



**DZONGU FARMERS VISIT ICAR-
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**OF THE TRILLION PHOTOS
TAKEN IN 2018, WHICH WERE
THE MOST MEMORABLE?**
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SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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Pages 8 | ₹ 5

CM inaugurates three-day Tarey Bhir Kite Fiesta at Sadam

SADAM, 31 DEC (IPR): Chief Minister, Pawan Chamling wished joy and prosperity for everyone on the eve of New Year while inaugurating the three-day Tarey Bhir Kite Fiesta at Sadam today. Organized, by South Sikkim Tourism Development Society, (SSTDs) Sadam, the programme had the presence of MLA, Tilu Gurung, Chairpersons, Advisors, representatives from Namchi Municipal Council, Panchayats and public at large.

Addressing the gathering, the Chief Minister spoke about the significance of this kite festival which he termed as an extremely unique concept with the advantage of attracting huge number of tourists. He also highlighted how the State Government has always supported various



types of tourism festivals thereby strengthening the tourism sector and enriching the lives of the public.

The CM also urged the youth to identify the

various tourism spots in the villages and promote these spots. He encouraged the youth to adopt modern technology with regards to tourism.

The State Govern-

ment has provided at least 1000 homestays till date and will continue to support the tourism industry, he added.

The Chief Minister gave in-principle approval for Mangshir Purne to be declares a state holiday in accordance with the beliefs of the Bhujel community.

He further enumerated the various milestones in our journey thus far:

turn to pg02

CHIEF MINISTER PAWAN CHAMLING'S NEW YEAR MESSAGE TO THE SIKKIMESE

"Let's renew our collective vows to build a more prosperous and peaceful Sikkim"

My dear fellow citizens,
As another year comes to a close and we set to usher in the new year, let us renew our collective vows to build a more prosperous and peaceful Sikkim.

May this New Year be another step in the journey of Sikkim's progress, prosperity and development!

The transformation that Sikkim has undergone in the last twenty five years did not happen by accident. Once one of the most backward states, we inherited the difficult task of reconstructing and reshaping Sikkim through a collective effort involving much blood, sweat and tears. The chaos and disorganization at every level was overcome with great care and tremendous struggle.

Sikkim must continue to rise. We have freed Sikkim from the chords of poverty, hunger, illiteracy and unemployment. Our goal now is to channel that success as we seek to make Sikkim the most developed, wealthy, happy and prosperous state. I wish our mission will continue to foster in the New Year too.

Major milestones in our journey thus far:

- Institutionalization and strengthening of democracy.
- Securing political, economic, social, educational and constitutional rights to the people.
- Creation of a dispensation where every single citizen can live with peace, security and dignity of life.
- Maintenance of peace and tranquility inspite of being a sensitive border State, flanked by three foreign countries.
- Legislation and implementation of

laws ensuring the abolition of injustice, exploitation, oppression and discrimination.

- Preservation and protection of all sections, groups and communities.



Bhutia, Lepcha and Nepali (Chettri, Bahun, Newar, Jogi, Sanyasi, Thami, Majhi, Kami, Damai, Sarki, Gurung, Tamang, Limboo, Rai, Bhujel, Manger, Yakha) communities in Sikkim have been provided with seat reservation in higher studies, government service, Panchayati Raj Institutions and Urban Local Bodies in proportion to their population.

- Abolition of age-old gender discrimination women and the resultant exploitation and oppression, leading to women empowerment. Reservation for women in higher studies, jobs and unprecedented 50% reservation in Panchayats and urban local bodies.

- Promotion and preservation of culture and tradition of all the communities.

- Providing opportunities to youths to avail highest level of education, skill development, capacity building and subsidies for entrepreneurship, thus making them self-reliant and responsible citizens.

- Fulfilment of basic needs of the people.

- Initiation of a mission to eventually liberate Sikkim from disease, hunger and despair.

- Protection and conservation of environment through path-breaking and novel initiatives.

- Transformation of Sikkim into a clean, secure and peaceful state.

turn to pg02

Soreng Girls Academy wins 1st All Sikkim Women's Football tourney

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 30 DEC:

Soreng Girls Academy, West Sikkim, lifted the 1st All Sikkim Women's Football Tournament trophy after a keenly contested final match played here at Paljor Stadium on Sunday.

Soreng Girls Academy overcame a strong Pragati Sangh, Soreng, challenge by a solitary goal. Hanna Rai scored the winning goal for the new champions.

The first half of the match ended in a goalless draw and the second half began with a flurry of attacks and counter attacks, but neither team could breach the strong defences until Hanna Rai scored the winning goal for Soreng Girls Academy in the 67th minute.

Pragati Sangh girls played their hearts out but could not equalise.

The winning team received a cash prize of Rs 15,000 along with trophies and cash prize of Rs 10,000 was presented



to the runners-up team along with trophies. The cash prizes were sponsored by Sonam Doma Lepcha, the wife of the late football coach Hangu Norden Lepcha, and trophies were sponsored by a Siliguri-based Silco.

Muskan Subba of Pragati Sangh was adjudged the Woman of the Match while the Best Player of the tournament trophy was presented to Pragati Sangh goalkeeper, Seema Gurung.

Soreng Girls Academy goalkeeper, Gyurmie Dolma Tamang received the Best Goalkeeper trophy and Highest Scorer trophy was won by Simran Gurung for her 5 goals in the tournament.

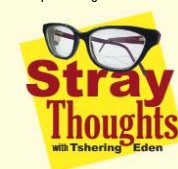
Trophies for these titles have been sponsored by former footballer, Chewang Thendup Sangderpa, and cash prizes by Sports & Youth Affairs Department Joint Director, Dr RB Biswakarma, who is also the in-charge

of Paljor Stadium.

The final match had Secretary, Sports & Youth Affairs Department, SD Dhakal, as chief guest and CEO of Sikkim Himalayan Sporting Club, Tenzing Lamtha, was present as the guest of honour among other guests.

The tournament was organised by the women's wing of Sikkim Football Association and saw the participation of eight teams from all four districts.

check out an experiment with some podcasting from Sikkim.



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<https://soundcloud.com/tshering-edem-506860426/stray-thoughts-01>

NEW FRIENDS SNOOKER CLUB

5TH WINTER OPEN SNOOKER CHAMPIONSHIP 2019

This tournament is organised in order to enhance and experience the beauty of the game, and also inspire the younger generation to learn and excel.

Players from: Delhi, Nepal, Bhutan, West Bengal & Assam

Venue: New Friends Snooker Club, Bhutia Busty, Namchi

Date: 5th to 9th January 2019

*Lodging free for out station players

Winner :
85,000/- + Trophy

Runners Up :
42,000/- + Trophy

High Break :
10,000/- + Trophy

Best Player :
8,000/- + Trophy

DSA demands 4 Sherpa candidates in 2019 election

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 31 DEC:

Denzong Sherpa Association [DSA] has decided to submit memorandum to all political parties with the demand of a minimum of four candidates belonging to the Sherpa community in the upcoming election.

In a press release, the Association has said that the representatives of Sherpa community elected after 1993 were fully under the domination of political parties and feudal forces and as such, they were unable to represent the rights and aspirations of the Sikkimese Sherpas in the

State Legislative Assembly.

DSA will also include the demand for protection of land belonging to Sherpa community under Revenue Order No. 1 in the memorandum, the release informs.

Though the people of Sikkim were provided political rights for formation of State Council in the year 1952 by the erstwhile Chogyal regime but the Sherpas of Sikkim were alienated from the political representation till the year 1993, DSA has said.

The Association will place these demands to all political parties within the month of Jan 2019, the release mentions.

Party Pies & SPARK M PRESENT

NEW YEAR EVE 2019

DJ TRON

BONFIRE NIGHT

JUNGLE PARTY FROM DUSK TILL DAWN

Venue: Dungmali Heritage Resort

DECEMBER 31ST 6:00 PM ONWARDS

STAG- 300
LADIES - 100
COUPLES - 300

Gangtok on Tuesday, 01 Jan

Temp: 09°C/03°C
Forecast: Sunny to partly cloudy with a little rain in the evening, then a shower in spots

Sunrise: 07:01 AM
Sunset: 03:49 PM

Meghalaya mine: Navy divers re-enter shaft, want water level reduced

SHILLONG, DEC 31 (PTI):

Indian Navy divers Monday again entered the flooded mine in Meghalaya, where 15 miners are trapped, and said the search would be feasible only after the water level inside the shaft is reduced to a safe diving limit of 30 metres.

On the 18th day of the operation, the Navy divers stayed inside the shaft for three hours with a hi-tech gadget, Under Water Remotely Operated Vehicle (UWROV), and found visibility to be very poor only one foot, operation spokesperson R Susngi said. "The Indian Navy suggested that the administration dewater using pumps to reduce the water level inside the mine shaft till about 30 metres (98 feet) or within safe diving limit before they commence diving," Susngi said.

According to the Navy, all precautions are being taken to ensure that divers do not suffer from decompression sickness, which is usually experienced in a compressed environment as that of the mine in Lumthari village. Fifteen miners are trapped inside a 370-foot-deep illegal coal mine in Meghalaya's East Jaintia Hills district since December 13 after water from a nearby river gushed in, puncturing the mine wall.

CM attends Gurung Tamu Lochar celebration in West Sikkim

DENTAM, 31 DEC (IPR): Chief Minister, Pawan Chamling, attended the 'Gurung Tamu Lochar Celebration 2018' at Dentam-Bega, West Sikkim on Sunday as the chief guest along with Minister RMDD, SB Subedi; Minister, Roads and Bridges, GM Gurung; Minister, AK Ghatani, Health along with MLAs, Chairpersons and HODs of different Departments.

The Chief Minister in his address extended his warm wishes and said that the auspicious occasion has been marked by declaring it a public holiday in Sikkim. The CM in his address to the gathering at the Sheep Farm in Dentam-Bega talked about the health benefits provided by the state and also gave sound advice on how to maintain an active life and healthy life.

He stated that his presence at the venue was a form of reverence to the public and to the auspicious occasion of Gurung Tamu Lochar. He stated that the actions of the Government regarding the protection of the Gurung Community along with the preservation of their culture, language and traditions, speaks louder than mere words. Further, the protection of their community with regards to scholarships, job reservations and other similar benefits received by the OBCs have been properly looked af-

Naya Sarkar Naya Bikash this New Year: Golay

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK 31 DEC:

Sikkim Krantikari Morcha president, PS Tamang [Golay] has extended his greetings and best wishes for the New Year to the people of Sikkim. He has expressed happiness, peace and prosperity to Sikkimese people in 2019.

2019 is very import-

ant for SKM and the people of Sikkim, the party has said further adding that the party believes that Sikkim will bring real change this coming year.

The party hopes to take the people of Sikkim forward with the slogan 'Naya Sarkar Naya Bikash'.

Sikkim has been de-

stroyed by false speeches and assurances in these 25 years and it is high time to uproot the present government to establish a people's government, an SKM release mentions.

The first task of SKM in 2019 would be to bring CBI into Sikkim in order to eradicate corruption from the State.

Namcheybong MLA interacts with constituency youth



NITESH R PRADHAN

GANGTOK, 31 DEC:

Namcheybong MLA, BB Rai, convened an interaction with youth of the constituency at Nandok on 30 Dec, Sunday. The interaction was well attended by youth of the area who engaged extensively in exchange of ideas and views on various issues related to the youth, state and society.

The MLA, while addressing the gathering, asked the youth to move forward with the changing times and also participate more energetically in activities of the society.

"The vision of the present leadership is to show the right path to the youth," he said.

He also announced that Namcheybong Idol – a singing and dancing

competition - will be held in the constituency as part of the Republic Day festivities which will also have the presence of ex-army and paramilitary personnel.

He also called on the youth not to fall for the despondency instigated by vested interests about government jobs.

"There cannot be any job creation in government without a vacancy," he said.

Mr Rai asked the youth to put funds given by the government for various self employment opportunities to proper use and stressed that good governance like is enjoyed in Sikkim was rare and that one should be able to take full benefit of it.

An open discussion was also held between the MLA and the youth.

He also lashed out

against the opposition for making lofty announcements without sharing details of how they proposed to deliver and also mentioned a viral video of an SKM functionary, who has made some incendiary comments about government formation, to argue that people need to weigh their options with care.

He also informed about coaching for youth for police and academic competitions started by him and thanked the people, schools and all stakeholders for the support he has received.

About the "one family, one job scheme," the MLA informed that the first phase of this scheme will be held shortly and that the scheme would continue.

Many youth also addressed the gathering where they expressed the need for creation of village libraries across Sikkim.

The youth also raised concerns about school dropout rates in rural Sikkim despite affordable education in the state.

An open discussion was also held between the MLA and the youth.

Dzongu farmers visit ICAR-National Research Centre for Orchids in Pakyong



GANGTOK, 31 DEC [PIB]:

A team of 30 Farmers from Dzongu, North Sikkim, visited ICAR-NRCO, Pakyong, on 27 Dec on an exposure visit as part of capacity building and awareness under the Tribal Sub-Plan Project for conservation and cultivation of orchids.

The team was accompanied by Panchayat President Sonam Kipa Bhutia and Panchayat Member Laden Ongmu Lepcha.

On behalf of the insti-

tute, Dr Tshering Lamu Bhutia, Scientist (Horticulture), welcomed the guests while Dr LC De, Principal Scientist (Horticulture), explained the importance and significance of floriculture in hill regions and also interacted with farmers in various aspects of conservation and cultivation of orchids and other ornamental flowers.

The team visited all the polyhouses and farms/ fields of ICAR-NR- CO accompanied by Ajay

Bhusal, Technical Assistant (F/F), and were talked through the mandate and activities of ICAR-NRCO.

Mr Bhusal explained the techniques of conservation and cultivation of orchids and management technologies developed by ICAR-NRCO and demonstrated planting/ potting techniques and methods of media preparation and also highlighted the various value-added products obtained from orchid waste.

Finally, Director of the institute, Dr DR Singh, interacted with the visiting farmers and motivated the farmers, youngsters and students towards agriculture.

He also highlighted the various opportunities and schemes introduced and implemented by ICAR - Government of India in agriculture sector, especially in the NE & NEH region.

All farmers appreciated the initiative taken by ICAR-NRC (O) Pakyong.

Singtam SC Welfare Association condemns CM's statement on SC/OBC certificates

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 31 DEC:

Singtam Scheduled Caste Welfare Association [SSCWA] has vehemently condemned the "irresponsible" statement of Chief Minister Pawan Chamling that SC and OBC certificates would be granted to non Sikkim Subject Certificate or Certificate of Identification holders. According to SSCWA, the CM made this statement during the function held on 28 Dec at Saramsa to mark the 24th anniversary of the SDF government.

The Association has said that after reducing the quota for SCs in government jobs, this an-

nouncement has further increased apprehensions in the minds of Sikkimese Kami, Damai and Sarki communities regarding their future.

"The SDF party founded on the plank of local protection has openly violated its own set of ideology and principle by announcing SC and OBC certificate to people other than SSC or Col holders," an SSCWA release states.

The association has further appealed to all political parties, organizations and individuals to condemn the announcement to protect Sikkim and its distinct identity as protected under Article 371F of the Indian Constitution.

"Let's renew our collective..."

The world-class performance of our government has leveraged Sikkim's name, fame and glory across the globe. Sikkim today has become a globally acclaimed and leading state in various fields.

Let us pledge to take the name, fame and image of Sikkim to newer heights as we embark on the New Year. Let us resolve to be on our guard to uphold the hard-earned peace, goodwill, security and freedom that prevail in Sikkim. May Sikkim be kept from destruction, unrest and hatred from racial, communal and religious differences.

Let's keep working towards the establishment of an inclusive society that nurtures the interest of every citizen and ensures the victory of all. Let's keep Sikkim from failing and stay united to keep Sikkim safe. Here is wishing you the very best for the New Year!

Yours truly,
 Pawan Chamling

SKM constituency-level meeting at Pathing



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 31 DEC:

A constituency-level meeting of Sikkim Krantikari Morcha for Rangrang-Yangang was held at Pathing, South Sikkim, today.

The meeting was attended by vice president [Farmer's Front], RK Basnet, vice-president [Election and Panchayati Raj Cell], LB Das, CLC president, Tenga Bhutia, and other senior leaders and workers of the party.

An SKM press release informs that the meet-

ing prepared the list of upcoming programmes of the party in the constituency and decided to increase the pace of the party programmes in the area.

Meanwhile, ward-level committees have been formed in more than 50% of wards in the constituency and the rest will be formed in January.

The release states that Mr Basnet expressed confidence of an SKM victory from Rangrang-Yangang constituency in 2019.

CM inaugurates three...

ated the advantages that the public will receive at the Sarkhari Rojgar Mela which is scheduled to be held on 12 Jan at Gangtok. The Chief Minister articulated that this mela is being conducted in order to give equal employment opportunity to the public in various State Government departments.

He also shared the details of the ensuing Janta Mela starting from 16 Jan at Paljor Stadium, Gangtok and shared the various benefits that the public will receive including the sanction orders of the requests placed during the 32-day Sikkim Jan Sewa, Jan Samman Abhiyan.

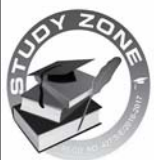
The Chief Minister was also felicitated by the organizing committee for his unwavering efforts in the upliftment of the State. He along with the dignitaries also felicitated the best homestay proprietor Binod Pradhan from Saloom homestay at Sukrabarey, Dew Prashad Pradhan and Guman Singh Pradhan of Sadam and Sukrabarey as the most progressive organic dairy farmers.

It maybe mentioned here that the special attraction of this three-day festival will include tree house, organic vegetables and fruit exhibition, traditional food stall, cycling, traversing, canopy walk, traditional Lingey ping and helicopter joy ride.

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

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ADMISSION OPEN

STUDY ZONE

Mr. Dawchung Lepcha (Chairperson)

OUR COURSE OUTLINES:

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

OUR COURSE OBJECTIVES:

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

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

Governor’s New Year greetings

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 31 DEC:
On the joyous occasion of New Year 2019, Governor Ganga Prasad has extended warm greetings and good wishes to the people of Sikkim.

In his message the Governor has said, “New Year brings with it the opportune time to have a fresh perspective in our lives and utilise the opportunities the time throws to us. It also provides us the time to reflect on the lessons learnt from troubles and difficulties that we have faced in the year gone by. New Year is symbolic to new hopes and aspiration which determines our actions as we plan to move ahead in our lives. May this new year usher prosperity, love, peace and happiness in the life of my fellow Sikkimese.”

SVA affiliated to VFI

NITESH R PRADHAN
GANGTOK, 31 DEC:
Sikkim Volleyball Association (SVA) attended a meeting of the Volleyball Federation of India in Delhi on 29 Dec regarding affiliation with VFI. The meeting went well and SVA is now affiliated with the Volleyball Federation of India.

Seshir Pariyar from Namchi represented Sikkim on behalf of SVA. In Sikkim, the association is headquartered in Namchi with Topda Bhutia as president and Leela Hang Subba as vice president.

LS passes Indian Medical Council (Amendment) Bill

NEW DELHI, DEC 31 (PTI): Lok Sabha Monday passed the Indian Medical Council (Amendment) bill to allow a panel of eminent professionals to run the scam-tainted Medical Council of India (MCI), so that medical education can be regulated in the best manner. The bill passed by the lower house seeks to replace an ordinance issued in this regard in September this year. Piloting the bill, Health Minister Jagat Prakash Nadda said this bill supersedes MCI and the powers of the council have been vested in a Board of Governors (BoG).

The BoG have all eminent personalities and include directors of AIIMS and PGI, Chandigarh. This board will continue to perform till a Council is constituted, Nadda said. A separate bill to replace MCI with National Medical Commission is pending in Parliament. “This bill has been issued so that medical education can be regulated in best manner, as MCI turned out to be massive failure,” he said. The Minister, while speaking on the bill, said the parliamentary panel on Health in its report also cautioned that any attempt to overhaul the medical regulatory system in the country will face huge challenges. He suggested that government was forced to come up with this bill as the oversight committee formed by the government on suggestion of the Supreme Court resigned and the MCI could not function.

3-day Kisaan Mela begins at Bermiok Reshep



WANGCHUK BHUTIA
BERMIOK-RESHEP, 31 DEC:

A three-day Kisaan Mela at Bermiok Reshep in South Sikkim was organised by Himalayan Education Society. President Himalayan Education Society, Bikash Pradhan highlighted about the Kisaan Mela and stated that the main motive behind organising the Mela is to bring together buyers and sellers of organic products under one roof. Different Self Help Groups are taking part in displaying their organic

produce and traditional food stalls. He also underlined the different activities undertaken by Himalayan Education Society for the development of the area. The Kisaan Mela was inaugurated by Upa Zilla Adhakshya South on 30 Dec. The second day of the Mela today was attended by Managing Director, SIMTEI, Mani Kumar Pradhan as chief guest. District Development Manager, NABARD South, Tempa C Bhutia delivered tips on organic farming and urged everyone to

work with dedication to achieve the mission. The chief guest in his speech appreciated the initiative being undertaken by Himalayan Education Society and also added that it should be organised every year. The Kisaan Mela will be held till 01 Jan 2019. Also in the function, the chief guest and the District Development Manager NABARD, Tempa C, Bhutia were felicitated by the organising committee. A colourful cultural program was presented by different SHGs.

Tong Rong Rong wins Lingdong-Barfok volleyball tournament



SUMMIT REPORT
DIKCHU, 31 DEC:

The final match of the Linghi Chubong Volleyball tournament was held Sunday at Mangzing Primary School in Dzongu, North Sikkim between Tong Rong Rong and Lower Lingdong. Tong Rong Rong won the match in a best of five clash and lifted the trophy. The GPU-level tournament for Lingdong-Borfok had Deputy Speaker, Sonam Gyatso Lepcha, as a chief guest accompanied by Zilla member, Rinjong Lhamu Lepcha, Zilla member Lum/ Gor/ Sangtok GPU, Tshering Gyatso Lepcha and the general public. The Mangzing ward panchayat, Passangkita Lepcha, reiterated the demand for construction

of a school building, extension of school ground, provision of hostel and the construction of road to Mangzing. She also requested for early disbursement of compensation for the road construction. SMC member, Nima Dorjee Lepcha, delivered the welcome speech. Headmaster Karma Lepcha highlighted the school activities and also shared problems faced by the school in terms of infrastructure and enrollment of students. He also highlighted the problem of network connectivity in the area due to which people are facing problems. Likewise, the complex head, Jorbu Lepcha, urged everyone at Mangzing to increase the enrollment of the school

in order for it to run smoothly. Addressing the function, the chief guest announced that the road to Mangzing will be constructed as early as possible and that survey for the same has been completed. The chief guest also announced Rs 50,000 for the sound system and costumes for Mangzing school. He further appealed to all to remain united and underlined the different development schemes being sanctioned in Dzongu. About the demand of land compensation, the Deputy Speaker informed that Rs 5 crore has already been sanctioned for the compensation and will be disbursed soon.


SDF Cheli Morcha hails declaration of holiday for Teej

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 30 DEC:
The Cheli Morcha of Sikkim Democratic Front, on behalf of all the women of Sikkim, has expressed gratitude towards the State Government and to SDF president, Chief Minister Pawan Chamling, for the declaration of a State holiday for the festival of Teej. The SDF Cheli Morcha

has hailed the development as a historic, women-centric initiative. A press release issued by SDF vice-president [Cheli Morcha], Manita Mangar, states that the SDF government has been working on its inclusive and gender-equality policies and principles for the collective interest and welfare

of the people of Sikkim since its inception. The release adds that the SDF government has taken many historic initiatives for the conservation and protection of various culture and systems of the State and has provided protection to all communities and religions of the State.

Teej is among the more important festivals of the State and that the declaration of a State holiday for Teej was recognition of the integrity and holy beliefs of women. The party adds that the historic and women-centric announcement of the government has further inspired the Sikkimese women.



ROADS & BRIDGES DEPARTMENT

GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM

SINGTAM

Memo No:280/ AES/ R&B

Date: 26/12/2018

NOTICE INVITINGTENDER

For and on behalf of the Governor of Sikkim, Assistant Engineer- Singtam, Roads & Bridges Department, Singtam , invites sealed tenders under single bid system from the eligible contractors of **Class IV Grade** enlisted with Sikkim Public Works Department vide Notification No. 515/R&B/Secy, dated 12.06.2018 and notification no. 556/R&B PWD/Secy dated : 28.08.2018 for the construction of **fair weather roads**, through competitive bidding within the territorial jurisdiction of **CONCERNED Ward of the Gram Panchayat Unit of Tumin-Lingi Constituency** where the work is to be executed. The details of works and time schedule are as under:

SL. No.	Name of Work	Cost of Work put to tender (in Rs)	Earnest Money @ 2.50% (in Rs.)	Cost of Tender documents (in Rs.)	Completion Time.
1.	Construction of Fair weather Road from Dahal Chupalakra Gaon to Dhanbari PMGSY Road in East Sikkim				
	Km 1 st	Rs. 42,38,496.00	Rs. 1,05,970.00	Rs.1,500.00	09 months
	Km 2 nd	Rs. 12,71,549.00	Rs. 31,789.00	Rs. 500.00	09 months
2	Construction of Fair weather Road from PMGSY Road to Nursery Gurasay in East Sikkim				
	Km 1 st	Rs. 42,38,496.00	Rs. 1,05,970.00	Rs.1,500.00	09 months
	Km 2 nd	Rs. 42,38,496.00	Rs. 1,05,970.00	Rs.1,500.00	09 months
3	Construction of Fair weather Road from Dhanbari PMGSY Road to Kageythang in East Sikkim				
	Km 1 st	Rs. 42,38,496.00	Rs. 1,05,970.00	Rs.1,500.00	09 months
	Km 2 nd	Rs. 21,19,248.00	Rs. 52,981.00	Rs.1,500.00	09 months

TIME SCHEDULE:-

1.	Date of submission of application with Bank receipt and TDR for issue of Tender Documents.	9 th January, 2019 (10.00 am to 4.00 pm) at respective Gram Prashashan Kendra where work is to be executed.
2.	Last Date and Time for submission of Tender	10 th January 2019 (10.00 am to 1.00 pm) at respective Gram Prashashan Kendra where work is to be executed.
3.	Date and Time for Opening of Tender	10 th January 2019 (1.30 pm) at respective Gram Prashashan Kendra where work is to be executed.

CONDITIONS OF CONTRACT

1. Tender is open only to the eligible Contractors / Firms of appropriate Class/ Area.

2. The intending tenders/ contractors should apply in writing for issue of Tender documents. The application would invariably be signed by the contractor himself/ herself. The tender document will not be issued to any person other than the INTENDING TENDERER. The application shall be submitted initially for each work listed above with all required documents.

3. The applications should enclose attested copies of the (a) Goods & Service Tax Clearance Certificate (b) Validated / Updated Contractor Enlistment Certificate along with application. It is mandatory to produce the Original validated/ updated Enlistment Certificate during sale/ issue of the Tender Document for verification.

4. The prescribed Non- Transferable Tender Documents (excluding the Tender Form) can be obtained during the period specified in (As above from the office of the Assistant Engineer- Singtam, Roads & Bridges Department, Singtam on production of requisite Bank receipt towards the cost of Tender Document (non-refundable) under the **Head "0059-80-800" cost of Tender Form (Roads & Bridges)**.

5. Earnest money deposit @ 2.5% in State Bank of Sikkim shall be in the form of Deposit Receipt of Schedules Bank which includes deposit in the form of Temporary Deposit Receipts (TDR) in favour of the Accounts Officer, Roads & Bridges Department, Mirman Bhawan, Gangtok. Tender Form shall be issued only on production of the deposit receipts of 2.5% earnest money.

6. The Tender Documents, including the Tender Form with quoted offer should be placed in a sealed cover with the name of the Tenderers and the name of the work superscripted on it. Supporting documents listed at Sl.No. (a)& (b) above should be enclosed with the offer.

7. Sealed tenders may be deposited in the Tender Box in the office of the Assistant Engineer- Singtam, Roads & Bridges Department, Singtam on the date and within the time indicated above.

8. Tenders will be opened by a Tender Opening Committee as prescribed by the Government in the presence of the tenderness on the date and time indicated above.

9. The Tenderer should sign on every page of the tenders documents as Acceptance of the General Direction and Conditions of Contract and other laid down norms. The rate quoted should be both in figures and words and should be inclusive of GST all other Taxes and Levies. Over writing and correction should be avoided and if made should be authenticated. Incomplete/ Conditional tenders shall be rejected forthwith.

10. In case of any discrepancy in rate (s) printed in the Schedule of Rates and Quantities issued with the tender documents rates as per approved Scheduled of Rates will be taken as correct. For items outside the SOR, the rates shall be as per the technically checked estimate/analysis. Decision of the Principal Chief Engineer cum Secretary / Head of the Department will be final in this regard.

11. The work value, scope and quantum of work are subject to change, the contractor shall execute the work as per the directives of the Department. No claim on this account shall be entertained whatsoever. If any extra claim is made, it shall be as per the agreements rates.

12. The Department reserves the rights to hold payments to the contractor unless test certificates are not produced by the contractor when called upon to do so.

13. Avoidable damages due to negligence of the contractors shall be at his/her own risk and cost. The department shall not be liable for payment of such damages (if any), including accidents to labourer at site.

14. The offer shall remain valid for a period of 90 days. The work should commence within 15 days from the date of issue of Work Order.

15. All the conditions as mentioned in the NIT shall be deemed to be a part of the agreement to be entered with the contractor. Security deposit shall be collected by deductions from the running bills of the contractor @ 5% of the value of work done.

16. The Department reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason thereof.

17. The recoveries of Royalties on Forest produces shall be as per rates notified by the Government from time to time and applicable on the date of payment. In no case, claim of any contractor for deduction as per rates incorporated in Analysis of Rates or Schedule of Rates or Rates on the date of tender shall be acceptable.

18. Subletting of contract work is against the norms and if it comes to the notice, the original contract shall be cancelled and appropriate action shall be initiated as per the rules.

19. The Department also reserves the right to increase, decrease, alter or modify the item of works as indicted in the NIT without assigning any reason thereof.

20. In case the man powers employed by the contractor are from outside the State or neighbouring countries, it shall be the responsibility of the contractor to get them registered with the Labour Department, Government of Sikkim as per the relevant Labour Laws.

21. Use of explosive shall be regulated as under.

a) Transportation, handling, storage and use of explosive (if necessary) shall be in accordance with the provision of the India Explosive Act and General Guideline, Circulars issued by the department and other competent authorities on the subject from time to time.

b) The rules and regulations issued by the Sikkim Public Works Department or any other competent authority shall strictly be adhered to with regard to transportations, storages, handling, and use of explosive at all times. Proper daily record of receipt and issue of explosives shall be maintained by the contractor.

22. The contractor shall also make arrangement to have photographs of the works taken at least at three stages of the construction period i.e. beginning, middle and completion stage.

23. Damages to properties in and around the work site must be avoided at all cost. The contractor shall be held responsible for any acts of negligence and shall be made to make good the damages.

24. It is accepted to the tenderer to have inspected the site before submitting his bid. There may be possible site difficulties for which the tenderer should have their own correct assessment before submitting the bid.

25. The cost of stock materials supplied from the departmental store will be deducted from the contractor's bills as per rules.

26. **The bidders shall produce a Certificate of Residence from the CONCERED GRAM Panchayat unit where the work is to be executed.**

R.O. No. 557/ ipr/pub/classi./18-19


Date: 29.12.2018.

Sd/-

Assistant Engineer

Roads & Bridges Department.

Singtam Sub Division



GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM

DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Sectt. Annexe I, Top Floor,

Sonam Tshering Marg, Gangtok – 737101, Sikkim

Phone No. (03592) 202601, Tele-Fax (03592)207426

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NOTICE INVITING EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)

The Department of Information and Technology, Government of Sikkim, seeks proposals from reputed and experienced registered Company/Proprietorship firm/Partnership firm in Sikkim to participate in competitive bidding for implementation of Check Post Management System @ Rangpo and Melli Check Post (including Supply and Installation of Software Solution, Security Surveillance, IT and non-IT equipments, Site preparation, Civil work, erecting of a canopy structure, electrical/ UPS with required wiring etc), commissioning, integration and maintenance” for a period of 3 (Three) years in Rangpo and Melli Check post, Sikkim.

The EOI document is available on the website www.sikkim.gov.in. Interested participants, who qualify as per the criteria mentioned in the EOI notification document, may submit their interest. The last date for submission of EOI is 12/02/2019.

R.O. No. 562/ ipr/pub/classi./18-19

Date: 29.12.2018

Additional Director.

SummitTIMES

ON TOP OF THE NEWS

Politics of Acrimony

Why prepare for debate when name-calling is also enough

When was the last time that Sikkim was treated to a genuine political debate? Discounting the recent effort on digital platform Sikkim Chronicle, never. All that plays out in the space where debates - as in differing ideological positions on important issues - are allegations and counter insinuations. And now, the country also appears to be catching on. The demonetization exercise offered a good example of how there is always a lot of noise, but substance remains a rare commodity. Opponents had problems with how the drama was executed, of how obviously ill-prepared the government was, and the government adamantly defended the righteousness of their decision. They were clearly not addressing each other, but were, like always, performing exclusively for their respective galleries. The bar has been falling fast and downright repulsive things are now being said. Expect this bottom of the barrel scrapping for political brownie points to arrive very shortly in Sikkim as well.

Meanwhile, people in Sikkim remain locked out of discussions that could help them notice at least something different in the political parties beyond who heads them. If political parties engaged in ideological debates on issues, they would know exactly what to run with in the upcoming assembly polls beyond allegations and claims. But when it comes to ideology, this position is either in very short supply or everyone has settled with jingoistic-jingles, because politics continues to remain obsessed with pot-shots and allegations, not plans and different approaches. And no, sops do not qualify as plans. It should worry every citizen and voter that most of the times, in most of the contests, they are expected to choose not which plan/proposal is better but who do they trust more with the same, near identical set of promises. When we, as citizens, don't demand better homework from our leaders and political parties, and vote on superficialities like which group makes a more convincing argument to deliver the same results, we open the door for attacks where there should have been debates and sops where there should have been visions grounded in ideology. In such a scenario, it becomes more important demonize opponents than convince people of your own "vision".

It is because we refuse to demand explanations and remain comfortable in the absence of nuance that vicious rhetoric, which should be allowed no space in the public domain, has become the only flavor around. Politics has come to such a pass that there is no other tone in which political debate is engaged in anymore. While distasteful remarks and exaggerated conspiracy theories might provide some vicarious thrills and entertainment for the otherwise disinterested, these are pronouncements which betray only a graceless lack of confidence and contribute nothing to either the delivery of governance or the responsibilities of the Opposition. Politics in a democracy might allow, even enjoy, for some theatrics, but should not be denigrated to a level where puerile arguments, obvious play-acting and/or unnecessary name-calling are stitched together to fill in for sane deliberations.

In Sikkim, as in the country, every segment, whether the ruling or the Opposition, has presented itself in rather poor light in how they have engaged important issues facing not just Sikkim, but arguments which have a resonance in the entire country. Significant issues, which could have inspired meaningful debate, have instead been reduced to acrimonious allegations and counters fuelling an environment in which political and ideological opponents are painted as enemies.

When debates focus only on vilifying, political dialogue becomes impossible. And what is democracy, if it cannot create the environment for political dialogue...

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



Maria Meza, a 40-year-old migrant woman from Honduras, runs away from tear gas with her 5-year-old twin daughters in front of the border wall in Tijuana, Mexico.



Emma Gonzalez, a student and shooting survivor from the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, addresses the crowd at the 'March for Our Lives' rally in Washington, D.C., March 24, 2018.



CCTV video obtained by the Turkish newspaper Hurriyet shows Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi entering the Saudi consulate in Istanbul on Oct. 2, 2018.

Of the trillion photos taken in 2018, which were the most memorable?

NICOLE SMITH DAHMEN
theconversation.com

What makes some images memorable and others easily forgotten? It's a question I've been studying for nearly 20 years.

Estimates suggest that more than 1 trillion photos were taken in 2018.

With so many in circulation, it's difficult for any single photo to capture our attention and become a famed iconic image.

In the golden age of photojournalism, news photographs became iconic largely because they appeared on the front pages of newspapers around the world - think Iwo Jima and the Hindenburg.

But that age has come to an end: Digital journalism and social media have changed the way we consume images. Each day, audiences are bombarded with photos. Many are shocking, inspiring and heartbreaking. But in their overwhelming volume, they're easily forgotten.

Nonetheless, some do rise to the top.

Two colleagues and I developed a model to help predict when and how certain images may become widely known.

The model shows that certain characteristics of an image - such as its timeliness, its cultural resonance, its political potency or its likelihood of being turned into a meme - can influence its rise and reach.

Images that exhibit these qualities can quickly go viral, turning them into what communication scholars call "instant news icons." While these images don't typically endure to become truly historic, they nonetheless help citizens navigate and understand complex events.

So which images did this in 2018?

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

On Feb. 14, a gunman opened fire at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, killing 17 people and injuring 17 others. Following such a mass shooting, there's a predictable pattern of news media coverage - breaking news reports filled with speculation, details about the perpetrator, elected officials responding with

"thoughts and prayers" and debates about mental health and gun control.

But after the shooting at Stoneman Douglas High School, we saw something new: images of resistance. The students there spoke fervently, demanding action from elected officials.

These images of resistance spurred school walkouts and nationwide protests, culminating in the March For Our Lives.

A PHOTO OF FIREFIGHTERS GOES VIRAL

Forest fires continued to rage in 2018.

During the devastating Carr Fire that burned more than 200,000 acres and claimed the lives of three firefighters, Redding, California resident Richard Tuggle captured a photo of five firefighters resting in a backyard in his neighborhood on July 27. The firefighters were clearly reeling from the exhaustion of battling the deadly fire.

What's particularly interesting about this photo and its rise to prominence is that it was captured by a citizen rather than a journalist. The photo went viral on social media and was ultimately picked up by news outlets across the country, showing how instant news icons can come from citizens as well as journalists in this new age of photography.

SECURITY CAMERAS UPEND THE SAUDI NARRATIVE

In early October, Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi disappeared. The Saudis initially denied that they had anything to do with his disappearance.

But security-camera footage emerged showing Khashoggi entering the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul. It served as evidence to support the claim - later confirmed - that he was killed inside.

In this case, the image was captured by a security camera, rather than a photographer. Nonetheless, it became an instant news icon. It's just another example of the changing nature of the production and consumption of news imagery.

Time magazine named journalists as their 2018 Person of the Year, partly in response to the Khashoggi killing.

DEVASTATION IN YEMEN

A devastating war in Yemen has led to economic

instability and widespread food shortages.

On Oct. 26, The New York Times published photojournalist Tyler Hicks' gut-wrenching images of starving Yemeni children.

A few days later we learned that Amal Husain, the 7-year-old girl in Hicks' haunting photo, had died.

Journalists have continued to document this humanitarian crisis. In mid-December the Senate voted to end U.S. military support to Saudi Arabia in Yemen.

But the crisis continues, and millions of people still face starvation.

THE POLITICS OF IMMIGRATION

Political, economic and ethical debates about immigration dominated the year, with two photos driving the conversation.

Getty photographer John Moore's image of a 2-year-old Honduran girl in a pink shirt sobbing as U.S. Border Patrol agents searched her mother became the face of Trump's "zero tolerance" family separation policy. The image was even modified for a Time magazine cover under the headline "Welcome to America."

The image continued to spur discussion after it was made clear that the mother and daughter were not actually separated. However, hundreds of other children have been separated from their parents and recently a 7-year-old girl in Border Patrol custody died.

Then, on Nov. 25, Reuters photojournalist Kim Kyung-Hoon snapped a picture of a mother and her twin daughters fleeing tear gas at the border wall between the U.S. and Tijuana, Mexico. Appearing in news outlets and on social media feeds across the country, it spurred further public and political outrage.

Some said the photo effectively contradicted Trump's narrative that refugees were dangerous. Others noted that the photo evoked the iconic image of a naked Vietnamese girl screaming in pain following a napalm attack.

[the writer is Associate Professor, School of Journalism and Communication, University of Oregon]

Health Check: when should you throw away leftovers?

ENZO PALOMBO
theconversation.com

Refrigeration is the most important invention in the history of food. But while commercial and home refrigerators have only been used for the past 100 years or so, people have long used cool natural environments to store foods for extended periods.

Temperature is important for controlling microbial growth. Just as we find food wholesome, bacteria and fungi also enjoy the nutritional benefits of foods. They will consume the food and multiply, eventually "spoiling" the food (think mouldy bread or slimy lettuce).

If the microbe can cause disease - such as Salmonella, Campylobacter, E. coli or Listeria - you're at risk of food poisoning. Most disease-causing microbes can grow to dangerous levels even before the food is noticeably spoiled without changing the smell, taste or appearance of the food.

HOW TO STOP BUGS GROWING IN OUR FOOD

All forms of life require a few basic things to grow: a source of energy, (sugar for us, sunlight for plants), oxygen (for higher forms of life), water and simple chemical building blocks that provide nitrogen, phosphorous and sulphur - and the correct temperature. Water is key, and denying it severely restricts microbial growth.

That's why salt has long been used as a preservative for perishable foods like meats; salt binds the water and makes it unavailable to microbes. Acid can also be used (via pickling or fermentation), as most microbes don't like acidic conditions.

Of course, cooking kills the microbes of concern, but they can contaminate and grow in the food afterwards.

If the food can't be salted or pickled, or you have leftovers of cooked food, you'll need to store the food at a temperature microbes don't like. Refrigeration is the most effective

perature range between 5°C and 60°C, where most common food poisoning bacteria like to grow. To avoid the danger zone, keep hot foods above 60°C and store foods below 5°C.

The two-hour/four-hour guidelines can also help avoid food poisoning from leftovers. If perishable food

day, it's probably best to discard or consume it soon afterwards.

If the food is OK, store it in small portions, as these will reach the right temperature sooner than larger volumes, before refrigerating or freezing.

Using some common sense, and understanding how microbes grow,



and economical option.

Typically, the greater the moisture level, the more perishable the food. That's why we can store dry foods (such as nuts) in the cupboard but high-moisture foods (such as fresh meat, vegetables) will quickly spoil if unrefrigerated.

HOW TO STORE FOOD SAFELY

The "danger zone" is the tem-

has been in the danger zone for:

- less than two hours, use it immediately or store it appropriately
- two to four hours, use it immediately
- longer than four hours, discard it.

So, if the food has been sitting on the table after a long lunch on a warm

can help avoid a nasty case of diarrhoea - or worse. All food business must comply with food safety standards but how we prepare, store and consume food in our homes is equally important in preventing food-borne illness.

[the writer is Professor of Microbiology, Swinburne University of Technology]

Bangla PM Hasina wins landslide victory in polls, secures 3rd straight term

ANISUR RAHMAN

DHAKA, DEC 31 (PTI): Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's ruling alliance Monday swept to a landslide victory in the general elections, securing a third straight term even as the opposition grouping rejected the poll outcome as "farical".

The Awami League-led grand alliance won 288 seats in the 300-member Parliament, Election Commission (EC) secretary Helaluddin Ahmed said, after counting of votes in the elections that was marred by deadly violence. The alliance, which got nearly 82 per cent of the total votes polled, bettered its previous best performance of 2008 when it bagged 263 seats.

The opposition Jatiya Oikya Front - National Unity Front (NUF) - secured seven seats with over 15 per cent of the votes, he said, adding that others won three seats.

Voting was postponed in one constituency and result not declared in another due to the death of a candidate, Ahmed said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated



ed Hasina over phone on her victory in the elections and assured her of India's continued support to Bangladesh's developmental strides.

Rejecting the results, the opposition NUF urged the EC to immediately scrap the "farical election" and hold a fresh one under a non-partisan interim government.

NUF chief and veteran lawyer Kamal Hossain called the polls a "farce", citing widespread polling frauds, bdnews24.com reported.

"We have reports that

fraudulence took place in all centres.

"You (the EC) must cancel this election right away. We reject the so-called results and demand a new election under a neutral government," Hossain said.

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir, who steered the party in the absence of Zia, described the polls as a "cruel farce". He said the elections proved that free and fair polls were not possible under a partisan government. The BNP's decision to stay

away from the general election five years ago was not wrong, he said.

At least 18 people, including a member of a security agency, have been killed and more than 200 others injured in poll-related violence, making it one of the deadliest polls in the country, the Daily Star reported.

Reports said most of the dead were ruling party activists, while others were workers of the BNP or its allies.

As many as 299 out of the 300 parliamentary seats went to the polls

that took place across Bangladesh from 8 AM to 4 PM (local time) Sunday.

The EC confirmed the complete result of the constituency in southwestern Gopalganj from where Hasina won, bagging 2,29,539 votes, while her BNP opponent got only 123 votes.

Over 600,000 security personnel including several thousand soldiers and paramilitary border guards were deployed across the nation for the election in which 10.41 crore people were eligible to vote.

Sheikh Hasina: Growth-oriented 'iron lady' for some, 'authoritarian' for others

DHAKA, DEC 31 (PTI): Bangladesh's iron lady Sheikh Hasina, who won a historic fourth term as prime minister becoming the country's longest-serving leader, is credited by her supporters for the Muslim-majority nation's impressive economic growth, but her opponents see her as an authoritarian who stifled the Opposition.

Hasina, the daughter of Bangladesh's founder Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, won the 11th parliamentary elections with a landslide victory even as the Opposition rejected the "farical" polls marred with violence that claimed 18 lives, making it one of the deadliest polls in the country.

The 71-year-old chief of the Awami League was pitted against a united opposition Jatiya Oikya Front (United National Front) led by octogenarian Kamal Hossain, an Oxford-educated jurist and former foreign minister.

Her arch-rival ex-premier and Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) chief Khalida Zia, who has been serving a 17-year sentence for corruption, was barred from contesting the polls.

Born on September 28, 1947 at her parental home of Tungipara in northern Bangladesh (then East Pakistan), Hasina is the eldest among the five children of Rahman, the first president of Bangladesh.

Hasina married nuclear scientist MA Wazed Miah in 1968. Her husband died in 2009. They have one son, Sajeeb Wazed Joy, and one daughter, Saima Wazed Hossain Putul.

Though she took active interest in politics throughout her student life, Hasina formally joined the Awami League as its leader following the tragic

assassination of Rahman, his wife and three sons in 1975.

While living in self-exile with her husband in India, Hasina was elected the president of the Awami League in 1981, and since then she has been the president of the party.



Ending six years in exile, she returned home on May 17, 1981. In 1983, Hasina formed an alliance to oust military dictator Hussain Muhammad Ershad. Hasina joined forces with Zia's BNP to help oust the military dictator in 1990 but the two soon fell out and their rivalry is popularly known as the "Battle of Begums".

Hasina and Zia, the 73-year-old widow of military dictator Ziaur Rahman, share a long and bitter rivalry and have alternated in power for most of the past 28 years. Hasina was first elected prime minister in 1996 after defeating her arch-rival Zia, who eventually regained power in 2001.

She was the first democratically elected prime minister of the country to complete the term.

In 2008, Hasina returned as the prime minister with a landslide victory. In January 2014, she became the prime minister for a third term in an unopposed election as BNP boycotted the polls.

She has been in power

ever since, presiding over economic expansion of more than six per cent every year since 2009.

Since she took power in 2008, Bangladesh's per capita income has seen a threefold increase. The country's gross domestic product (GDP)

stood at USD 250 billion in 2017 and it clocked a growth rate of 7.28 per cent last year.

The garment industry has emerged as one of the main pillars of the economy, providing jobs to 4.5 million people. Hasina has been praised by her supporters for cracking down on Islamist extremists after five homegrown terrorists stormed a Dhaka cafe in 2016, killing 20 hostages, including one Indian.

She also launched trials of the powerful Islamist opposition over crimes committed during the 1971 independence war.

Her critics, however, have described her as an authoritarian since she pushed on with an uncontested general election in 2014.

Her opponents accuse her of crushing the opposition and creating a one-party dominant political system in Bangladesh. Hasina will serve as the prime minister for the fourth term - a record for any Bangladeshi leader since the country came into existence in 1971.

Unique Shuttlers win Jorethang Premier Badminton League

JORETHANG, 30 DEC (IPR): The semifinals and finals of the first franchisee-based sporting event in Sikkim, the Jorethang Premier Badminton League (JPBL), organised by Badminton Association of Jorethang, were held at the Badminton Court above Jorethang Car Parking Plaza on Sunday.

Unique Shuttlers emerged winners of the league and walked away with a grand prize of Rs 2 lakh while Namchi Smashers finished behind as the runners-up and received Rs 1.25 lakh.

Kapil Mani Shilal and Ministerand owner of Red Panda GMTS, GM Gurung, emerged winner and runner-up of the exhibition match respectively. The fair team award was conferred on team Racquetters.

Rajya Sabha MP Hishey Lachungpa was present as the chief guest accompanied by Speaker KN Rai, President State Badminton Association C. Zangpo, NJMC Chairman Tika Gurung, Vice Chairper-



son Pema Tamang, NJMC Councillors, President of Badminton Association Of Jorethang Jigme Namgyal, BAJ executive members amidst a huge gathering of sporting enthusiasts from all over the state.

The four franchisees that qualified for the semi-finals were Jorethang Rising Star (IRS), Unique Shuttlers (US), Namchi Smashers (NS) and The Racquetters (TRQ). All the other franchisee owners - Roshan Rai of Racquetters, Tarundeep Rai and TP Ethenpa of Namchi Smashers, Satyam Rai of Southern Phoenix were also present on the said occasion.

The organizing committee also felicitated

Jorethang Senior Secondary School, the recent winners of National Inter School band competition held in Delhi during the course of the sporting event.

It may be mentioned here that Jorethang Badminton Premier League is a certain raiser event for the upcoming Jorethang Maghey Mela 2019 where a total of 10 players in each team from top 60 badminton players of Sikkim through an Open Auction which was held on 25 November.

Alken Laboratories was the title sponsors for the badminton league while IPCA laboratories and Casino Mahjong Sikkim with the support of locals were among other sponsors of the tournament.

2018 saw collapse of red bastion in Tripura

JAYANTA BHATTACHARYA AGARTALA, DEC 31 (PTI): The BJP storming to power ending 25 years of Left rule was the major news in Tripura in 2018 which saw some cracks in the ruling alliance with the IPFT fighting the panchayat elections separately and also raking up its separate Triparaland demand.

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Indigenous Peoples Front of Tripura (IPFT) also differed sharply on the issue of a National Register of Citizens (NRC) in the state like the one in neighbouring Assam.

Lotus bloomed in Tripura in March after which a nine-member ministry headed by Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb took oath in presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The Congress, which hitherto used to be the main challenger to the Left Front in the state, lost ground and could not get even a single MLA elected to the 60-member house in the February poll.

Sudip Roy Burman, who headed the state Congress in the 2013 assembly elections but switched over to the BJP this time, said, "In 2013, the CPI(M) faced strong anti-incumbency but Congress central leadership had helped the CPI(M) in the state clandestinely for enjoying the party's support in Parliament."

BJP workers celebrated the end of the red bastion in Tripura by bringing down a five-foot-tall statue of former Soviet leader Vladimir Lenin in Belonia town, the district headquarters of South Tripura district on March 4.

The BJP government initiated several steps to erase the legacy of the long Left rule.

A week before Deb shifted to the chief minister's residence, the state government changed the

name of the road leading to it from 'Marx Angel's Sarani' to 'Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee Lane'.

After taking charge, Deb was in the news for the wrong reasons. He made several remarks that triggered widespread criticism -- the Internet and satellite communication existed during Mahabharata era, civil and not mechanical engineers should opt for civil services, educated youths should set up paan shops instead of seeking government jobs and youths should explore a career in dairy field and keep cows.

He was also rapped for questioning the crowning of Diana Hayden as Miss World in 1997 and claiming that Rabindranath Tagore had rejected his Nobel prize in protest against the British government.

The new government conducted by-elections to 3,386 seats of local bodies -- 3,200 gram panchayat, 161 panchayat samiti and 18 zilla parishad -- in September after these fell vacant following large-scale resignations of elected representatives of the Left parties.

The BJP won unopposed 96 per cent of the gram panchayat and panchayat samiti seats and all the 18 zila parishad seats in the polls.

In November, the Tripura government announced doing away with the school curriculum of the Left regime from next academic session and replacing it with CBSE syllabus and also decided introduction of NCERT books for students.

The shift of power witnessed violent clashes between the CPI(M) and the BJP at many places during 2018.

The CPI-M state secretary had on March 4 alleged that at least two persons were murdered and 240 leaders and workers of the party

were injured in BJP-IPFT sponsored post poll violence in the state.

On April 10, CPI (M) leader Prakash Karat visited some areas in West Tripura district and said his party would not "tolerate attacks on democracy".

While the BJP and the IPFT bonded to overthrow the Left Front from power, differences soon started cropped up between them on several issues.

The IPFT fought election to three-tier local bodies separately but could not stop the BJP's forward march in the state. Soon after the publication of the final draft of the NRC in Assam on July 30, Deb said there was no demand for such a citizens' register. But the IPFT differed and demanded citizens' registration in the state.

On October 8, the Supreme Court issued a notice to the Tripura government in response to a writ petition seeking revision of the NRC.

Chief Justice of India Ranjan Gogoi issued the notice to the state and central asking for their views.

In October, the IPFT renewed its demand for a separate Tipraland state for tribals to protect and safeguard their socio-economic and political interests.

The IPFT placed the demand to a high power committee set up by the Ministry of Home Affairs to probe the socio-economic, cultural and linguistic problems faced by Tripura's tribal communities.

As the year drew to a close, Tripura is set to get a waterways between Sonamura in Sipahijala district and Ashuganj port in Eastern Bangladesh covering a distance of about 70 km. This would facilitate transportation of goods from Kolkata to Ashuganj and then to Sonamura by small ships.

Entire Nagaland declared 'disturbed' for six more months under AFSPA



NEW DELHI, DEC 31 (PTI):

The entire state of Nagaland has been declared "disturbed area" for six more months, till June-end, under the controversial AFSPA, which empowers security forces to conduct operations anywhere and arrest anyone without any prior notice.

In a notification, the Home Ministry said the central government is of the opinion that the area comprising the whole of state of Nagaland is in such a disturbed and dangerous condition that the use of armed forces in aid of civilian power is necessary.

"Now, therefore, in exercise of the powers conferred by Section 3 of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958 (No. 28 of 1958), the central government hereby declares that whole of the said state to be a 'disturbed area' for a period of six months with effect from 30th December, 2018, for the purpose of that Act," the notification said.

been taken as killings, loot and extortion have been going on in various parts of the state which necessitated the action for the conveniency of the security forces operating there.

There have been demands from various organisations in the North-east as well as in Jammu and Kashmir for repealing the controversial Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA), which, they say, gives "sweeping powers" to security forces.

The AFSPA has been in force in Nagaland for several decades. It has not been withdrawn even after a framework agreement was signed on August 3, 2015 by Naga insurgent group NSCN-IM general secretary Thuingaleng Muivah and government interlocutor R N Ravi in presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The framework agreement came after over 80 rounds of negotiations spanning 18 years with the first breakthrough in 1997 when the ceasefire agreement was sealed after decades of insurgency in Nagaland.

Arsenal's season at crossroads as Fulham await



LONDON, DEC 31 (AFP): Riding high until two weeks ago, Arsenal's season has taken a sudden downturn that has thrown the focus firmly onto the club's plans for the January transfer window. Prior to the visit to Southampton in mid-December, the Gunners had gone 22 games without defeat and while form had been more patchy since the end of October, the trajectory of Unai Emery's side was undeniable on the up.

Defeat at St Mary's Stadium, however, triggered a run that has brought just one win in

five games, including Saturday's humiliating 5-1 defeat at league leaders Liverpool.

With Chelsea winning at Crystal Palace a day later, Arsenal now sit five points off the top four and anything less than three points in the home meeting with fellow London side Fulham on Tuesday will further undermine the club's hopes of reclaiming a place in the Champions League.

Arsenal have started to appear increasingly vulnerable at the back, a weakness that was ruthlessly exposed by Jurgen Klopp's side at Anfield.

The sight of his defenders chasing shadows and failing in their attempts to constrain Liverpool's thrilling front three will have made painful viewing for Spanish manager Emery and came just three days after Stephan Lichtsteiner's mistake had gifted Brighton an equaliser in the 1-1 draw at the Amex Stadium.

Injuries haven't helped with defenders Nacho Monreal, Hector Bellerin, Rob Holding and Shkodran Mustafi all missing the trip to the south coast, while Laurent Koscielny is still

feeling his way back to form and fitness after an extended lay-off.

Mustafi returned for the Liverpool game yet while the changes to the back-line have done nothing to help the team establish some stability, Bernd Leno insists injuries cannot be used as an excuse following the Liverpool defeat.

"I don't think that was the difference," said the goalkeeper.

"Of course we conceded five goals but I think we as a team made too many mistakes. We have enough quality, even when somebody is in-

jured...injuries were not the problem. "We have to look forward because we have another important game on Tuesday. It's the first game of the year and on Tuesday we want to beat Fulham at home. We need to win." Arsenal's problems have not been restricted to their back line, but the frailties suggest Emery needs to bolster his defence in the transfer window.

It's not a new problem for the club but with Lucas Torreira now offering more steel in front of the back four, there is the possibility to develop a more convincing defensive core. Meanwhile, uncertainty continues to surround the Arsenal future of Mesut Ozil who has so far failed to win over the new coach and missed the visit to Anfield with a knee problem.

"I don't know if it's big or not big, but it's his knee," said Emery when quizzed about the playmaker's absence.

With Alexandre Lacazette also appearing frustrated after being withdrawn at Brighton and then left on the bench at Liverpool, the coming weeks will go a long way towards shaping the remainder of Arsenal's season.

Solskjaer tells two-goal Pogba to cut out showboating



MANCHESTER, DEC 31 (AFP): Ole Gunnar Solskjaer encouraged Paul Pogba to cut showboating from his game to recreate the "efficient" display that saw the Frenchman score twice for the second straight game in a 4-1 thrashing of Bournemouth at Old Trafford.

A third consecutive victory since Solskjaer took caretaker charge until the end of the season keeps United eight points adrift of Chelsea in the fight for a top-four finish.

Pogba has been key to all three wins, but this was arguably his best display as he also teed up Romelu Lukaku's fourth

goal and struck the post late on to just miss out on a first career hat-trick.

"That is a top, top performance for a mid-field player because it's all-round: work rate, dangerous in the box, no showboating. It's touch, pass, move," said Solskjaer.

"It's an efficient game and Paul knows he's at his best when it's an efficient game."

The change in mood around United in the 12 days since Jose Mourinho was sacked is palpable, no more so in the performances of Pogba, who was discarded from the Portuguese's starting line-up for his final three league games in charge.

"We are Manchester United and we need to be at the top of the league. It is just a reaction of all of the players and everyone is enjoying themselves,"

said Pogba. "It is different, we still won games with the old manager but it is just a different style of playing, we are more offensive and we are creating more chances and that is how we want to play."

United have now scored 12 times in three games under the Norwegian, but Solskjaer insisted he has just tried to instill what he learned under Alex Ferguson during 11 seasons as a player at Old Trafford.

"This is how it was. I've just gone about the job as I experienced it as a player, and a coach," added Solskjaer.

"We want to go attacking. We've been at home two games and we have to entertain the fans. I love working with good players and good people."

Pogba played a part in four of United's five goals at Cardiff last weekend to get Solskjaer off to a flying start before scoring twice against Huddersfield on Boxing Day.

Solskjaer has spoken of his desire to see Pogba break into the box more regularly and he had the simplest of tasks to prod the ball into an empty net after Marcus Rashford had bewildered the Bournemouth defence.

Nathan Ake and Diogo Rico were left beaten by Rashford's combination of fleet-footed dribbling and pace before his cross perfectly picked out Pogba's run.

Pogba then made it 2-0 with a bullet head-

er from Ander Herrera's cross. Unlike Pogba, Nemanja Matic was one of Mourinho's most trusted lieutenants but the Serbian has also epitomised the change in tack orchestrated by Solskjaer with the former Chelsea midfielder much more willing to look for a forward rather than sideways pass.

And Matic began the move for United's third when he picked out Anthony Martial's run and the Frenchman's cross with the outside of his boot was turned home by Rashford.

For all the improvements of late, though, Solskjaer is still waiting for a first clean sheet since November as Ake beat Matic to power home David Brooks's cross.

Rashford should have added to his tally when put clean through by Pogba, but didn't get enough elevation on his attempted chip over Asmir Begovic before making way for Lukaku 20 minutes from time.

And the Belgian netted almost instantly when he squeezed the ball past Begovic on his weaker right foot from another Pogba pass.

Only the post then denied Pogba a first ever hat-trick when his low strike from the edge of the box came off the woodwork.

But United had to see out the final 11 minutes a man light after Eric Bailly needlessly lunged in on Ryan Fraser to see a straight red card.

Federer relishing 'once in a lifetime' Serena clash



PERTH, DEC 31 (AFP): The Hopman Cup might have saved its best for last as excitement builds for the most anticipated tennis match involving a man and woman since the "Battle of the Sexes" in the 1970s.

Roger Federer and Serena Williams, two of the greatest players in history, will face off across the net for the first time on Tuesday when United States go up against defending champions Switzerland in the mixed doubles of the unique two-player, mixed teams event.

This year's tournament is expected to be Perth's final Hopman Cup and Tuesday's group tie is an early sellout on the back of the prospect of seeing two of the all-time greats, with 43 Grand Slam singles titles between them, on the same court.

"It is very exciting for both of us and I hope a lot of tennis fans tune in and watch it," said Federer after opening his Hopman Cup campaign with an easy singles win on Sunday.

"I admire everything she's done on and off the court, we are both fierce competitors and we always want to win," added the 20-time Grand Slam champion of the once-in-

a-lifetime match.

"It is going to be one time, probably never again. She is one of the biggest champions in our sport ever, men and women combined, so it is great to be playing against her."

The original "Battle of the Sexes" saw Billie Jean King beat Bobby Riggs in an exhibition singles match in 1973.

Federer said he had plenty of experience playing against women, going back to his days as a teenage tour hopeful in Switzerland.

Despite their long concurrent careers and having attended a few Wimbledon champion dinners together, Federer said the pair barely knew each other.

"I don't know her that well," he said.

"In the corridors and cafes, walking by each other, sometimes in the past she has asked me how are the kiddies and how is everyone doing, but if I said I know her it would be a bit of an exaggeration."

Williams has said in a television interview that she was looking forward to getting a picture with Federer for her Instagram page.

"It is the age of social media," said Federer, with a grin.

1984 anti-Sikh riots case: Sajjan Kumar surrenders in court, to be lodged in Mandoli jail

NEW DELHI, DEC 31 (PTI): Former Congress leader Sajjan Kumar on Monday surrendered before a court here to serve the life sentence awarded to him by the Delhi High Court in connection with a 1984 anti-Sikh riots case.

He surrendered before Metropolitan Magistrate Aditi Garg who directed that Kumar be lodged in Mandoli jail in northeast Delhi.

The court rejected Kumar's petition to be lodged in the high-security Tihar jail, but allowed his plea for security and directed the police to take him to the prison in a separate vehicle.

A lawyer present in the courtroom said the court considered Kumar's plea for security since there was a threat as he was also facing prosecution in another anti-Sikh riots case.

While declining his plea to be sent to Tihar jail, the court said he was being sent to Mandoli jail in accordance with the rule. The HC had set a deadline of December 31 for Kumar to surrender and on December 21 declined his plea to extend the time by a month.

The 73-year former Congress leader has filed a petition in the Supreme Court challenging the conviction and life sentence awarded by the HC.

The high court on December 17 convicted and sentenced Kumar to life imprisonment for the "remainder of his natural life". After his conviction, Kumar resigned from the Congress party.

The case in which Kumar was convicted and sentenced relates to the killing of five Sikhs in Raj Nagar Part-I area in Palam Colony of south-west Delhi on November

1-2, 1984 and burning down of a Gurudwara in Raj Nagar Part-II.

The riots had broken out after the assassination of then prime minister Indira Gandhi on October 31, 1984, by her two Sikh bodyguards.

Earlier in the day, former MLAs Kishan Khokhar and Mahender Yadav, who were also convicted in the same case, surrendered before the court to serve their 10-year jail term.

Besides Kumar, the others convicted in the case were former Congress councillor Balwan Khokhar, retired naval officer Captain Bhagmal and Girdhari Lal.

In its judgment, the high court had noted that over 2,700 Sikhs were killed in the national capital during the 1984 riots which was indeed a "carnage of unbelievable proportions".

Farm woes to take centrestage as poll battle looms

LAXMI DEVI AND MANVENDRA JHA

NEW DELHI, DEC 31 (PTI): The agriculture sector, which remained in distress during 2018 as crop prices slumped due to bumper production, will be in spotlight in the new year as the BJP-ruled central government is set to roll out a big package to assuage the angry farming community ahead of the general elections.

The proposals being considered range from waiving off interest for farmers who repay crop loans on time to lowering the insurance premium and providing income support for meeting input costs, according to sources.

During the year, the Centre did take several measures to address the farmers' issues.

One of the major decisions was to fulfil its 2014 poll promise of fixing the minimum support price (MSP) at least 1.5 times the production cost, even as agronomists questioned the method adopted to ascertain costs.

The government also announced a Rs 15,000 crore 'PM-AASHA' scheme to ensure that farmers get the MSP as part of its objective of doubling farmers' income by 2022. Various incentives were given to sugar mills to help them clear arrears of sugarcane growers.

Agriculture credit target was raised by Rs 1 lakh crore to Rs 11 lakh crore for this fiscal. Import duties were

raised on many goods like edible oils and pulses while exports incentives were given for items like sugar and onions to protect farmers.

Despite these steps, farmers continued to face the challenge of selling their produce at remunerative prices in both domestic and international markets.

In fact, farmers' financial crisis deepened during 2018 as an all-time high production of foodgrains at nearly 285 million tonnes and bumper output of oilseed, sugarcane, cotton as well as horticulture crops led to a decline in market prices. The prices of many crops fell below MSP as well as input cost.

Reports of farmers dumping their produce on the streets or selling at throwaway prices were common throughout this year. Some cases of suicides were also reported.

Droughts in several parts of states like Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Jharkhand, Gujarat and Rajasthan only aggravated the crisis.

Farmers marched to the national capital more than once this year and held massive protests in many parts of the country to share their plight and make various demands, including better crop prices as well as loan waiver.

While the BJP-ruled central government ruled out a loan waiver, the opposition Congress did promise the same during the state elections held this year.

The Congress achieved success in four states -- Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh --- largely riding on the promise of farm loan waiver.

The poll promise was implemented within days of the new governments taking charge in these four states, putting pressure on the Centre to take more pro-farmer initiatives.

With general elections due in the next few months, it is certain that the BJP-led NDA and the opposition parties will engage in one-upmanship in wooing farmers and promising dole outs for securing their crucial votes.

The Centre is expected to soon announce a relief package for farmers, while the Congress will, in all probability, promise to waive farm loans at the national level, as it had done before the 2009 general polls.

However, former agriculture secretary S K Pattanayak, who retired recently, did not agree with the prevailing view of the sector being in large-scale distress.

"Distress cannot be there when there is more production. It is a question of some deprivation. Farmers may not have got expected prices," he said.

"There may be distress in pockets because of failure of crops and borrowing at higher rate. These local problems are not new in the sector and it always

existed. That should be isolated from the general distress," Pattanayak told PTI. Stating that farm loan waiver is not the long-term solution, he said: "If the government has the capacity to give farm loan waiver, it is good. If it is at the cost of cutting the budget elsewhere, then it is not necessarily the best thing to do."

Ashok Dalwai, chairman of a high-level committee on doubling farmers' income, said the government realises that the challenge lies in marketing and has taken several initiatives from the long-term perspective, which will show results in due course of time.

He said farmers' distress is a "sensitive subject" and the opposition parties are bound to raise it in an election year.

"But the government has taken several steps. It has done so much that it has to just reach out to the people," Dalwai said.

In short, it looks like politics over agriculture will play out in a big way in 2019 general elections, given that farm sector absorbs half of the country's 1.3 billion population.

Politics apart, farmers will definitely need hand-holding from both the central and state governments as foodgrains production is expected to be bumper in 2018-19 crop year (July-June) as well, limiting any chance of improvement in prices.

China puts new lightweight battle tank into service

KJM VARMA
BEIJING, DEC 31 (PTI): China has put into service its much-touted lightweight battle tank which the military seeks to deploy in the mountainous regions, like Tibet, to boost its combat capabilities in the high-altitude areas.

The new-generation tank, identified as Type-15 by the People's Liberation Army (PLA), was displayed for the first time at an exhibition, organised last month to mark the 40th anniversary of China's reform and opening up, at China's National Museum as part of new weapons developed by the country.

Chinese defence ministry spokesperson Senior Colonel Wu Qian confirmed that the tank has been handed over to troops for deployment.

"As for the Type 15



light tank, according to my information, it has been handed over to our troops," Wu told the media last week.

The indigenously-developed tank had undergone combat ready exercises on the plateaus of Tibet in June last year when the armies of China and India were engaged in an eye-ball to eye-ball 73-day-long standoff at Doklam in the Sikkim sector.

Indian troops had opposed the construc-

tion of a road by Chinese soldiers near a trijunction border, as it was too close to the main highway, the Chicken Neck corridor, connecting the North East with rest of India. The area was also claimed by Bhutan.

The relations between India and China as well as the militaries normalised this year with concerted efforts by both sides after the People's Liberation Army (PLA) halted the road construction. According

to Chinese official media, the lightweight battle tank is equipped with a hydro-pneumatic suspension system that ensures good manoeuvrability and survivability in mountainous regions.

Its main weapon is the 105 mm gun that can fire armour-piercing shells and launch guided missiles, it said.

The Type 15 tank has a 1,000 horsepower engine which is significantly lighter than the PLA's other main battle tanks

in service, and weighs about 32 to 35 tonnes, compared to the Type 99 tank, which weighs 54 to

58 tonnes, and the Type 96 one weighing about 42.8 tonnes, the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post reported.

Military analysts said the tank could be quickly deployed to sensitive regions such as Tibet and the plateau border area if a dispute broke out, the SCMP report said.

Beijing-based military affairs commentator Song Zhongping said the

PLA Marine Corps needed to upgrade some of its key equipment.

He said they were using the Type 62 tank, which only has about 500 horsepower and an 85mm main gun.

"The Type 62 tank is lagging behind. The Type 15 tank has much better protection capability and manoeuvrability," he was quoted as saying in the SCMP.

Journalists to lead New Year Eve celebrations at iconic New York’s Times Square

YOSHITA SINGH
NEW YORK, DEC 31 (PTI): Honouring journalism and press freedom, leading journalists, mostly from the US, will ring in the New Year Monday at the iconic Times Square's popular New Year eve celebrations, watched by billions around the world.

As the official special guests, the group will appear on stage with the Committee to Protect Journalists just before midnight to push the crystal button that signals the lowering of the New Year's Eve Ball.

Times Square Alliance and Countdown Entertainment, co-organisers of Times Square New Year's Eve, said that the group of eminent journalists representing a broad spectrum of news organisations will

be honoured as the special guests for the most-watched New Year Eve celebration at Times Square. The moment seen by billions around the world officially begins the 60-second countdown to the New Year.

The group will include Global Opinions Editor at The Washington Post Karen Attiah, Deputy Managing Editor at The New York Times Rebecca Blumenstein, CNN New Day Co-Anchor Alisyn Camerota, TIME Editor-in-Chief Edward Felsenthal, NBC Nightly News and Dateline NBC Anchor Lester Holt and The Wall Street Journal Editor-in-Chief Matt Murray.

Executive Director of the Independent, non-profit organisation

Committee to Protect Journalists Joel Simon will join the group onstage. "We are honoured to have such a respected group of media entities and journalists join us to #CelebratePressFreedom as we ring in the New Year," President of the Times Square Alliance Tim Tompkins said.

"In one of the world's most famous public squares, it is fitting to celebrate free press and free speech as we reflect on where we've been during the past year and what it is we value most as a society," Tompkins said.

Prior special guests include former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon, Supreme Court Justice Sonya Sotomayor, former Secretary of State Colin Powell, Lady Gaga,

former President Bill Clinton and then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. "As the Ball drops, the Special Guests will lead the 60-second countdown to 2019 joined by millions of revellers with a message of unity and harmony for the new year.

"We thank the news organisations and the journalists for helping us celebrate journalism and press freedom around the world," President of Countdown Entertainment Jeff Straus said.

Simon said the group of journalists represents all journalists in the United States, and around the world who work hard every day to keep their communities informed and hold the powerful to account.

"It's the freedom to do this critical work that we celebrate," he added.

Ghosn’s detention extended to Jan 11: media

TOKYO, DEC 31 (AFP): Former Nissan boss Carlos Ghosn will be spending the beginning of 2019 behind bars after a Tokyo court on Monday extended his detention through to January 11, local media reported.

The decision, reported by public broadcaster NHK and local news agency Jiji Press, comes after Japanese prosecutors re-arrested Ghosn for fresh allegations on December 21, dashing his hopes of being home for Christmas.

There was no immediate confirmation from the court.

The move comes as Ghosn, who was arrested on November 19, faces three separate sets of allegations involving financial wrongdoing during his tenure as Nissan chief.

The growing case against the auto tycoon represents a stunning reversal of fortune for a man once revered in Japan and beyond for his ability to turn around automakers, including Nissan.

The twists and turns of the case have gripped Japan and the business world and shone a light on the Japanese legal system, which has come in for some criticism internationally.

Authorities are pur-

suing three separate lines of enquiry against the 64-year-old Franco-Lebanese-Brazilian executive.

They suspect he conspired with his right-hand man, US executive Greg Kelly, to hide away around half of his income (some five billion yen or USD 44 million) over five fiscal years from 2010.

They also allege he under-reported his salary to the tune of four billion yen over the next three fiscal years - apparently to avoid criticism that his pay was too high.

The extension that prosecutors won Monday allows them to continue investigating a complex third claim that alleges Ghosn sought to shift a personal investment loss onto Nissan's books. As part of that scheme, he is also accused of having used Nissan funds to repay a Saudi acquaintance who put up collateral money.

Prosecutors have pressed formal charges over the first allegation but not yet over the other accusations.

The extension deals a new blow to Ghosn's hopes of being released from the Tokyo detention centre where he has been held since his shock arrest.

Earlier this month, he appeared on the verge of winning bail after a court rejected a request from prosecutors to extend his detention on the second allegation against him.

But by filing the new claims, prosecutors were able to restart the clock on his detention.

The once jet-setting executive, who denies any wrongdoing, was initially held in a tiny single but has now reportedly been moved to a more comfortable room.

He has complained about the cold and the rice-based menu, sources say, though he has told embassy visitors he is being well-treated.

While he has failed to win bail, his alleged accomplice Kelly won a court-ordered release on Christmas Day.

Kelly's bail conditions prevent him from leaving Japan, and he is reportedly now seeking treatment for a spinal condition at a Japanese hospital.

Ghosn's lengthy detention has sparked criticism, especially from abroad, but Japanese prosecutors have defended the legal system, which allows suspects to be "re-arrested" several times over different allegations.

And his arrest has laid bare tensions in the alliance he helped forge between Nissan, Mitsubishi Motors and France's Renault.

While Nissan and Mitsubishi swiftly ousted Ghosn from his leadership posts after his arrest, Renault has responded more cautiously to the allegations.


The French firm has also repeatedly called on Nissan to hold a shareholders meeting, and is reportedly seeking increased representation on the board of the Japanese automaker.

Nissan has rejected the calls for a shareholder meeting at this stage, and says it is waiting until a commission looking into governance at the firm releases its findings.

The Japanese automaker has also so far failed to agree on who should succeed Ghosn as chairman.

While the tycoon was once so beloved for his role in turning around Nissan that he was immortalised in manga comic form, his former colleagues have since harshly criticised him.

Nissan's CEO Hiroto Saikawa, a one-time Ghosn protege, has accused his former boss of accruing too much power and referred to his tenure's "dark side."



ROADS & BRIDGES DEPARTMENT
GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM
SINGTAM

Memo No:280/ AES/ R&B

Date: 26/12/2018

NOTICE INVITINGTENDER

For and on behalf of the Governor of Sikkim, Assistant Engineer- Singtam, Roads & Bridges Department, Singtam , invites sealed tenders under single bid system from the eligible contractors of **Class IV Grade** enlisted with Sikkim Public Works Department vide Notification No. 515/R&B/Secy, dated 12.06.2018 and notification no. 556/R&B PWD/Secy dated : 28.08.2018 for the construction of **fair weather roads**, through competitive bidding within the territorial jurisdiction of **CONCERNED Ward of the Gram Panchayat Unit of Tum-in-Lingi Constituency** where the work is to be executed.

The details of works and time schedule are as under:

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Cost of Work put to tender (in Rs)	Earnest Money @ 2.50% (in Rs.)	Cost of Tender documents (in Rs.)	Completion Time.
1.	Construction of Fair weather Road from Dahal Chupalakha Gaon to Dhanbari PMGSY Road in East Sikkim				
	Km 1st	Rs. 42,38,496.00	Rs. 1,05,970.00	Rs.1,500.00	09 months
	Km 2nd	Rs. 12,71,549.00	Rs. 31,789.00	Rs. 500.00	09 months
2	Construction of Fair weather Road from PMGSY Road to Nursery Gurasay in East Sikkim				
	Km 1st	Rs. 42,38,496.00	Rs. 1,05,970.00	Rs.1,500.00	09 months
	Km 2nd	Rs. 42,38,496.00	Rs. 1,05,970.00	Rs.1,500.00	09 months
3	Construction of Fair weather Road from Dhanbari PMGSY Road to Kageythang in East Sikkim				
	Km 1st	Rs. 42,38,496.00	Rs. 1,05,970.00	Rs.1,500.00	09 months
	Km 2nd	Rs. 21,19,248.00	Rs. 52,981.00	Rs.1,500.00	09 months

TIME SCHEDULE:-

1.	Date of submission of application with Bank receipt and TDR for issue of Tender Documents.	9 th January, 2019 (10.00 am to 4.00 pm) at respective Gram Prashashan Kendra where work is to be executed.
2.	Last Date and Time for submission of Tender	10 th January 2019 (10.00 am to 1.00 pm) at respective Gram Prashashan Kendra where work is to be executed.
3.	Date and Time for Opening of Tender	10 th January 2019 (1.30 pm) at respective Gram Prashashan Kendra where work is to be executed.

CONDITIONS OF CONTRACT:

- Tender is open only to the eligible Contractors / Firms of appropriate Class/ Area.
- The intending tenders/ contractors should apply in writing for issue of Tender documents. The application would invariably be signed by the contractor himself/ herself. The tender document will not be issued to any person other than the INTENDING TENDERER. The application shall be submitted initially for each work listed above with all required documents.
- The applications should enclose attested copies of the (a) Goods & Service Tax Clearance Certificate (b) Validated / Updated Contractor Enlistment Certificate along with application. It is mandatory to produce the Original validated/ updated Enlistment Certificate during sale/ issue of the Tender Document for verification.
- The prescribed Non- Transferable Tender Documents (excluding the Tender Form) can be obtained during the period specified in (As above from the office of the Assistant Engineer- Singtam, Roads & Bridges Department, Singtam on production of requisite Bank receipt towards the cost of Tender Document (non-refundable) under **the Head "0059-80-800" cost of Tender Form (Roads & Bridges)**.
- Earnest money deposit @ 2.5% in State Bank of Sikkim shall be in the form of Deposit Receipt of Schedules Bank which includes deposit in the form of Temporary Deposit Receipts (TDR) in favour of the Accounts Officer, Roads & Bridges Department, Nirman Bhawan, Gangtok. Tender Form shall be issued only on production of the deposit receipts of 2.5% earnest money.
- The Tender Documents, including the Tender Form with quoted offer should be placed in a sealed cover with the name of the Tenderers and the name of the work superscripted on it. Supporting documents listed at Sl.No. (a)& (b) above should be enclosed with the offer.
- Sealed tenders may be deposited in the Tender Box in the office of the Assistant Engineer- Singtam, Roads & Bridges Department, Singtam on the date and within the time indicated above.
- Tenders will be opened by a Tender Opening Committee as prescribed by the Government in the presence of the tenderers on the date and time indicated above.
- The Tenderer should sign on every page of the tenders documents as Acceptance of the General Direction and Conditions of Contract and other laid down norms. The rate quoted should be both in figures and words and should be inclusive of GST all other Taxes and Levies. Over writing and correction should be avoided and if made should be authenticated. Incomplete/ Conditional tenders shall be rejected forthwith.
- In case of any discrepancy in rate (s) printed in the Schedule of Rates and Quantities issued with the tender documents rates as per approved Scheduled of Rates will be taken as correct. For items outside the SOR, the rates shall be as per the technically checked estimate/analysis. Decision of the Principal Chief Engineer cum Secretary/ Head of the Department will be final in this regard.
- The work value, scope and quantum of work are subject to change, the contractor shall execute the work as per the directives of the Department. No claim on this account shall be entertained whatsoever. If any extra claim is made, it shall be as per the agreements rates.
- The Department reserves the rights to hold payments to the contractor unless test certificates are not produced by the contractor when called upon to do so.
- Avoidable damages due to negligence of the contractors shall be at his/her own risk and cost. The department shall not be liable for payment of such damages (if any), including accidents to labourer at site.
- The offer shall remain valid for a period of 90 days. The work should commence within 15 days from the date of issue of Work Order.
- All the conditions as mentioned in the NIT shall be deemed to be a part of the agreement to be entered with the contractor. Security deposit shall be collected by deductions from the running bills of the contractor @ 5% of the value of work done.
- The Department reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason thereof.
- The recoveries of Royalties on Forest produces shall be as per rates notified by the Government from time to time and applicable on the date of payment. In no case, claim of any contractor for deduction as per rates incorporated in Analysis of Rates or Schedule of Rates or Rates on the date of tender shall be acceptable.
- Subletting of contract work is against the norms and if it comes to the notice, the original contract shall be cancelled and appropriate action shall be initiated as per the rules.
- The Department also reserves the right to increase, decrease, alter or modify the item of works as indicted in the NIT without assigning any reason thereof.
- In case the man powers employed by the contractor are from outside the State or neighbouring countries, it shall be the responsibility of the contractor to get them registered with the Labour Department, Government of Sikkim as per the relevant Labour Laws.
- Use of explosive shall be regulated as under.
 - Transportation, handling, storage and use of explosive (if necessary) shall be in accordance with the provision of the India Explosive Act and General Guideline, Circulars issued by the department and other competent authorities on the subject from time to time.
 - The rules and regulations issued by the Sikkim Public Works Department or any other competent authority shall strictly be adhered to with regard to transportations, storages, handling, and use of explosive at all times. Proper daily record of receipt and issue of explosives shall be maintained by the contractor.
- The contractor shall also make arrangement to have photographs of the works taken at least at three stages of the construction period i.e. beginning, middle and completion stage.
- Damages to properties in and around the work site must be avoided at all cost. The contractor shall be held responsible for any acts of negligence and shall be made to make good the damages.
- It is accepted to the tenderer to have inspected the site before submitting his bid. There may be possible site difficulties for which the tenderer should have their own correct assessment before submitting the bid.
- The cost of stock materials supplied from the departmental store will be deducted from the contractor's bills as per rules.
- The bidders shall produce a Certificate of Residence from the CONCERNED GRAM Panchayat unit where the work is to be executed.**

R.O. No. 557/ ipr/ pub/ classi./ 18-19
Date: 29.12.2018.

Sd/-
Assistant Engineer
Roads & Bridges Department.
Singtam Sub Division



BRRRR BLUE: Kylie Jenner went from blonde to blue just in time for the chilly weather. The Kylie Cosmetics chief shared her new 'do in a series of Instagram pictures. Kylie has been blonde a number of times before and recently went back to platinum before her lavish 21st birthday party!

If the script is bankable the film will do well: Fatima Sana Shaikh

MUMBAI, DEC 31 (PTI): In a span of two years Fatima Sana Shaikh has tasted both success and failure with her films "Dangal" and "Thugs of Hindostan" respectively. The actors says the fate of her movies on the ticket window has taught her that audience will always connect with a good script.

Fatima, who started her Bollywood career as a child actor in "Chachi 420", said she does not understand the "business of filmmaking" but recognises the importance of good content. "I do not follow the business of filmmaking. I do not understand bankability. We are lucky as today there is so much new content available, also producers are backing new talent. It creates a lot of opportunities.

"The focus is on content and if the script is bankable then it does well. People have realised that a good script does win hearts," Fatima told PTI. The actor received critical acclaim for her portrayal of wrestler Geeta Phogat in Aamir Khan-fronted "Dangal". Her second film "Thugs of Hindostan", however, did not work at the box office.

Fatima said dealing with the failure was really hard for her. "There were huge expectations from the film. It is very unfortunate and sad. My first film was Dangal' and that got so much love and Thugs ' did not, I did feel bad.

This was something new to me. "I am someone who goes through reviews before watching a film. When I saw the reviews and they were brutally honest and I do understand that. I was like just be little nice."

The film, directed by Vijay Krishna Acharya, also featured megastar Amitabh Bachchan, Aamir and Katrina Kaif.

Fatima said the team had a great time while filming the project, but was heartbroken when audiences could not connect with the movie. "Something did not work out with the film and people did not enjoy it as much as we wanted them to. It is ok. I have taken it as a bitter-sweet journey.

"We make films for audience and what they feel about the film they should be honest and they have the freedom to say that. As actors we should have the dignity to accept it and not question them."

Fatima said as an actor her aim will always be to give her 100 per cent to a role.

"I want to still work. It has taken out lot of time for me to reach here. I have faced lot of rejection, heard lot of not-so good things about me. "It has taken a long time for me to reach here and every moment matters to me. Every setback is a learning experience and I just want to move ahead. No matter what happens. Even if I give ten flop films I will still continue work"

down in a dedicated journal or making a vision board that will inspire you on a daily basis.

CANCER: Upgrade to the VIP tickets, Cancer. Shortly before the ball drops on 2019, uncompromising Mars rushes into Aries and your prestigious tenth house until February 14. You've got grand plans for the year ahead, and it all starts NOW. Tonight, you practically owe yourself an upscale celebration.

LEO : This NYE could be one for the history books, Leo, so keep an overnight bag packed—just in case. Shortly before the year ends, restless Mars blazes its biennial trail into Aries and your globetrotting ninth house. Between now and February 14, you'll have endless opportunities to expand your horizons—provided you're willing to venture out of your lair. If you happen to be traveling, lucky you! But blow off the tourist scene and find out where the locals celebrate. If you are close to home, pick a venue or accept a party invite that promises an eclectic crowd of creative originals. You could wind up musing about a meta-

Cancer came as a gift, it transformed my life: Manisha Koirala

NEW DELHI, DEC 31 (PTI): Actor Manisha Koirala, who won a tough battle against ovarian cancer, feels the disease came into her life as a gift as her vision is now sharper, mind clearer and her perspective realigned.

As she completes six years of being cancer-free, she shares her story - one marked by apprehensions, disappointments and uncertainties - and the lessons she learnt along the way.

In her memoir "Healed: How Cancer Gave Me a New Life", she talks about her treatment in the US and the care provided by the oncologists there to how she rebuilt her life once she returned home.

Manisha says her book is a result of intense soul-searching and she has plunged deep into the dark, bottomless pit of painful memories and woven a story out of them. "It has taken a lot of courage to confront and relive my experiences. But I needed to do so in order to become a true storyteller for the readers' sake as well as my own," she says.

She was diagnosed with ovarian cancer in 2012.

Manisha says for a decade, she had abused her body. "The poor lifestyle I had been leading made my body susceptible to diseases. Had it not been cancer, some other malady would have struck me. In hindsight, on a dark, lonely night, I still wonder what it could have been and whether it would have been better or worse," the book, co-authored with Neelam Kumar and published by Penguin Random House, says.

"I think cancer came into my life as a gift. My vision is sharper, my mind clearer, my perspective realigned. I have succeeded in transforming my passive-aggressive anger and anxiety into more peaceful expressions," Manisha writes.

She says post-recovery, she has succeeded in transforming her passive-aggressive anger and anxiety into more peaceful expressions.

Born into the prominent Koirala family in Nepal, Manisha made her Bollywood debut with "Saudagar" in 1991 and went on to act in films like "1942: A Love Story", "Akele Hum Akele Tum", "Bombay", "Khamoshi: The Musical", "Dil Se", "Mann", "Lajja" and "Company".

She took a break from acting in 2012 and returned five years later with the coming-of-age drama "Dear Maya", Netflix's "Lust Stories" and "Sanju".

The comeback was not so easy.

"At first it was difficult for me to take on the role of a char-

acter artist as I had been used to playing the heroine. Then I saw the blessing in this. Having plunged into the depths of my emotions, I could now express the intricate complexities, deeper nuances and profounder layers of each character."

In her words, she began her "second innings hesitatingly", with a Kannada film.

Manisha looks back at the period just after her foray into films in the early '90s with a "lot of regret and sadness".

When films happened suddenly, she was just 19-years-old and not ready to handle Mumbai.



"Its unfamiliarity and expanse scared me. For a young, unexposed Nepalese girl, Bollywood was a terrifying experience. Unsure of how I should be behaving and interacting on the film set, I hid myself behind books. They protected me from my fear of interacting with everyone who seemed to be so sure of themselves," she says.

She then decided to do something to overcome her shyness and feeling of awkwardness.

"Alcohol came to my rescue. I loved the feeling of confidence it gave me, loosening me up, wiping out my inhibitions. Fortified by drinks, my shyness disappeared and I became quite at ease while socialising. Emboldened, I took to drinking more and more, she writes.

Parties became a way of life for her. Either friends would party at her house or she would go over to theirs, Manisha says.

In school, too she was a shy, introverted girl who found solace in books.

"I think reading a lot of books does that to you. I was ahead of my classmates in some ways. While they were enjoying Mills & Boons, I was reading Ayn Rand."

I am audience made star: Ayushmann Khurrana

Mumbai, Dec 31 (PTI): Ayushmann Khurrana, who emerged as the biggest star of 2018 with the back-to-back box office success of "Andhadhun" and "Badhai Ho", attributes his success to choosing unconventional yet entertaining stories.

Khurrana says he has always believed that the script is the true star of a film.

"I am audience made star. But I believe the real star (of a film) is the script, it is the script that makes you a star. I want to give the audience something unconventional every time, something novel. As an actor it is a great space to be in, he told PTI in an interview. "Doing unconventional thing is least risky now. Conventional has become more risky in this day and age. You have to do something different so that people buy movie tickets and come to cinema halls. The audience has changed," he added.

As the poster boy of middle-of-the-road cinema in India, next on Khurrana's wishlist is a film on LGBT subject. "We have lot of battles to win. There is cultural shift. We



ing stardom, one has to be consistent with their work and that is the real struggle. "Initially there is the struggle to get work, then you want to get good work and establish yourself as an actor and a bankable star. And then, you need to maintain that. That consistency is the struggle."

ARIES: Dress to the nines and chill the champagne. Firebrand Mars bursts into your sign shortly before midnight—its first visit to your sign since early 2017. You'll be in your dazzling and festive element as this electrifying transit sets the stage for an unforgettable celebration. Earlier in the day, while Mars hovers in Pisces, allow yourself to feel any deep emotions that arise, but be careful not to indulge your more escapist tendencies.

TAURUS: You'll send 2018 out with a bang, but be aware that New Year's Eve could find you in a mood that's equal parts party-animal and internally focused. Shortly before the stroke of midnight, exothermic Mars dips out of your social sector and hunkers down in Aries and your twelfth house of transitions until February 14.

GEMINI: Thinking of a mellow NYE, Gemini? Think again! Before the stroke of midnight, firebrand Mars rushes into Aries and your eleventh house of groups, which means more will definitely be merrier. Early in the day, set some lofty intentions, perhaps writing them

down in a dedicated journal or making a vision board that will inspire you on a daily basis.

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physical subject or challenging someone to a dance-off.

VIRGO: Regardless of whether your NYE plans call for a big blowout with a formidable cast of characters, you'll be happiest getting the party started on a quiet, intimate note. Shortly before midnight, seductive Mars slinks into your erotic eighth house for a journey that lasts until February 14. Instead of working the crowds, you might want to focus all your attention on one special soul.

LIBRA : You'll be in your gracious, glamorous element this NYE as passionate Mars launches a six-week tour through Aries and your seventh house of relationships (aka "the Libra house"). It's likely that you're feeling warm and fuzzy about a handful of friendships, and what better way to show how much you care than to host a pre-party party?

SCORPIO: This might not be the NYE that sees you dancing on the bar till dawn, but considering the year of wild growth that's behind you, a gentler pace is fine by you—isn't it, Scorpio? Thanks to your

co-ruler Mars settling into Aries and your sixth house of self-care this evening, 2018 slinks out more like a kitten than a lion. You'll be just as happy (happier, probably) bidding adieu to the year in a meditation circle, candlelight yoga class or perhaps on some sandy beach

SAGITTARIUS: Party costume: Check. Crazy shoes and accessories: Check! Wild hair and makeup: Up to you, Archer, but why not? This NYE gets a turbo-charge from passionate Mars. Just before midnight, the red planet bursts into Aries and your festive, flamboyant fifth house until February 14. Since the fifth house also rules fame, this NYE (and the first six weeks of 2019) could turn into one giant photo op for you and your crew.

CAPRICORN: How's this for a perfect NYE gameplan: Get yourself suitably dressed up; have everyone stop by just as the bubbly reaches the perfect temperature; cue up your killer playlist; and let the rest unfold spontaneously. With passionate Mars nestling into your domestic quarters shortly before the ball

drops, you may relish the thought of staying home and turning your living room into "the club."

AQUARIUS: You don't need a VIP party to ring in the New Year in style, Aquarius! In fact, with passionate Mars heading into Aries tonight and getting lit in your super-social third house until February 14, you could have a blast hanging out anywhere from a friend's living room to a dive bar. It's all about the company you keep.

PISCES : Effervescent Mars shimmers in your sign for part of the day, closing out a six-week tour of growth and excitement just before the year ends. Indulge and pamper thyself! Getting ready for NYE could be as entertaining as tonight's celebrations, so why not treat yourself to a hair and makeup appointment or level up your party gear to meet RuPaul's runway approval rating? Tonight, when Mars swings into Aries for six weeks, your sensible-but-sensual second house will be lit. Bid adieu to 2018 in the most elegant way possible. Drop by a cocktail party or enjoy the chef's tasting menu at an amazing restaurant.