain insensitive towards women's issues and some have even displayed boorish poor taste in the recent past. For anyone with any serious political ambitions, gender sensitivity will be a good investment to make. While this used to be consciously included in the activities of most political outfits till a few years back, it has all but vanished from political deliberations in post-election Sikkim. The sooner the wannabe leaders recognise the due rights and aspirations of women, the better it will be for their political futures.

Sikkimese women have established that henceforth, their endorsement will be required by every aspirant and every candidate, in every constituency in Sikkim. This power cannot be ignored because while women voters are in majority in five assembly constituencies, in actual turnout [not just percentage points] they outnumbered male voters in as many as nine Assembly constituencies in 2014. Even the most basic political calculation will thus recommend that political parties in Sikkim allow more women into representative politics roles, in positions which are more than just token. The parties, for their own survival, need to appreciate the power that women now wield in Sikkim and this means that women's issues can no longer be sidestepped. Political power is no longer possible without catering to the women voters, and given the centuries of prejudice and offensively male-centric system that has been imposed on women, one hopes that this vote-bank stands separate from the caste and community divisions that short-sighted politicians tend to carve out.

### WRITE US:

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

Mail us at: [news@summittimes.com](mailto:news@summittimes.com)

# The Neuroscience of Christmas Cheer 'Emotion'

OLLY ROBERTSON  
*theconversation.com*

It is, for many of us, the most wonderful time of the year. "Christmas cheer" is that thing which is often referred to by those who believe December really is the season to be jolly. It's that feeling of joy, warmth and nostalgia people feel when the jingle bells start jingling. But what is the science behind it?

Evidence of Christmas cheer inside the brain was found during a study run at the University of Denmark in 2015. Twenty people were shown images with either a Christmas or non-Christmas theme while having their brain monitored in a functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) machine. The fMRI machine highlights parts of the brain when there is an increase or decrease in activity in that region. And when there was an increase of activity for this study, that region lit up like ... well, a Christmas tree.

When the participants saw photographs of Christmas themed images, such as mince pies, a network of brain regions lit up, leading the researchers to conclude that they had found the hub of Christmas cheer inside the human brain. What the activation in brain regions actually meant, the researchers couldn't say. One theory was that that network in the brain could be related to memories or spirituality. The scientific understanding of our internal experiences is changing and it now seems likely that Christmas cheer may be an emotion in itself.

### WHAT IS AN EMOTION?

Many scientists used to think that emotions were pre-programmed reactions, hardwired into human brains. According to the traditional view, when you see Christmas TV adverts, some dedicated part of you (a kind of "happiness circuit") leaps into action to bring you Christmas cheer.

The happiness circuit was thought to be a single part of the brain responsible for making you feel that warmth in your chest, making your heart beat quickly with joy and forming an expression of happiness on your face – an expression thought to be universal across peoples and cultures.

According to the traditional view, humans have a small set of core emotions, like fear and happiness. Each of these emotions has its own dedicated brain region which creates changes in physiology and behaviour – changes which are similar (if not the same) across different instances of the same

emotion. For example, it was thought that the happiness you feel when you see a puppy would activate the same neural and physiological systems as the happiness you feel when you spend time with your friends. And so, when activated, the happiness circuit should light up in the fMRI machine. The traditional view feels intuitive. But, in the 100 years science has been studying emotion, scientists have never been able to find a specific happiness circuit or a circuit relating to any emotion.

When it comes to Christmas cheer, this is likely the reason why there was no specific neural path found in the fMRI data. Rather, the general network of neural activation associated with Christmas cheer points to a more nuanced understanding of emotions.

### EMOTION ON DEMAND

The contemporary view says that emotions are the brain summing up three sources of information to create an on-demand experience. The brain combines information about your physiological state, environment and personal experiences to form a subjective feeling inside you. According to the contemporary view, when you see Christmas TV adverts, you feel positive because you associate good things with Christmas, your heart beats quicker because some part of you recognises the excitement the advert evoked in you as a child and you express the feeling physically, usually through facial expressions.

All of these things culminate as a feeling. A feeling which we label and categorise as an emotion. Throughout our lives we learn to label categories of emotions. This labelling is why we use the same word to describe the terror felt heading on to a rollercoaster and the terror associated with being in a car accident, despite the fact that these experiences feel completely different.

But because the brain constructs an emotion on-demand using a wide range of brain regions, there is no neural signature or physiological blueprint with which to record or measure the experience. Many different parts of the brain work together to create an emotion depending on what's going on around and inside you. This is why every experience of an emotion – even the same emotion – will look different in an fMRI scanner. When it comes to emotions, brain activation isn't predictable because each emotion is formed from different, unpredictable information and contexts.

At Christmas time, each person has associations with songs, foods and activities that help them use the label "Christmas cheer" to categorise the experience. These associations are totally unique to each person. This is why your festive family traditions don't always seem to translate when you introduce them to your friends or your significant other.

But Christmas cheer can be shared with others through rituals (such as decorating the tree) and language (through things like carol singing) to cement those emotion categories. Every time we encounter items or ideas that we relate to over Christmas because of our past, our brains create the emotion of Christmas cheer.

### BAH HUMBUG SYNDROME

But, of course, some people are like Ebenezer Scrooge and just want to get through the holidays. A lack of Christmas cheer has anecdotally been called "bah humbug" syndrome. In the same way as Christmas cheer, "bah humbug" can be seen as an emotion. Perhaps it's the dread of family politics or the tight, pounding chest people feel thinking about the cost of Christmas. But the brain combines these sources of information to create an emotion. So if you've had more negative experiences associated with Christmas, you are more likely to feel bah humbug than cheer.

Regardless of whether you tend to feel more of the Christmas cheer or the bah humbug emotion, there is a slither of magic in these festive emotions. In every waking moment, your brain is constructing your emotional reality. You have the power to increase your Christmas cheer or banish your feelings of bah humbug. This phenomenon is known as prediction, and it's really just a numbers game. Rather than reacting to the world, your brain is running an internal model built around patterns of your previous experiences. The more instances your brain has of a positive experience relating to Christmas, the easier it is for your brain to construct Christmas cheer on-demand in the future.

So if you want to get into the Christmas spirit, spend time doing festive activities which you enjoy, share your experiences with the people you love, and do whatever rituals make sense to you. If science can give you anything this year, let it give you the gift of Christmas cheer.

*[the writer is Doctoral Researcher in Psychology, Keele University]*



# Can You Die From a Common Cold?

PETER BARLOW  
*theconversation.com*

Most people know that the flu can kill. Indeed, the so-called Spanish flu killed 50 million people in 1918 – more than were killed in the first world war. But what about the common cold? Can you really catch your death?

The cold is a collection of symptoms – coughing, sneezing, a runny nose, tiredness and perhaps a fever – rather than a defined disease. Although it shares a lot with the initial symptoms with the flu, it's a very different infection.

Rhinovirus causes about half of all colds, but other viruses can cause one or more of the symptoms of a cold, including adenovirus, influenza virus, respiratory syncytial virus and parainfluenza virus.

The common cold is normally a mild illness that resolves without treatment in a few days. And because of its mild nature, most cases are self-diagnosed. However, infection with rhinovirus or one of the other viruses responsible for common cold symptoms can be serious in some people. Complications from a cold

can cause serious illnesses and, yes, even death – particularly in people who have a weak immune system.

For example, studies have shown that patients who have undergone a bone marrow transplant can have a higher likelihood of developing a serious respiratory infection. While rhinovirus is not thought to be the main cause of this, other viruses that are associated with symptoms of the common cold, such as RSV, adenovirus and parainfluenza virus, are.

There is, of course, more than one way for someone to become very sick after infection with a respiratory virus. Some viruses, such as adenovirus, can also cause symptoms throughout the body, including the gastrointestinal tract, the urinary tract and the liver.

Other viruses, like the influenza virus, can themselves potentially cause severe inflammation in the lungs, but they can also lead to particularly serious conditions, such as bacterial pneumonia.

A virus-induced bacterial infection is one way a cold or flu virus can lead to death. While the exact mechanisms of how bacterial infections

can be primed by viral infection are still being investigated, a possible way it can occur is through increased bacterial attachment to cells of the lung. For example, rhinovirus has been shown to increase the presence of a receptor called PAF-r in lung cells. This can allow bacteria, such as Streptococcus pneumoniae, to bind more effectively to the cells, increasing the likelihood of it leading to a severe condition like pneumonia.

### HIGHER RISK IN SOME PEOPLE

Unfortunately, a cold can also have more severe symptoms in the very young and the very old. Older people are more likely to develop a more serious infection compared with adults or older children. And people who smoke – or who are exposed to second-hand smoke – are also more likely to get a cold and have more severe symptoms.

Another group of people who are more severely affected by infection with cold-causing viruses are people with an existing lung condition. They can include people with asthma, cystic fibrosis or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Infection with a virus that causes inflammation of the airways can make breathing

much harder. People with COPD who catch a mild cold virus are also at risk of developing a bacterial infection.

While the bacterial infection in these patients can be treated with antibiotics, there is no effective antiviral treatment against all types of rhinovirus. For other respiratory viruses, such as influenza, there is an effective vaccine that can help protect vulnerable people from the flu virus, including asthmatics, the very young and the very old.

There is not one single element that dictates how severe an infection with a cold virus will be, but there are many conditions or factors that can raise a red flag.

One of the best ways to avoid catching a cold is to wash your hands properly. This can prevent the spread of many different infections, not just the viruses that cause the common cold. And everyone, not just those classed as vulnerable, should get the flu jab. For viral infections, prevention is key.

*[the writer is Professor of Immunology and Infection and Head of Research of the School of Applied Sciences, Edinburgh Napier University]*



# Anti-CAA protesters block Guv's way, force him to return without attending JU convocation

**KOLKATA, DEC 24 (PTI):** Shouting slogans against the CAA and waving black flags, protesters blocked West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar's entry into Jadavpur University where he had gone to attend the annual convocation, prompting him to denounce the incident as "total collapse of rule of law".

Amid his frequent run-ins with the Mamata Banerjee government, Dhankhar arrived at the university, a hotbed of anti-CAA and anti-NRC protests, only to find his way blocked by around 50 people, said to be members of Shiksha Bandhu Samiti, an affiliate of the ruling TMC's trade union wing.

"Go back", "No NRC, No CAA", the protesters chanted as Dhankhar stepped out of his car to reach the venue.

As the protesters were unrelenting, the governor dialled Vice Chancellor Suranjan Das, and later accused him of being a "silent spectator" to the unsavoury drama.

"We cannot allow such a system to be there...There can't be complete lawlessness. There's is total collapse of rule of law," a livid Dhankhar told journalists while seated in his car before leaving the campus in a huff.

He said he was surprised how a small group of people could play "havoc" with the future of students. Dhankhar also said none of the protesters was a student, while expressing "shock and surprise" at the turn of events.

"The university ad-



ministration is doing nothing at all. They must have control on their employees. They can visit employees with action. We cannot allow such a system to be there," an angry and exasperated Dhankhar told reporters.

The governor, who was heckled and shown black flags twice at the university on Monday, chose to ignore the warnings and visited the place again. Protests against Dhankhar had come a day after he declared as "illegal and invalid" the varsity's decision to defer the December 24 special convocation because of possible trouble.

However, the convocation did take place but without the presence of the governor, who is the chancellor of state universities.

In a series of tweets, Dhankhar deplored the occurrences at the univer-

sity. "Am surprised that inspite of my directive to VC to go by rule book and abide by my direction as regards Convocation, the same has been started. In utter helplessness as of now I am leaving the Jadavpur University campus. Those concerned must soul search," he wrote on the microblogging website.

He also claimed the vice chancellor was in a "passive mode and a silent spectator to the unseemly spectacle", and alleged the whole episode was "orchestrated by powers that be".

"Rule of law is nowhere in sight," he added.

Dhankhar was on the campus also on Monday to attend a meeting of the university Court, its highest decision-making body.

After he could not attend the Court meeting due to the agitation

by students and the non-teaching staff, he had called up the vice chancellor and requested him to hold the meeting at Raj Bhavan. However, the members of the Court decided against it as the meeting had already begun on the JU campus.

The West Bengal government berated Banerjee for her decision to launch street protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and the proposed pan-India National Register of Citizens, insisting that a person occupying a constitutional position should desist from such action.

As violent protests raged in West Bengal over the new citizenship law, Dhankhar had advised the chief minister to focus on restoring law and order instead of engaging in "unconstitutional and inflammatory" actions.

in September to "rescue" Union Minister Babul Supriyo from a clutch of frenzied students had set off a verbal duel between the state government and Raj Bhavan, with recriminatory tweets being exchanged between the two almost on a daily basis.

Dhankhar had recently berated Banerjee for her decision to launch street protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and the proposed pan-India National Register of Citizens, insisting that a person occupying a constitutional position should desist from such action.

As violent protests raged in West Bengal over the new citizenship law, Dhankhar had advised the chief minister to focus on restoring law and order instead of engaging in "unconstitutional and inflammatory" actions.

## Officer concerned to pay for delay in MNREGS wages

**LUCKNOW, DEC 24 (PTI):** The Uttar Pradesh government on Tuesday decided that if payment was not made to labourers within 15 days under the MNREGS scheme, the officer concerned will have to compensate for the delay. The compensation

amount will be recovered from the salary of the officer, according to a decision taken at a meeting of the state cabinet chaired by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath here.

"Under MNREGS it is mandatory to give payment to labourers within

15 days. If it is not done, fine will be realised from the salary of the concerned officer of Centre or state responsible for delay based on the level on which it was delayed," UP government spokesman Shrikant Sharma told reporters here.

## New citizenship law against Constitution as it is based on religion: Yogendra Yadav

**NEW DELHI, DEC 23 (PTI):** Swaraj Abhiyan chief Yogendra Yadav on Monday said the new citizenship law is based on religion which is against the Constitution.

He was part of a discussion on the amended Citizenship Act and the

NRC at the Faculty of Law in Delhi University.

Yadav said earlier also there was a law for citizenship in India and it was not based on religion.

The present law, the Citizenship Amendment Act, is based on religion

that is why it is against the Constitution, he said.

"The new law is against every citizen of this country because it is against the social fabric of India," Yadav said.

At the discussion, the students demanded that the law be taken back.

## Book to chronicle India's Olympic journey



**NEW DELHI, DEC 24 (PTI):** A new book will chronicle India's journey in the global sports arena of Olympics - the wins, the misses, the star sportspersons, their stories, and the challenges and possibilities that lie ahead of India to make its mark at the mega sporting event.

"Dreams of a Billion: India and the Olympic Games" written by Boria Majumdar with Nalin Mehta will be brought out by HarperCollins India in January 2020.

The book provides an inside view of what goes on backstage in the Indian Olympics world alongside a quick history of how India has fared at the Olympics over the past century and a look at how the Indian Olympics world has changed in the last decade.

Speaking about the book, Majumdar says,

"To bring our Olympic champions alive and to go backstage with them and discuss their trials and tribulations was an enriching experience."

According to Mehta, "Our conversations with India's foremost athletes have given us some unbelievable tales of raw courage and unbending grit. This book combines these with the wider story of Indian Olympic sports to show us where we came from, the paths we have travelled as a sporting nation and the many possibilities that now lie ahead of us."

Udayan Mitra, publisher (Literary) at HarperCollins India, terms "Dreams of a Billion" as a fascinating book about India's Olympic journey and preparations for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, on which the country's hopes are pinned.

"It's an anecdotal, insightful look at the inside workings of India's sporting world, and makes for an absolutely fascinating read. We're excited to publish this very special book under the Harper Sports imprint, and hope that a lot of readers are going to join us in the excitement for Mission Olympics," he says.

Ace shooter Abhinav Bindra says Indian sport has grown from strength to strength on the back of inspiring stories of courage, determination, and the passion to achieve excellence and as a sportsperson it is humbling to be a part of this collective journey chronicled in the book.

Badminton great Pullela Gopichand feels as sports culture in India grows, it is very important that story-telling about sports developments as well.

## Jharkhand voters reject 10 turncoats

**RANCHI, DEC 24 (PTI):** As many as 10 turncoats, including two former Pradesh Congress Committee presidents and an ex-BJP chief whip, bit the dust in the Jharkhand Assembly elections.

All the candidates had switched sides after being denied tickets to the elections.

Former BJP spokesperson Praveen Prabhakar, who joined the National People's Party days before the commencement of the five-phase Assembly elections in the state secured least votes in Nala seat at 987.

Ex-BJP chief whip Radhakrishna Kishore, who joined the AJSU Party after being denied a ticket, lost to BJP candidate Puspita Devi in Chatrapur constituency.

Kishore had quit the Congress to join the Janata Dal (United) before embracing the BJP.

Former Jharkhand PCC Chief Pradeep Kumar Balmachu lost from Ghatsila after contesting the seat on an AJSU Party ticket.

Another ex-PCC president Sukhdeo Bhagat, who contested Lohardaga seat on a BJP ticket, was defeated by incumbent PCC president Rameshwar Oraon.

Former Jharkhand BJP president and sitting MLA Tala Marandi lost from Borio after he contested the seat on an AJSU Party ticket.

Phoolchand Mandal,

who switched sides to the JMM from the BJP, lost in Sindri seat while former BSP MLA Kushwaha Shivpujan Mehta was defeated in Husainabad, where he had fought on an AJSU Party ticket. Former MLAs Kunal Sarangi of the JMM and Manoj Yadav of the Congress lost in Baharagora and Barhi constituencies respectively after contesting the seats on BJP tickets.

Akeel Ansari, who was close to JMM president Shibu Soren but had joined the AJSU Party after being denied a ticket, lost to Congress candidate Alamgir Alam in Pakur seat.

Only a few turncoats emerged victorious in the elections.

Ex-PCC president Sarfaraz Ahmad won from Gandey constituency on a JMM ticket.

Former minister Bhanu Pratap Sahi and ex-JMM MLA Jai Prakash Bhai Patel retained Bhananathpur and Mandu constituencies respectively after contesting the seats on BJP tickets. Another ex-minister, Baidyanath Ram won from Latehar seat on a JMM ticket after quitting the BJP.

The JMM-Congress-RJD alliance has won 47 of the state's 81 seats. The JMM won 30 seats, Congress 16 and RJD one.

The BJP clinched 25 seats, the AJSU Party two, the JMM (P) three and others four.

## Kumar Sanjay Krishna appointed chief secretary of Assam

**GUWAHATI, DEC 24 (PTI):** The Assam government on Tuesday appointed senior IAS officer Kumar Sanjay Krishna as the new chief secretary.

A state government order said that Krishna, a 1985 batch IAS officer at present the additional chief secretary Home, Political and Disaster Management will take over as the chief secretary after the incumbent Alok Kumar retires on December 31.

The Assam government also transferred nine senior IAS officers.

Jishnu Barua will be the Additional Chief Secretary Home and Political and Revenue and Disaster Management Departments in addition to his present duties of Secretariat Administration (Archives) Department, the order said.

Barua is, however, relieved from his additional charge of Additional Chief Secretary Environment and Forest and Excise Department.

Rajiv Kumar Beta was relieved from the additional charge of Chairman of Board of Revenue, Assam and Additional Chief Secretary Finance, Soil Conservation and Transformation and Development Departments but will continue as Chairman of Assam Administrative Tribunal.

VS Bhaskar, additional chief secretary Pensions and Public



Grievances, Hill Areas and Mines and Minerals Departments was posted as Chairman of Board of Revenue, Assam.

Syedain Abbasi, principal secretary Public Health Engineering, Water Resources, Information Technology and Science and Technology departments will hold additional charge of principal secretary Pension and Public Grievances Department.

Biswaranjan Samal, principal secretary Co-operation and Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs Departments and MD, Assam Food and Civil Supplies Corporation Limited was posted as principal secretary Hill Areas Department.

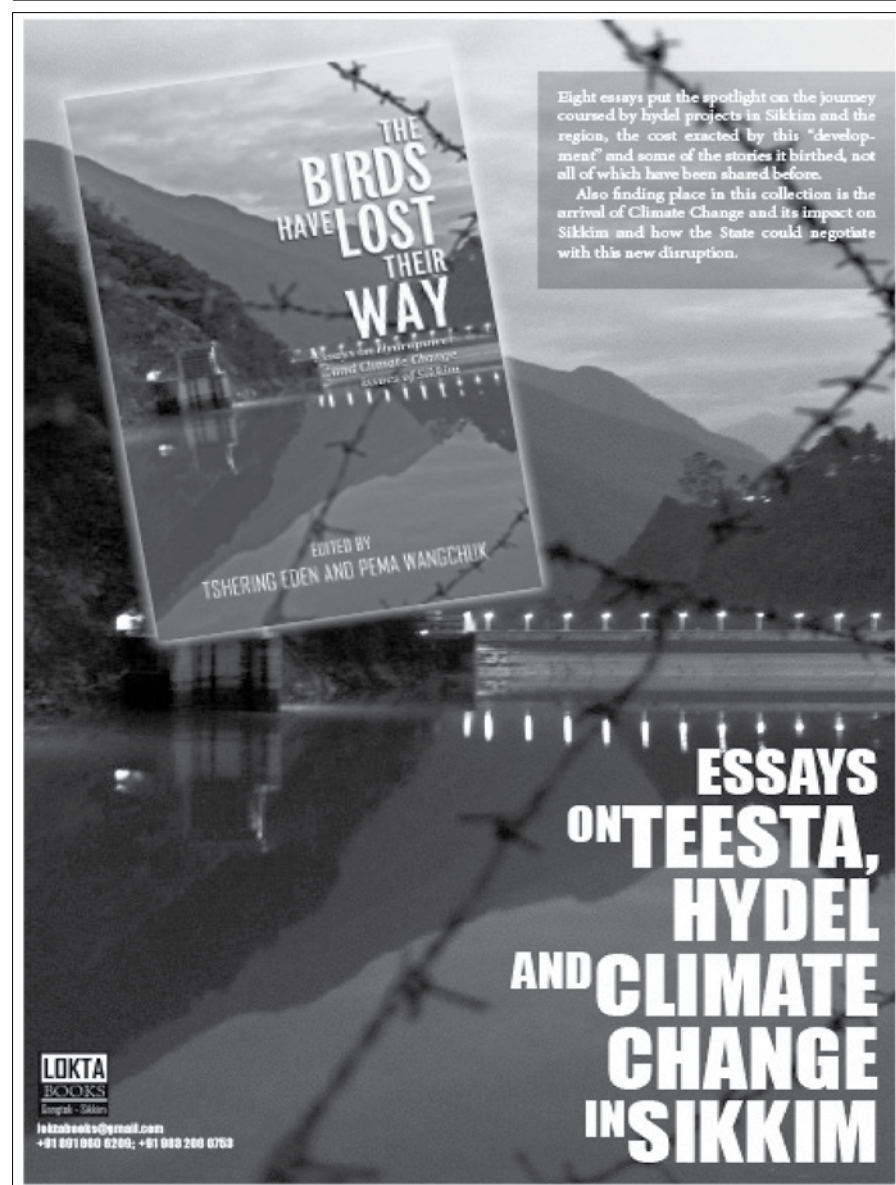
Samir Kumar Sinha, principal secretary Health and Family Welfare, Finance and Pension and Public Grievances Departments and additional principal resident commissioner, Assam Bhawan, New Delhi was transferred and posted as principal secretary Finance Department and Transformation & Devel-

opment Department.

Avinash Purushottam Das Joshi, principal secretary Sports and Youth Welfare Departments will be the new principal secretary Environment and Forest, Excise and Mines and Minerals Departments.

Preetom Saikia, Commissioner and Secretary Elementary Education, Secondary Education and Cultural Affairs Departments will hold additional charge of Commissioner and Secretary Printing and Stationery and Information and Public Relations Departments.

Nitin Kumar Shivdas Khade, Commissioner Barak Valley Division, Development Commissioner, Hill Areas and Commissioner and Secretary Finance and Transformation and Development Departments and CEO of State Innovation and Transformation Aayog will hold additional charge of Commissioner and Secretary Soil Conservation Department, the order added.





## Pakistan pace sensation Naseem grows from cub to lion

**KARACHI, DEC 23 (AFP):** Pakistan's Naseem Shah may be just a teenager but his fiery bowling has given him a top position on the bowling charts.

On Monday, Naseem grabbed 5-31 in Pakistan's series-clinching win over Sri Lanka in Karachi to become the youngest fast bowler at 16 years 307 days to achieve the feat.

He broke the record of another Pakistan Mohammad Amir who also made his mark with his first five wicket haul at 17 years 257 days against Australia in Melbourne 10 years ago.

Naseem's feat has prompted the cricket world to take notice of the precocious ability.

Belief in his talent, Naseem says, has been the key.

"I had belief in my hard work and talent so when I got the chance I tried my best," said Naseem. "I am elated that my feat on a home ground and before my own people has contributed in the win.

"I know this is just the beginning and if I keep up the hard work more rewards will come my way." Naseem's landmark moment capped a three-month fast track progress from a precocious talent to one of the leaders of Pakistan's bowling attack.

He has been in the limelight for sometime but it was in October this year that national selectors decided to throw him in the deep when he took nine wickets in a domestic match.

Four days later he was on the plane to Australia for the two-match Test series -- a move described as 'throwing a cub before the wolves.' Pakistan's bowling coach Waqar Younis -- himself a lethal fast bowler -- likened Naseem to former Australian great pace-man Dennis Lillee.

"He's got a very strong action. He reminds me of Dennis Lillee actually. He's got a very similar action," Waqar said before the first Test in Brisbane.

"He's not as big as Dennis - Dennis was a big guy - but when he gets it right, he's a handful. He's very talented with his pace the key."

Naseem made people take notice with his short burst of eight overs against Australia A, claiming Marcus Harris's wicket with a sharp bouncer.

That was after he received the news of his mother's death back home.

But he showed steely resolve as a week later he was played in the first Test in Brisbane.

He claimed dashing Australian opener David Warner twice, first off a no-ball on 56 and then on 154. Warner appreciated Naseem's talent.

"He charged in, and there's a superstar there," said Warner.

"If Waqar can get a hold of them (Naseem and other young bowlers) and get their lines and lengths and their engines going, they're going to be a force to be reckoned with in the future."

# How one man used royalty, rednecks and football to help Syrian refugees

**STEVE BRENNER**  
*theGuardian*

**S**amuel J Fox, a lawyer from Los Angeles, saw the Syrian refugee crisis and felt compelled to act. "It was heartbreaking," he tells the Guardian of the brutal, harrowing pictures of displaced children that spurred him into action. "Something, anything, needed to be done."

For Fox, that something was football. He began what he called a "movement" to provide football jerseys – and hope – to the thousands of displaced, poverty-stricken youngsters living in camps with nothing but the tattered shirts on their backs. And so JerseyEX was born.

It's a remarkable tale of rednecks, refugees, royalty, show business, and sports stars, incredible serendipitous meetings and the genuine goodness of Fox (with help from his friend and associate, New York producer Eric Angelson), who has, out of his own pocket, gone to incredible lengths to help those less fortunate than himself.

The story, naturally, begins in 1990 with legendary redneck comedian Jeff Foxworthy. Fox was at Foxworthy's side providing legal help throughout his career. The now 61 year-old Foxworthy enjoyed a stellar stand-up career and authored a series of books about redneck lifestyle with titles such as No Shirt. No Shoes ... No Problem! – and his fame opened unexpected doors for Fox.

One of those doors, involved a surprising phone call. "I'm calling on behalf of the King of Jordan," the voice said. Fox hung up. It was surely a crank caller. The phone rang again. It was Major General Gary L Harrell, a decorated US Army veteran, based in Jordan, where he was helping the King of Jordan, Abdullah II, establish an anti-terrorism training center.

It turned out the king was a fan of a reality show presented by two clients Fox had met through Foxworthy – Abdullah wanted to meet them. Once the disbelief lifted, he went to the Middle East with his clients, and met a friend of the king's on the return flight to New York, during which an opportunity to advise on a digital strategy for Jordan presented itself. "The goal was to bridge the



digital communities of Amman and Los Angeles," he says.

A consulting contract was agreed and Angelson, whose background also included digital technology, was enlisted. When the king visited California, the pair attended a reception with him and Andrew Harper, the Jordan-based head of the United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR). Abdullah and Harper gave presentations showing the plight of Syrians crossing the desert into Jordan to escape violence and persecution in their own country.

"The photos were haunting," says Fox. But one image in particular caught his eye. "There were three kids running barefoot on rocks, smiling and kicking a ball. It made me want to go to a refugee camp and bring some happiness," he says. "So that became the plan."

He found a shop in Los Angeles that collected old jerseys, and 180 shirts were loaded into bags. Fox and Angelson then headed off to Jordan and the newly opened Azraq refugee camp. Conditions were bleak - there was no electricity and little water for the estimated 10,000 inhabitants. The mood, however, was quickly lifted. One by one, children of all ages queued up to receive the jerseys and greeted Fox and Angelson with

warm hugs and handshakes. "Eric and I were so moved," says Fox.

This, however, was just the start. The contract to build a digital bridge between the US and Jordan was canceled, as Isis's brutal stranglehold on the region grew. But the football connection was forged and the pair wanted to do more to help the refugees they had met.

That opportunity quickly repeated itself, thanks to a chance meeting at a conference in Los Angeles run by Jusoor, an organization that helps Syrian youth with education. "Our strategy was simple; talk to everyone," says Fox. "We explained to some of the attendees we had just been to Azraq to distribute jerseys and were now trying to figure out a way to send some more. This man looked at us and said, 'I'll ship them for you - for free.' I was blown away."

The man was Fadi Ghandour, who founded Aramex, one of the biggest shipping companies in the Middle East and North Africa. To date, 15,000 shirts have been sent.

Fox and Angelson's knack for connecting with the right people continued. When they were in Jordan, via the Royal Film Commission, Fox and Angelson were introduced to the king's brother - Prince Ali bin al Hussein, who headed the Jor-

dan Soccer Federation and also ran for FIFA presidency in 2015. Prince Ali's offer to waive customs charges for any shipments was a massive moment for Fox, who was funding JerseyEX out of his own pocket. "I couldn't have done this without him and Fadi," he says.

Fox then met Richard Walden, founder of Operation USA, which collects items to be offered in disaster zones. Hollywood legend Julie Andrews is a spokesperson for them – and they, by sheer chance, had thousands of extra jerseys in a warehouse. Fox took them all. The next development came through another unlikely source.

"I got a call from [humanitarian organization] World Vision asking to donate 400 jerseys to reward children for a hygiene-education program in partnership with Sesame Street," says Fox. "I said yes, but then we never heard back, so I said 'I'll do it myself.' Then, I had an epiphany – if jerseys can give children a moment of joy, then football can be used to motivate these kids to change their lives and take control of their future."

Fox was inspired but desperate for celebrity endorsement to fast-track his efforts through a video campaign. Luckily, Borussia Dortmund and Manchester United were

in LA during the summer of 2018.

"Dortmund were training [at the University of California, Los Angeles], but the session was closed," recalls Fox. "Then, I saw [former NBA star] Steve Nash whom I had represented for his first Nike contract 20 or so years ago. He was with Christian Pulisic, and when I shouted my name to him, he couldn't believe it. He got me over the barrier and I managed to shoot a video with Christian."

The theme of the seven-second video - and subsequent clips created with Manchester United duo Scott McTominay and Axel Tuanzebe - was simple: players pointed out the importance of washing hands before eating. More videos were filmed in Jordan by Widad Shafakoj, a brilliant director found in Amman, featuring their women's World Cup team. That led to a partnership with USA for UNHCR and that, says Fox, "gave me some serious credibility."

The next logical step was to get soap to the refugees. A deal was struck to buy soap from the Zarqa Life Center, a community safe haven for women and children affected by war, who make and sell the product to support themselves. A second contract was agreed with soap makers at Za'atari refugee camp. A further donation came from Trinitae, a high-end Jordanian soap company. During their last trip in August, Fox and Angelson distributed over 2,000 bars in Za'atari and Azraq. Fox even created a catchy football chant that the refugee children in Azraq sang on the pitch.

So what does the future hold? The dream is to work with clubs and players to create football-centric media with life-affirming messages. Fox also wants to partner with a soap company to generate revenue to continue to support UNHCR and help his program. For every bar sold, another bar is donated to a refugee family.

"The true potential of the sport is found not on the pitch, but in the lives of millions of children who watch it and play it every day," concludes Fox. "The beautiful game can produce some beautiful messaging, even if it's only seven seconds long."

## Kohli, Dhoni named captains of Test and ODI team of the decade by Aussie website



**MELBOURNE, DEC 24 (PTI):** Virat Kohli has been named captain of the Test XI of the decade by Cricket Australia's official news website, while Mahendra Singh Dhoni was chosen as the leader of its ODI team of the decade.

It is not a surprise that Kohli finds himself in both the Test and ODI teams. The 31-year-old has arguably been the best batsman over the last decade. He has already amassed 70 international hundreds and is only behind Ricky Ponting (71) and Sachin Tendulkar (100).

Kohli, who averages more than 50 in all formats, is also third in the list of leading run-scorers of all time with 21,444 runs, behind Ponting (27,483) and Tendulkar (34,357).

The India skipper has scored runs all around the world but Australia has been a special place for him, having scored nine hundreds (six in

Tests, three in ODIs) Down Under.

Kohli is primed to shatter more records, having ended 2019 as the leading run-getter.

The others in the Test XI of the decade include Alastair Cook, David Warner, Kane Williamson, Steve Smith, AB de Villiers, Ben Stokes, Dale Steyn, Stuart Broad, Nathan Lyon and James Anderson, 'cricket.com.au' posted.

The website's ODI team of the decade is led by Dhoni, who captained India to two World titles, in 2007 and 2011, respectively.

Rohit Sharma, who had a memorable 2019, which included five hundreds in the World Cup, is one of the openers in the team alongside Hashim Amla.

Kohli is the undisputed number three, followed by de Villiers, Shakib Al Hasan, Jos Buttler, Dhoni, Rashid Khan Mitchell Starc, Trent Boult and Lasith Malinga.

# Ice-cool Mason Greenwood can ignite Manchester United's tepid season

**DANIEL HARRIS**  
*theGuardian*

**W**atching a teenager make their name is a moving, affirming experience, equal parts empathy and envy: if you're young you want to be young and good, and if you're old ... you still want to be to be young and good. In a wild world, there's no feeling like watching talent explode, all wide-eyed, grateful and disbelieving.

Mason Greenwood is none of these things, a child who scores goals like a man. Often young players snatch at chances, lost in the supermarket trying six different finishes at once. But Greenwood handles things differently, blessed with a clear mind and the resting heart rate of a table. These may seem ridiculous words to write about someone who has accomplished so little. But they are considerably less ridiculous than Greenwood's ability. When we encounter new things we naturally assess them relative to old things, and Greenwood's points of comparison are obvious. Aesthetically he is most similar to Robin van Persie: smooth, lean, precise and controlled – but with a right foot as definitive as his left.

Strategically, though, he more closely resembles Ole Gunnar Solskjær: able to get a shot away – and on target – in almost any circumstance. Against AZ Alkmaar and Everton, Greenwood's excellent goals bore a hallmark of his boss: shaping for the far post before dragging a finish back towards the near – through



the legs of a defender used as a screen. Neither strike was particularly powerful and both passed close to the keeper, but timing and disguise ensured that neither effort was remotely saveable.

And elementally Greenwood is most reminiscent of Paul Scholes: though he does a very different job, his style is underpinned by the principle of only ever attempting what is feasible. If a situation demands something simple, something simple is performed; if a situation demands something flash, something flash is performed. This illustrates equanimity as well as ability. "He doesn't change his demeanour if he scores or if he misses," said Solskjær after Greenwood's superb winner against Astana in September. "He's a delightful young boy to work with."

When Real Madrid won the Champions League final in 2000, Roy Keane noticed that Raúl reacted with none of the

traditional tears and histrionics. "I deserve this," was how Keane summarised his attitude, and Greenwood is similarly entitled. Unlike for instance Marcus Rashford, he seems not surprised by his emergence but that he has been expecting it, wondering what's taken so long.

Though it made sense that Greenwood began the season as a substitute, it was odd that, with Anthony Martial injured and United struggling to score, he was picked to start only two cup games. But he still managed beautifully taken goals against Astana and Rochdale, and in 893 minutes now has seven – plus two assists.

The xG model calculates that there was only an 11.41% chance of him taking as many opportunities as he has done, and no number can describe the expertise of those finishes. Nor does xG account for which foot the ball dropped to or the state of the game. He is two-footed

enough to vary his dead balls and all of his goals have come with United under pressure, either level or trailing.

The United youth coach Jimmy Murphy used to describe the players he nurtured as apples in his orchard, presenting them to Matt Busby only when they were ready. But because there were no substitutes in those days, eventually the manager had to take a risk. Even players such as Scholes, Ryan Giggs and David Beckham were picked to start on account of their talent rather than the compelling case they made off the bench. Greenwood, on the other hand, has earned a spot by the quality of his performances, and the more there are, the faster he will improve.

Of United's attackers, Daniel James is the easiest for Solskjær to drop. But though Greenwood can contribute from the right wing, he's better between the width of the goalposts: already United's best finisher, his hold-up play was lively when picked at centre-forward against Spurs. It is true that Martial, who usually features there, has a high top level but what distinguishes the best players is a high bottom level, which the Frenchman lacks. Against United, teams tend to sit back – Newcastle seem sure to on Boxing Day – and Greenwood is far more likely than Martial to press, conjure room for shots and attack crosses at the near post; to mitigate the abominable midfield behind him.



# Bethlehem welcomes pilgrims for Christmas celebrations

Pilgrims from around the world gathered Tuesday in the biblical city of Bethlehem, revered by Christians as the birthplace of Jesus, to celebrate Christmas in the Holy Land.

Palestinians and foreigners began converging on the "little town" in the Israeli-occupied West Bank from early morning, with Christmas Eve festivities taking place in and around the Church of the Nativity.

Tourists queued to visit the grotto inside the church, believed to be the exact site where Jesus was born, with Ola, a Nigerian visitor, saying it was a "special day."

Outside in the winter sun, hundreds watched as Palestinian scouts paraded to the sound of drums.

"I feel really emotional to be here today, it's wonderful," said Germana, an Italian travelling with her husband and two children.

Archbishop Pierbattista Pizzaballa, apostolic administrator of the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem and the most senior Roman Catholic official in the Middle East, was due to travel from Jerusalem to Bethlehem on Tuesday morning.

He will lead midnight mass in the Church of the Nativity, with Palestinian president Mahmud Ab-



bas expected to attend.

Bethlehem is close to Jerusalem, but cut off from the holy city by Israel's separation barrier. The first church was built on the site in the fourth century, though it was replaced after a fire in the sixth century.

This year celebrations were bolstered by the return of a wooden fragment believed to be from the manger of Jesus.

Sent as a gift to Pope Theodore I in 640, the piece had been in Europe for more than 1,300 years before being returned last month, Francesco Patton, chief custodian for the Holy Land, said.

"We venerate the relic because (it) reminds us of the mystery of in-

carnation, to the fact that the son of God was born of Mary in Bethlehem more than 2,000 years ago," Patton told AFP at the time.

- "Tough Christmas in Gaza" -

In the square by the church, Palestinian tourism minister Rula Maaya told AFP it had been a good year, with 3.5 million tourists visiting the city.

But fewer Christians from the Gaza Strip were in attendance than in previous years, as Israel granted permits to just around 200 of the some 900 people who applied, said Wadie Abunassar, an adviser to church leaders in the Holy Land.

The Palestinian territories of the West Bank and Gaza are separated

by Israeli territory and crossing between them requires hard-to-get permits. Abunassar said Christmas remained a time for hope.

"The Holy Land is not only the site of the birth and crucifixion (of Jesus), it is also the place of resurrection," he told AFP.

"Despite all challenges, difficulties, pain and problems we are facing, we keep the hope in God and people."

- "Bumpy year" -

Around the world, people were getting ready to ring in the Christmas festivities.

In her traditional Christmas Day message, Britain's Queen Elizabeth II was to describe 2019 as "quite bumpy" after a year of crises in the royal

family. In France, travellers were meanwhile in for more woe in the bitter nearly-three week strike by train drivers fighting government pension reform plans.

The walkout has ruined Christmas travel plans for tens of thousands of French ticket holders unable to reach loved ones in time for Christmas Day.

A frantic scramble for gift promotions left a dozen people injured in an Australian mall.

And in the central Philippines, where Christmas is widely celebrated among the country's Catholics, thousands of people were warned to leave their homes as a severe tropical storm approached.

## Queen admits 'bumpy' year in Christmas message

Queen Elizabeth II called 2019 "quite bumpy" in a Christmas message at the end of a chaotic year which saw Britain bitterly divided over its split from the European Union and her scandal-plagued son Prince Andrew withdraw from public life.

But in some good news on Tuesday, the 93-year-old monarch's husband Prince Philip checked out of a London hospital after four nights of treatment for an undisclosed "pre-existing condition" in time to join the royal family for Christmas.

The year was filled with disappointments for the queen -- a seminal figure in British public life who assumed the throne in 1952 and is beloved by much of the nation.

None may have been more bitter than a calamitous BBC interview in which her second son Andrew tried to distance himself from American paedophile Jeffrey Epstein. Andrew promised to "step back from public duties" after his denial of having sex with one of Epstein's alleged victims was ridiculed in the UK media and reportedly criticised in Buckingham Palace.

The queen will point to the life of Jesus as an example of how reconciliation can be achieved and "how small steps taken in faith and in hope can overcome long-held differences and deep-seated divisions" in her speech, which will be broadcast on Christmas Day. The remarks were

widely interpreted as a reference to the Brexit debate that has torn Britain apart since it voted to leave the EU in a 2016 referendum.

"The path, of course, is not always smooth, and may at times this year have felt quite bumpy, but small steps can make a world of difference," the queen will say.

Royal commentators said the queen's use of the word "bumpy" marked her most explicit admission of turmoil since her headline-grabbing description of 1992 as an "annus horribilis".

The marriages of three of her children fell apart and her beloved Windsor Castle nearly went up in flames that "horrible year".

- Missing picture - The queen found herself dragged into the tortuous political drama of Brexit when she approved Prime Minister Boris Johnson's request to suspend parliament in August. Critics claimed it was an attempt to silence opponents to his Brexit plans.

The Supreme Court subsequently ruled that Johnson's request had been unlawful and many people blamed him for making the queen look bad.

The queen was also rumoured to have been disappointed by her grandson Prince Harry and his American former actress wife Meghan Markle.

The young couple made waves by speaking out about their struggle with living in the public eye and then suing three

British newspapers for prying into their private lives. Their picture was notably absent from the collection of family photographs on the queen's desk in her televised address. Harry and Meghan will also miss that annual Christmas Day gathering at the royal retreat at Sandringham that Philip was whisked to after leaving hospital.

- 'Spirit of reconciliation' -

The queen has remained one of Britain's most popular figures despite the royal family's travails.

A poll by YouGov in November showed 72 percent of respondents had a positive opinion of the monarch. The queen's Christmas Day message also reflected on the heroism of British forces during the D-Day landings in Normandy that turned the course of World War II in 1944.

Her trips abroad are becoming increasingly rare, but she made one in June to attend the 75th anniversary commemorations in France.

"For the 75th anniversary of that decisive battle, in a true spirit of reconciliation, those who had formerly been sworn enemies came together in friendly commemorations either side of the Channel, putting past differences behind them," the queen will say in her message.

"By being willing to put past differences behind us and move forward together, we honour the freedom and democracy once won for us at so great a cost."

## US welcomes Saudi Khashoggi verdicts as 'important step': official

**WASHINGTON, DEC 24 (AFP):** The United States on Monday welcomed death sentences issued by Saudi Arabia against five people over the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi. "Today's verdicts were an important step in holding those responsible for this terrible crime accountable," a State Department official told reporters after the ruling, which was lambasted as a travesty by Turkey, rights groups, and The Washington Post, to which Khashoggi contributed.

The court however exonerated two top aides to Saudi Arabia's powerful Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, whom the United States Senate considers responsible for Khashoggi's murder in October last year at Riyadh's consulate in Istanbul. The United States "encouraged Saudi Arabia to undertake a fair and transparent judicial process," the official added.

"We're pressing them for more transparency and for holding everybody accountable."

Riyadh has described the murder as a "rogue" operation, but both the CIA and a United Nations special envoy have directly linked Prince Mohammed to the killing, a charge the kingdom vehemently denies.

The government of US President Donald Trump has been careful to not attribute such blame to the prince.

## China hosts Japan, S Korea with eyes on nuclear North

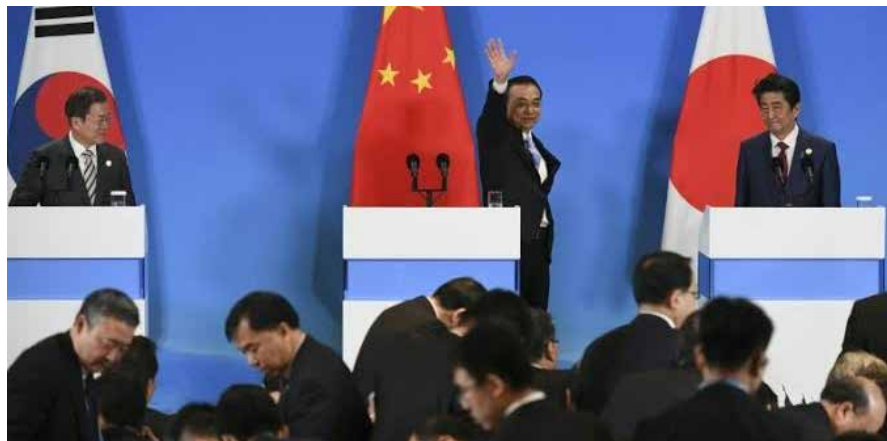
**CHENGDU, DEC 24 (AFP):** China hosted the leaders of squabbling neighbours South Korea and Japan on Tuesday, flexing its diplomatic muscle with America's two key military allies in Asia and seeking regional unity on how to deal with a belligerent North Korea.

The gathering in the southwestern city of Chengdu was held with the clock ticking on a threatened "Christmas gift" from North Korean leader Kim Jong Un that would reignite global tensions over its nuclear programme. Kim has promised the unidentified "gift", which analysts and American officials believe could be a provocative missile test, if the United States does not act make concessions in their nuclear talks by the end of the year.

At the opening ceremony with South Korea's Moon Jae-in and Japan's Shinzo Abe on Tuesday morning, Chinese Premier Li Keqiang said he hoped cooperation among their nations would "protect the region's safety and stability". South Korean President Moon Jae-in said it was important they worked together at a "turbulent" time.

The gathering in Chengdu will feature the first one-on-one meeting between Moon and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe for 15 months.

Ties between their two nations have hit rock bottom in recent months over trade issues and other disputes related to decades of bitter



wrangling over Japan's 1910-45 occupation of the Korean peninsula. The United States has frequently urged its two allies to bury the hatchet, worried that their poor relations were complicating diplomacy in Asia -- although it has held off on direct mediation.

China is appearing to fill that void with its Chengdu event.

"As the region's major power, China hopes to show its diplomatic presence to the world by bringing the Japanese and South Korean leaders to the same table," Haruko Satoh, professor and expert on Chinese politics at Osaka University, told AFP.

At separate lead-up meetings in Beijing on Monday with Chinese President Xi Jinping, Moon and Abe both spoke of China's hefty diplomatic influence in the region.

Long-running efforts to contain North Korea's nuclear programme have been largely deadlocked since the collapse of a second summit between US President Donald Trump and Kim in Hanoi at the start of this year.

In an effort to pressure the United States,

the North has conducted a series of short-range missile tests and threatened to go further with its "Christmas gift". If the North fired an intercontinental ballistic missile in defiance of UN sanctions, it would destroy Trump's argument that he had succeeded in reducing risks from North Korea.

Former US national security adviser John Bolton, who was dismissed in September, on Monday criticised Trump's strategy and warned the North posed an "imminent" threat.

"The risk to US forces & our allies is imminent & more effective policy is required before NK has the technology to threaten the American homeland," tweeted Bolton.

If the North does carry through with a threatened provocation, the United States should admit its policy of engaging the North had failed, Bolton said in an interview with news site Axios. The US should then work with allies to show that "when we say it's unacceptable, we're going to demonstrate we will not accept it," he added. Before leaving for

China, Abe told reporters that links with Seoul remained "severe", though the Chengdu meeting was important given the regional issues at stake.

"Considering the security environment in East Asia, I recognise that relations between Japan and South Korea as well as relations among Japan, the US and South Korea are important," he said.

The relationship between Japan and South Korea is overshadowed by the 35 years of brutal colonisation by the Japanese -- including the use of sex slaves and forced labour -- that is still bitterly resented today. Ties began a downward spiral in recent months after a series of South Korean court rulings ordering Japanese firms to compensate wartime forced labour victims.

These infuriated Tokyo, who insisted the matter had been settled by a 1965 treaty between the two countries. Seoul then threatened to withdraw from a key military intelligence-sharing pact, although it reversed course in November and agreed to extend it "conditionally".

## Former US adviser warns of 'imminent' North Korea risk

**WASHINGTON, DEC 24 (AFP):** Former US national security adviser John Bolton on Monday sharply criticized President Donald Trump's North Korea policy, warning that the Asian country posed an "imminent" threat. "The risk to US forces & our allies is imminent & more effective policy is required before NK has the technology to threaten the American homeland," tweeted Bolton, who was dismissed in September amid growing disagreements with Trump, particularly regarding his North Korea policy.

The erstwhile adviser, a longtime hawk on North Korea, was openly skeptical of the 2018

summit between Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, and encouraged the US president to be cautious.

The denuclearization process has been largely deadlocked since the collapse of a second summit in Hanoi at the start of this year. North Korea promised an ominous "Christmas gift" earlier this month if Washington does not give ground by the end of December.

In an interview with news site Axios published Monday, Bolton also said he thinks the Trump administration does not really intend to stop Pyongyang from becoming a legitimate nuclear power capable of firing missiles at other countries, otherwise "it

would be pursuing a different course." "The idea that we are somehow exerting maximum pressure on North Korea is just unfortunately not true," he said.

Should North Korea conduct a major test or make some other significant provocation after the ultimatum expires, Bolton said he hopes Washington will acknowledge its mistake and say, "We've tried. The policy's failed." The US should then work with allies to show that "when we say it's unacceptable, we're going to demonstrate we will not accept it," he added.

Bolton also criticized Trump for saying the North Korean short-range missile tests don't bother him.

**VIDEO NEWS SECTION**

**To book ad-space, contact SummitTIMES at**

**GANGTOK:** For circulation details Contact: +91-9749897695, +91-964702692  
 & for advertisement booking at +91-993427303 or at office no 03592  
 25B/6F, Malluhatadadvice@summittimes.com

**KOLKATA OFFICE:** Indus Ali/Intervyst, Synapse, & Madan Street, Metre - 2, 2nd floor Kolkata - 700072. Ph: 033-22124348 / fax 033-22124337 / mob +91-98309547774 / +91-98309597. E-mail: contact@synapse@gmail.com / rashed.ali123@gmail.com

**Phone:** 03592-208498  
 +91-9832556698  
 +91-9832080753

**www.summittimes.com**  
 news@summittimes.com  
 summittimes@gmail.com  
 advertise@summittimes.com

**Address:** Santa Bhawan Complex, Church Road  
 Near Diesel Power House (DPH)  
 Gangtok, East Sikkim, 737101



# Baba Ram Dass, spiritual guru and LSD proponent, dies at 88

**HONOLULU (AP)** — Baba Ram Dass, the 1960s counterculture spiritual leader who experimented with LSD and traveled to India to find enlightenment, returning to share it with Americans, has died. He was 88.

Dass' foundation, Love Serve Remember, announced late Sunday that the author and spiritual leader died peacefully at his home earlier in the day. No cause of death was given. He had suffered a severe stroke in 1997 that left him paralyzed on the right side and, for a time, unable to speak. More recently, he underwent hip surgery after he was injured in a fall in November 2008, according to his website.

"I had really thought about checking out, but your love and your prayers convinced me not to do it. ... It's just beautiful," he told followers in a videotaped message at the time from his hospital bed in Hawaii.

Over the years, Ram Dass — born Richard Alpert — associated with the likes of Timothy Leary and Allen Ginsberg. He wrote about his experiences with drugs, set up projects to help prisoners and those facing terminal illness and sought to enlighten others about the universal struggle with aging.

But he was best known for the 1971 book "Be Here Now," written after his trip to India. The spiritual primer found its way into thousands of backpacks around the world. "I want to share with you the parts of the internal journey that never get written up in the mass media," he wrote. "I'm not interested in what you read in the Saturday Evening Post about LSD. This is the story of what goes on inside a human being who is undergoing all these experiences."

Among his other books were "How Can I Help?" and "Compassion in Action" and "Still Here: Embracing Aging, Changing, and Dying." "In the '60s, I was an uncle for a movement," he told The Associated Press in 1998. "I was always showing people where they could go. I went east, and then there was a big movement east."

Now, he said, "the baby boomers are getting old — and I'm learning how to get old for them. That's my role."

The Boston-born son of a prominent attorney, Ram Dass entered the public sphere in the early 1960s as a young Harvard psychology professor. Alpert, as he was then known, earned a doctorate at Stanford University.

He and Leary, a Harvard colleague, began a series of experiments with hal-

lucinogenic mushrooms and LSD, giving the drugs to prisoners, philosophers and students to study their effects. Ram Dass later wrote that he tried psilocybin, the compound found in hallucinogenic mushrooms, in Leary's living room.

"I peered into the semidarkness and recognized none other than myself in cap and gown and hood," he wrote. "It

to break the law, since that leads to fear and paranoia." In 1974, Ram Dass founded the Hanuman Foundation, which set up programs such as the Prison Ashram Project to introduce inmates to spirituality. He also helped create the Seva Foundation, which works to prevent blindness and helps community groups in developing countries. His Love Serve

Remember Foundation is dedication to preserving his teachings and those of Neem Karoli Baba.

Ram Dass lived for many years in the quiet town of San Anselmo, California, about 20 miles (32 kilometers) north of San Francisco, surrounded by the markers of his life straddling East and West: Japanese prints and statues of Buddha, sea-shells from the South Pacific and a well-used player piano.

In later years, he moved to Woodside, California. More recently, he was based in Maui.

He said his 1997 stroke brought physical and spiritual suffering, but that he came to see the suffering as a source of insight that he could share with others facing their own battles with illness and aging.

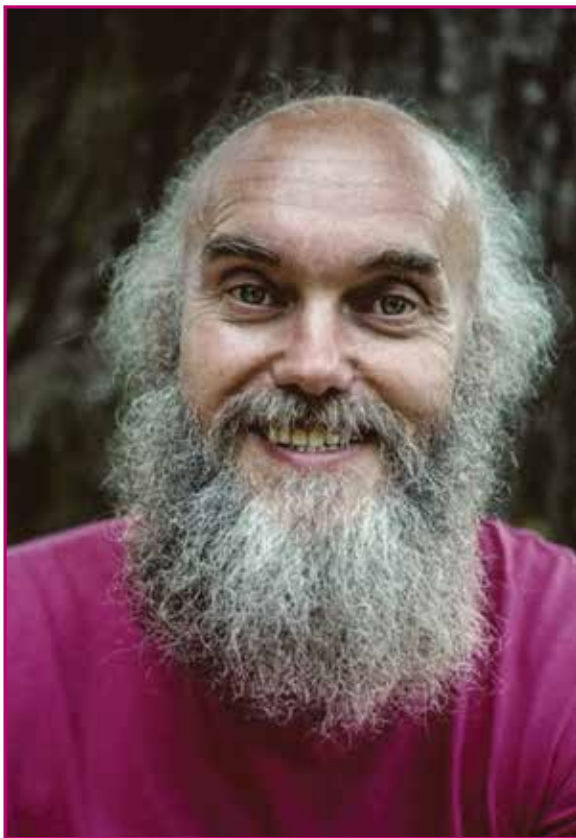
"It's brought out new aspects of myself and aspects of my relationship to the world," he said in 1998. The stroke has gotten me into a stage of life — this is a stage close to death, a stage which is inward."

After regaining his speech, Ram Dass returned to the lecture circuit, starting by touring Northern California sharing tales of what he called his state of "heavy grace."

"All illnesses are part of the passing show," he told the San Francisco Chronicle in 2004. "You are not just your body. You are the witness of your body." He had a falling out with Leary in the 1970s after rumors surfaced that the latter, jailed on drug and prison-break charges, offered to provide authorities with information on others involved in the drug culture in exchange for a lighter sentence.

But the pair had reconciled in the years before Leary's death in 1996, joking back and forth and praising one another as they made joint appearances at lectures. When Leary was on his deathbed, Ram Dass came to visit after Leary asked for advice on how best to let go of life. "The mythic level that Timothy and I lived at was that we were adventurers," he said in the 2014 documentary, "Dying to Know: Ram Dass & Timothy Leary."

Although speaking of Leary, Ram Dass added an epithet that also could be his own: "If you have identified with your soul when you are alive, death is just another moment."



**WALKING SOLO!** The Australian singer, Cody Simpson is spotted hanging around SoHo, New York after shutting down break up rumors with Miley Cyrus.

## Authorities Reportedly Find Drugs and Guns on Plane That Lil Wayne Was On (UPDATE)

**UPDATE 12/23, 10:15 P.M. ET:** The Miami Herald, citing law enforcement sources, reports that authorities discovered firearms and drugs on an aircraft Lil Wayne was on.

Howard Srebnick, a defense attorney for Lil Wayne, said federal investigators allowed the rapper to leave. Wayne also took to Twitter to seemingly give an update on his situation. "All goody! I think they thought I was talking abt a different 'Pack' in my last tweet," he wrote.

According to The Miami Herald, who themselves were citing "three law enforcement sources," an inbound private jet that Lil Wayne is a passenger on has been stopped by federal agents at the Miami-Opa Locka Executive Airport. Sources claim that the agents were given a tip that there were drugs being transported on the jet and that, as of late Monday afternoon, those authorities were attempting to secure a warrant from a Miami federal judge to perform a search.

Investigators for both the FBI and ATF were set to scan the plane, in addition to police officers from Miami-Dade County.

Should somebody onboard actually be charged, The Herald adds that that person could spend Christmas in federal custody since the courts are closed for Christmas Eve

and Christmas Day. Opa-Locka officials said that the plane, a Gulfstream G-V, was traveling to Miami from California. Agents discovered that Wayne was a passenger on that plane, along with others. The Herald adds that all passengers had to wait until federal agents had wrapped up their search.

Stay tuned for more info on the situation. Back in May, Weezy announced that he would not per-



form during Rolling Loud when it was held in Miami Gardens due to a required police check.

"The Festival Police (Not Rolling Loud) made it mandatory that I had to be policed and checked to get on the stadium grounds," he said at the time. "I do not and will not ever settle for being policed to do my job and give you guys a great show."

## Derek Hough Was Seriously Injured on the Set of 'Holidays with the Houghs'

The 34-year-old performed alongside his sister and fellow pro-dancer, Julianne Hough.

If there's anyone who understands that the show must go on, it's World of Dance star Derek Hough.

The 34-year-old recently revealed that while performing musical numbers in the NBC Christmas special Holidays with the Houghs, he was actually injured himself badly,

but no one noticed.

"The very first move of the special I came out and did a little James Brown split and I ripped my hamstring," he said on The Kelly Clarkson Show, alongside his sister and fellow pro-dancer, Julianne Hough.

But Derek didn't let this incident stop him, sharing that he had to come up with a quick solution backstage so he could immediately

get back on the dance floor. "Taped it up with duct tape and then just kept going," he told Kelly.

Despite this temporary fix, he admitted being close to tears while introducing the show. "Luckily you can't really tell but ... the tears rolling down my eyes while I'm smiling," the Emmy Award-winning choreographer said while recreating the intense moment. In the end, Holi-

days with the Houghs was as memorable as it could be: The brother-sister duo went up against each other to put their best spin on holiday classics and also, shared Hough family traditions.

The holiday special was complete with special appearances by singers Ne-Yo and Ciara, and if you happen to have missed it, you can catch an encore tonight at 8 p.m. ET.

**ARIES:** Your inner fire is burning brighter than ever before. You are beginning to get a sense of your path which is motivating you to take the required action. The resources required are within you. But moving forward is not the same as running like a marathoner. Take your time to put your plans into action. Tip: Act mindfully.

**TAURUS:** You've had your share of experimenting with new things and venturing into unknown territories in the past year. You've learned so much about yourself and your trade in the process. But as the year draws to an end, you want to go back to your safe space. You want to work with what you are best at. Continue to shine your light on the world, Taurus. Tip: Do what you love.

**GEMINI:** Gemini, it is time to get back to your book. Dig deep into your chosen field to understand the underlying mechanism that can support growth. Gain practical knowledge through as many experiences as you can. If you want to create a solid future in this field, you have to become the master of your trade. Leave

no stone unturned, as every win, and every defeat will have something new to teach. Tip: You like big books and you cannot lie.

**CANCER:** Cancer, you possess the rare quality of being able to merge your personal goals with those of the collective, making it possible for everyone to work towards the same thing with equal enthusiasm. Continue to lead by example. There's so much your subordinates could learn by simply being around you. Some if you could find yourself providing emotional support to others as well. Tip: Continue to support others with your strength and wisdom.

**LEO:** Aren't you tired of making resolutions you're never going to keep up with? Surprise yourself, Leo. Get on board the fitness bandwagon starting today. Consider a yoga class in the neighborhood or renew your membership at the gym. Cliched as it is, health is wealth. Both money and happiness are dependent on how fit you are, how good you are feeling in your body, and your capacity to create a life that fulfills you in every way. Tip: Revisit your fitness goals.

**VIRGO:** This is just a minor setback, Virgo. When you are emotionally invested in a task or project, it is but natural to feel disappointed when things don't go as planned. Keep in mind that you are destined for bigger things and that there are many opportunities coming your way. Maybe failing at this one was part of the divine plan, one that is making you bulletproof for the future. Tip: Every failure is a lesson in disguise.

**LIBRA:** All of us, irrespective of our outer appearance, are an amalgam of both the masculine and feminine. While the former prides itself on raw and primal energy - our physical strength - the latter relies on a gentle, inner force to be seen and heard. Both of them are equally important and serve us in their own way. However, the situation at hand may or may not be solved by taking an aggressive stance. So, what aspect of yourself will you work with today? Tip: Your inner strength ensures a favourable outcome.

**SCORPIO:** Both success and stability are yours to keep, Scorpio, and the kind of wealth

that was once a distant dream. Use your power for the greater good. See how you can inspire change and motivate others to live their highest potential. Challenges, if any, will be navigational. Don't waste your breath worrying too much about them. Tip: Both success and stability are on the cards.

**SAGITTARIUS:** A lot of people are able to go further than they think only because someone else thought they could. Who is this person in your life, Sagittarius, who believes more in you than you do yourself? Reach out to a mentor or teacher today, somebody who has always had faith in your abilities and can remind you what you are made of stars. Tip: Get in touch with your spiritual guide or mentor.

**CAPRICORN:** Endings are followed by beginnings. The morning arrives after the dark night. Such is the cycle of life, Capricorn. Trust that this period is bringing with itself immense blessings. Blessings that will clear the path and help you move forward. Be cognisant of the financial opportunities as well that are showing up in your reality. Capitalising on them will help you expand your empire.

Tip: Trust the cycle of life.

**AQUARIUS:** "Success is not final; failure is not fatal: It is the courage to continue that counts." A Winston S. Churchill quote to motivate you as you write your success story. Aquarius, you have that rare quality that makes you shine. Trust that people will pay any price to be able to work with you if you deliver what you promise to. So continue to strive for excellence. Words of caution: do not overwork yourself to a point where your health begins to suffer. Tip: Strive for excellence.

**PISCES:** The magic you're looking for is in the work you are resisting. The cards are reminding of the importance of silence, solitude, and the simple act of coming home to yourself. Spend more time nurturing the inner temple this week. Go on a digital detox for a few hours every day. Telepathy is a perfectly effective form of communication! That feeling of disillusionment may continue to longer for a while. Step away from what you are creating. This will help you gain immense perspective. Tip: Embrace silence and solitude.