

GANGTOK, WEDNESDAY, Jan 21-27, 2004

# NOW!

SIKKIM MATTERS

VOL 2 NO 28 □ Rs. 5



- ANOTHER CRIME SOLVED WITHOUT A COMPLAINT FILED
- MELA MANAGER ROBBED
- HIT & RUN IN GANGTOK

**crime watch**

DETAILS ON pg 23

## Bye-bye Akshay

After four years and two months, the person who had become the public face of Sikkim Police as the SP [East], Akshay Sachdeva, is all set to move on. Sharing a love-hate relationship with the Gangtokians throughout his tenure here, he speaks, in an exclusive farewell interview, to NOW! about his experiences and memories as the SP, East,

**TURN TO pg 13 [extras] MORE COMPLETE STORY**



# AIMING TIME



TURN TO pg 6 & 7 FOR DETAILS

# POLLS

It will be in April. It will be a two-way battle.

The nation is definitely going for early polls and the stage seems set for a simultaneous Assembly poll in Sikkim too. Indications to this end came early with the first hint made more than six months back when the ruling Sikkim Democratic Front discussed the possibility at a CEC meeting. Although early elections were not announced at that time [in fact an official announcement in this regard is still awaited], the suggestion was very effective in the hectic activity it triggered. No sooner had word leaked that SDF was debating the

possibility of early polls that all the fence-sitters in Sikkim politics were forced to take sides and show their hand. The camouflage of inaction was dumped and culminated with the induction of former CM, Nar Bahadur Bhandari in Cong [I]. Now that April polls are a very possible scenario, Sikkim can expect even more heightened politicking. A NOW! feature looks into where things stand and where they could be headed...

**TURN TO pg 4 FOR DETAILS**

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# NOW!

SIKKIM MATTERS

## Sikkim's Rabbit Hole

Alice had to take a courageous leap into the rabbit hole to see all logic get skewed out of rationality. In Sikkim, all it takes for perceptions to get warped is the whiff of an election. The rose-tinted glasses that colour the Sikkimese inference of events through four years, suddenly turn into blinkers which block out every thing save caste considerations and communal exigencies. During an election year, everything becomes of dire importance. The rising crime graph suddenly starts shocking people; incidents which people had forgotten start hurting again; too many inferences are cast on ordinary conversations and people start seeing monsters in their own shadows. May be this is how people in most states react to elections, but given the ridiculously small number of voting population in Sikkim, the insular divisions that people start compartmentalising themselves into becomes too claustrophobic for comfort. It goes without saying that this trend is unhealthy, but that is what politics has been reduced to - a numbers game of vote-banks and vote-shares. While all the scheming and planning that goes into appropriating such vote-banks might be the only resort left for leaders who surface only once in a while when elections are round the corner, they remain something that the masses should remain distant from. It is they who will have to live with all the bad-blood that they have created among themselves after the real beneficiaries of the divide have bagged important portfolios or switched sides.

So what do the people do?

It is all very easy to say that since it is the people who elect the leaders, they can effect a change in their mind-set too. The pyramid of power is too inverted for such a change to come any time soon. In the meanwhile, the people can just kick back and enjoy the show. Enjoy the free rides to bigger towns, the free lunches and pocket money, but don't get suckered into aligning along partisan lines that some will definitely want them to. Sikkim has failed to meet many of its long-pending demands because the support for them was segregated. If any community is serious about getting their voice heard, they will have to also cull support from other sections of the population. By themselves, when they think they are speaking out, they are only playing Chinese whisper. The message gets too wrapped in a communal colour by the time it reaches Delhi or even Mintokgang for that matter apart from the fact that it is barely audible. As Sikkim prepares to jump into its rabbit hole, remember, Alice's story might have been fun to read, it must have been a frightening experience for the protagonist herself. Does Sikkim want to go through that horror?

## We, the People, and Crime



The crime rate in Sikkim is rising fast leading to an alarming situation. In the year 2003 alone, there have been a significant number of crimes recorded. The crime sheet of Sikkim includes heinous crimes like murders, murders for theft, rape of minors etc. Only recently, two very shocking crimes were reported. One is the cold-blooded murder of two minor girls in Rhenock, east Sikkim and the other is that of brutal murder of one taxi driver from Pakyong. This signifies that Sikkim is fast becoming the hotbed of crime and criminal activities. It is important to note that peace, which is the attribute of Sikkim, is fast slipping away. The free and safe Sikkim is slowly turning into an unsafe one. It is indeed an alarming situation for the people. What is going wrong?

It is an obvious and pertinent question that arises in everyone's mind. Because it concerns all of us. Anyone can fall prey to it. At this point we blame the government and law keepers for everything. We question the cred-

ibility of the government and the police but we fail or more appropriately ignore to question our own credibility. How much have we been conscious and cooperative in averting crime? We never ask ourselves. Here it becomes necessary to remind that we cannot clap with one hand, it needs both.

To those who question the credibility of the police. I would like to tell that the police cannot guard each and every individual. They cannot prevent each and every crime

from taking place. It is out of question for any efficient police force around the globe. Crime usually occurs in their absence. But it is appreciable to note that our police are very much efficient and dynamic. They have from time to time demonstrated their vigour and valour. If not hundred percent, I bet, they have been able to solve ninety percent of the crimes. Though they are unsuccessful in preventing crimes from taking place, they have been remarkable successful in bringing criminals to justice. Very few criminals have been successful to slip away from their

hands. So it is to some extent wrong to only blame them.

It is pertinent to realize at this point that more than anyone else it is we who have a bigger role to play in order to check crime. The only thing that is required of us is to realize that our cooperation is very significant to check crime. We must be responsible and cautious. Our law keepers are working consistently to find out ways and means to prevent crime. They have time and again set up guidelines for the public to follow, but we have never bothered to follow them. To cite an example, in view of servants being involved in most cases of crime, there is constant notice from the police department to the public to provide the identity of the servants employed for proper verification. Especially, of those from outside the State. But hardly anyone has taken serious note of it. Our careless attitude has provided the impetus for the escalation of crime. Today, we are at the threshold, if we do not react now, we will forever lose the peace of our society.

- The writer is a resident of 5th Mile, Tadong, East Sikkim

### SAMDUP TSE: NOT ONLY A HIT BUT A SUPER DUPER ONE

As I approached the majestic statue of Guru Rimpoché, I was awestruck by the grandeur of the holy sight and tears welled up in my eyes, and I felt myself elevated up to the heavens.

Truly, it is the best place to be, to attain peace of mind. Surrounded by virgin forests, serene, heavenly tranquility transcends all over the place. I hope, it will forever remain the same and also no shops and many other catalysts that pollute the sacred area ever crop up within the vicinity of the sanctum sanctorum.

My sincere thanks go to our Chief Minister of Sikkim who had the vision to create such a marvel of spiritual as well as a historical monument in Sikkim which is there for the world to see.

R. la, Burtuk, Gangtok  
[recvd on email]

### THOUGHTS ON THE RHENOCK INCIDENT

A propos the news report on the double-murder of minors carried in the last issue of your paper. We were shocked to read about the incident and even more reviled the gruesome manner in which the two were murdered. We can only imagine what the parents must be going through and extend our moral support to them. The news that there was tension in the area is understandable. It is a miracle that things did not go out of hand. The control that the Rhenock people showed in allowing the law to take its own course is commendable. Here we would like to stress on the growing influx into our state. Too many people from too many places are coming to Sikkim and working

### LETTERS

and living here. Should they commit a crime here and escape, no one will know where to look for them. We feel that something should be done about unchecked influx into Sikkim. We also congratulate the police officials who arrested the culprit in time. We also support the demand of the Rhenock people that the culprit be given the highest possible punishment.

Students from Tadong, East Sikkim

### THANK YOU, ALL

This is to express my gratitude to NOW! for printing of matter related to the undersigned in two consecutive issues of the paper. It was really an honour for me. Thank you.

I, through your paper, would also like to express my heartiest feelings to the President and members of the Sikkim Football Association for felicitating and publicising my achievements in such a grand manner. My very special and personal thanks to Mr. Tempo Bhutia, Mr. Menla Ethenpa and Dr. Sonam T. Ethenpa who were really supportive in my quest to become a National Referee and I hope that they will equally support the newcomer referees who have recently appeared in the Referees Course conducted by the Sikkim Football Association at TNA Ground conducted by qualified and internationally experienced instructors from AIFF. I do also hope for more exposure in the future.

I will also not forget to thank Mr. Solomon Lepcha, who had very kindly encouraged me to induct as a referee with Sikkim

Football Association in my initial days in 1988-89 and his words, "You can do it," reached me here. Thank you.

Further, I thank all those who have congratulated me on my achievement and whom I could not mention individually by name here.

Thank you.  
Chamchuk Lama, National Football Referee

### IGNORED SNOW

I was away for the New Year and remember speaking to relatives in Gangtok over the phone about the snowfall at Tashi View Point. Excited, I browsed the net for stories on the rare snowfall in Gangtok, but all I got were report after report on the snowfall in Darjeeling. I am confused. Snowfall in Darjeeling [at least the upper reaches] is not rare. Snowfall on the edge of our town is almost unheard of and yet no one reported on it. Even the dailies from Siliguri were full of photographs of tourists playing in the Darjeeling snow, but nothing on Sikkim. Do we ever make news outside the political or crime arena?

Tashi Bhutia, Gangtok

### THE POLL CAMPAIGN

The campaigning has begun and again it will be time for people here to drop everything else - the fields and the petty contracts - to join the circus. Vehicles will be difficult to come by and promises will be made all over the State. There is bound to also be some communal tension and then everything will get back to normal. I can only thank god that we will be having both Assembly and Lok Sabha election together.

Rajesh Chettri, Gangtok

### VIEWPOINT JOHN GURUNG

able to note that our police are very much efficient and dynamic. They have from time to time demonstrated their vigour and valour. If not hundred percent, I bet, they have been able to solve ninety percent of the crimes. Though they are unsuccessful in preventing crimes from taking place, they have been remarkable successful in bringing criminals to justice. Very few criminals have been successful to slip away from their

# THE FUN GETS STRONGER...

## MAGHE MELA AT JORETHANG



NOW! pix

# AS THE DAYS GROW LONGER

**ANAND OBEROI**

**JORETHANG:** Maghe Sankranti, heralding the start of the holy month of Magh was observed from January 14 to 16 all over Sikkim. Hindus celebrated the end of what is considered the inauspicious month of Poush during which all religious ceremonies are forbidden. Astronomically speaking, the day marks the Sun's reentry into the Southern Hemisphere and with it the days start getting longer and warmer. For the believers, with Maghe Sankranti begin days of health and fortune. While we leave that to the believers, one thing was certain at Jorethang during Maghe Sankranti - the days of fun had begun.

The Jorethang Maghe Mela, considered to be the biggest in the state, lived up to the expectations of all those who visited it last week. People of all ages and communities from the state and from villages in neighbouring West Bengal attended the colourful Mela. The three-day Mela was inaugurated by Minister for Agriculture, GM Gurung. According to official estimates the turnout at the mela was almost double that of last year.

The Mela had everything one could wish for. From stalls exhibiting all kinds of items for sale to games of fortune and the ever-popular Ferris wheel.

Amidst the hustle and bustle of the festive occasion, with mikes blaring the latest Nepali and Hindi hit songs, we managed to speak to some people. For Bishwa Subba, who has been coming to the Mela for the last two years from

Singla in Darjeeling, it was a lot of fun. "I have spent quite a lot of money here, but I don't mind because Maghe Mela comes only once a year and enjoying with friends and family is all that counts," he chirps merrily.

Pratima Chettri, who had just had a spin in the Rotiping, and was desperately trying to get over the stomach churning experience, told NOW! that although there were lots of things that she wanted to do in the Mela, it was shopping that she was most interested in.

And there was plenty to buy from. Clothes, accessories, home appliances, name it and it was there.

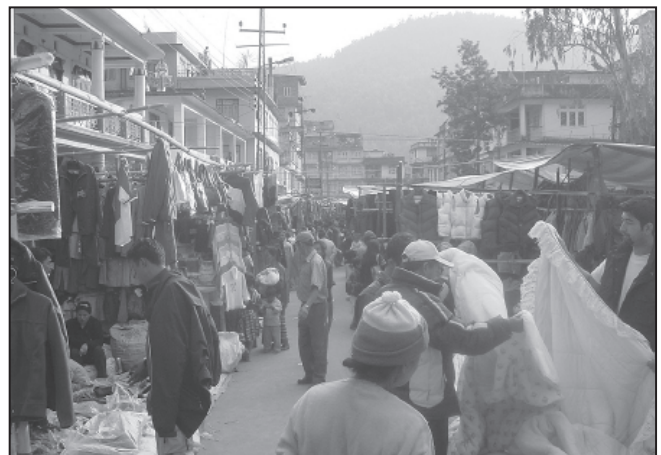
For the hawkers and small time businessmen who had been coming here for the last few years, the mela offers a good opportunity to earn money. Says Bakim Ghosh of Siliguri, who has a stall selling soft toys "Earlier my father used to come here but now I handle business. We come here in groups every year because business has always been very profitable here and we enjoy it here."

For the children, it were the rides that were the most fun. If Nanu, a seven year old who has come with her parents from Gangtok, enjoyed the pony ride most, then for Rajan from Mangan, "the most enjoyable experience in the Mela was the air gun shooting.

Some of the other crowd pullers at the fair were Raveena's dance at the Chitrahaar and the two movie halls showing the latest films.

The 3-day mela also saw many events like the volley ball tournament finals be-

turn to pg 8



## Cong uses Rhenock double-murder whip to flay SDF

### a NOW REPORT

**GANGTOK:** The Sikkim Pradesh Congress Committee-I (SPCC) has expressed "deep anguish and regret" over the twin murder of minor girls in Rhenock on 11 January.

SPCC-I spokesman Biraj Adhikari, in a press statement, while extending the Congress's

"heartfelt condolences and deep regret" to the bereaved families, has demanded "maximum possible punishment" for the accused.

Blaming the present SDF government for the "rapidly deteriorating law and order" in the State, Congress said that the incident at Rhenock "reflected the irresponsibility of the Chamling-led Govern-

ment and its failure towards maintaining law and order in the State."

"The number of heinous crimes that occur everyday in the State and the rising crime rate in the last ten years of SDF rule is alarming, given the area and population of State in comparison to other States in the country. It reflects the failure of

the SDF government," the press statement reads.

While also criticising the present government for "failure to bring justice to the people" in most of the crimes committed in the State in recent times, the Congress has demanded that all those accused booked for such heinous crimes be brought to justice immediately.

# SIBLAC RAISES NATHULA ISSUE WITH CII

### a NOW REPORT

**GANGTOK:** The Sikkim Bhutia Lepcha Apex Committee (SIBLAC) has once again brought out the Nathula trade issue and its presumable impact on the demography of the State, this time, directing its "apprehension" to the Confederation of Indian Industries (CII).

On the eve of the CII seminar on the proposed reopening of Nathula pass for trade in Siliguri on January 16, SIBLAC, in a letter to the Chairman, CII, signed by

ruling party MLA and SIBLAC convenor, Tseten Tashi Bhutia, SIBLAC expressed its "apprehensions" on the "issues of safeguards of minority Bhutia-Lepcha" of the State, and its "stands on the reopening of Nathula" for trade.

"One of the main factors responsible for the present resentment among the Sikkimese, particularly among the indigenous minority Bhutia-Lepcha people is the influx and presence of large number of emigrants from outside of the State, neighbouring countries in particular - Nepal and Tibet - which have caused immense

social, political, economic and ethnic imbalance in the State. The Nathula trade will encourage more influx... the issue must take due cognisance of the changing demography of Sikkim and displacement of Bhutia-Lepcha people from their ancestral land," the letter read.

SIBLAC has further said in the letter that the "impact of changing demography in Sikkim has been the worst" among all the North-eastern states in the country and has expressed "great concern" over the "number of outsiders that is growing at an explosive and unsustainable pace."

"The increase in population due to influx has increased the burden of dependency and reduced resources of the State. The present rate of growth, if not moderated will have frightening implications on the socio-political security of the minority Bhutia-Lepcha in particular and Sikkimese people in gen-



Nathula

eral," it said.

Reiterating that SIBLAC was "not against" any development activity or the opening of Nathula, the letter stresses that development activities should be "people-centric" and not "displace" them from their own land.

SIBLAC further said that CII should take note of three points before opening of Nathula for trade, which should be "deemed

absolutely necessary." These points are - restoring original definition of "Bhutia" by amending the Scheduled Tribes/Castes Orders [Amendment] Act, 2003; safeguarding the political rights of Bhutia-Lepcha people by amending the Representation of People's [Amendment] Act, 1980 and delimiting reserved constituencies of BLS to ensure their genuine representation in the State Assembly.



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- Interior and exterior signage conceptualization, design, installation and maintenance.

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- Project management, i.e. build-outs, renovations, initial move in and re-arrangement.

Architectural/ Design firms evincing an interest in the above cited works should mail a detailed organizational profile and work experience.

Consultancy firms should provide detailed profile of the management team.

Individual designers/ consultants are also invited to mail personal profiles.

**Details in the profiles should include:** 1. Educational qualification. 2. Professional Practice. 3. Professional Registrations. 4. Professional Affiliations. 5. Academic and Civic Activities

Email proposals to: [naresh@envision-india.org](mailto:naresh@envision-india.org)

## A BRUSH WITH ART AT JORETHANG



### a NOW REPORT

**B**rushstrokes, an art exhibition organised by Sikkim Akademi held its first show at Jorethang from January 14-16 along with the Maghe Mela. Twenty-four artists showcased their creations at the 3-day exhibition held at Panchsheel Bhawan, here.

The exhibition-cum-sale was inaugurated by Minister for Agriculture, GM Gurung, and was sponsored by Lalit Kala Akademi, New Delhi. It is the first of its kind for Sikkim.

Rajen Pradhan, Passang Sherpa, BB Rai, Sisir Thapa, Vijaymani Thulung were some of the artists who exhibited their work here. Many of the 165 paintings on display were sold during the course of the exhibition.

Kiran Rasailly, Chief Engineer, Buildings & Housing Department and an acclaimed artist himself, selected the best five paintings, all of which won cash prizes of Rs. 5,000 each. A certificate of participation was also handed over to the artists by the Akademi.

The paintings, most of which depicted the reality of life and people of Sikkim, were appreciated by all visitors.

In fact, the talent on display so impressed the area MLA, Bhojraj Rai, that he promised to start an art gallery in this south district border town. Needless to add, the idea went down well the artists present who pointed out that all of Sikkim did not have a single art gallery yet.

Encouraged by the response to the exhibition, Sikkim Akademi aired hopes to make this an annual feature.

## Pulse Polio immunisation reaches 67,520 children

### a NOW REPORT

**GANGTOK:** A total of 67,520 children have been vaccinated under the Intensified Pulse Polio Immunisation Programme in the State since September 2003.

According to an activity report issued by the Department of Health & Family Welfare, after the three rounds of Pulse Polio immunization programme conducted in September and November 2003 and January 2004, the

State is reaching impressive figures in the drive to eradicate polio from the State.

In the East District, a total of 28,143 children were given polio drops against 16,737 children in the West District, 5,464 in the North and 17,176 in the South District.

The figures also reveal that the vaccination booths set up during the designated immunization days are proving to be more successful. Out of the 67,520 children vaccinated, 63,451 children were administered polio drops at the booths

## PUBLIC NOTICE

The Department of Roads and Bridges, Govt of Sikkim has proposed to construct an Airport at Pakyong, East Sikkim. The salient features of the project are as follows:-

1. State : Sikkim
2. District : East
3. Location : Pakyong
4. Total Area Required : 217.50 (approx), which includes 112.50 acres already acquired and additional requirement of 95 acres.
5. Length of Runway : 1600 meter
6. Length of Airstrip : 2000 meter
7. Area of Terminal Building : 4100 Sq meter
8. Car Parking capacity : 50 cars
9. Air Traffic Control Tower : 15 meter
10. Type of Aircraft : ATR-72/500, AUW/21 tonnes
11. Capacity of Aircraft : 50 seater
12. Total Estimated Cost : 224.00 crores
13. Water Supply : The water source has been indicated by the PHE Department & the cost for the same is included in the estimate.
14. Fencing : The provision is kept for chain link fencing around the Airport area.

Whereas by notification of Govt. of India in the Ministry of Environment and Forest No. 60 (E) dated 27<sup>th</sup> January 1994, issued under sub-section (1) and clause (V) of sub-section (2) of Section 3 of Environment Protection Act, 1986 (29 of 1996) as made mandatory under Part-II section 3 sub-section (II) dated 10<sup>th</sup> April 1997, the State Pollution Control Board is required to conduct Public Hearing in the interest of the public for preparing recommendations based on the technical assessment of documents and data furnished by the project authorities for obtaining necessary environmental clearance from MOEF, Govt. of India.

Therefore, notice is hereby given to all persons, including bonafide residents, environmental groups and other located at project site/sites of displacement, sites likely to be affected to participate and provide suggestions, views, comments and objections, if any and to attend the public hearing to be conducted on 14.02.2004 at SDM office complex, Pakyong, East Sikkim at 10:30 AM onwards. Any person, individual interested to submit other written suggestions, views or complaints can do so on or before the hearing date, which may be addressed to the Member Secretary, State Pollution Control Board, Department of Forest, Environment and Wildlife, Deorali, Gangtok.

**ST Lachungpa, IFS,**  
**State Pollution Control Board, Department of Forest, Environment and Wildlife**

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## SDF CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE CLEARS PROPOSAL TO HOLD SIMULTANEOUS POLLS; MANIFESTO COMMITTEE SUBMITS DRAFT

# CAMPAIGN ON OUR STRENGTHS, NOT THE OPPOSITION'S WEAKNESSES, CHAMLING TELLS HIS CADRE

### a NOW REPORT

**GANGTOK:** It is not yet "official," but as close to "final" as it can get. Sikkim will go in for simultaneous Assembly polls when the nation conducts the general elections sometime in April this year. The party nod to opt for simultaneous polls was given at a 4-hour long central executive meeting of the ruling Sikkim Democratic Front held here on 20 January, Tuesday.

While talk of early polls [the ruling SDF's term ends only in November] has been making the rounds for quite some time now, it was only with the ruling party's CEC meeting that it has become certain. The party, however, was apparently serious about the prospect as was made obvious on Tuesday when, apart from the nod for simultaneous polls, the CEC meeting also saw the SDF Mani-

festto Committee submit a draft proposal to the Chief Minister.

The campaigning, inform party sources, will begin in February. Adding a wicked twist to the launch of its election campaign, the party has reportedly decided to start from Rhenock - the Opposition leader Nar Bahadur Bhandari's constituency which supported him even when his traditional stronghold, Soreong, fell to SDF in the last polls.

These overt shows of strength apart, Mr. Chamling does not appear to be in the mood to contribute to the Opposition's publicity in Sikkim. Speaking to the executive members of his party on Tuesday, he urged them to campaign of the ruling party's strengths and not the Opposition's weaknesses.

In his 2-hour speech, the party president reiterated that the Opposition "did not hold much water in Sikkim" and that the campaign trail should be directed more at

reaching SDF's message and its performance to the people than highlighting the obvious chinks in the Opposition's armour.

While calling on senior party members to now focus on contributing towards the party's poll prospects, Mr. Chamling said the time had come for everyone to work in earnest to return SDF to power.

With the decision on early polls cleared, can talk of possible candidates be far behind?

Informed sources reveal that there will be some new faces introduced in the upcoming polls. There are also many in the party ranks who feel they have now grown in popularity and performance to deserve a party ticket. With 31 of 32-member legislative assembly wearing the SDF colours, ticket distribution is definitely something that will require a delicate balancing act by the Chief Minister.

Incidentally, Mr. Chamling, at the CEC meeting, also made it clear that the tickets will be decided "by the party" and that there was no need for "delegations" to approach him supporting the candidature of different leaders. "Party workers should

# AIMING THE

### PEMA WANGCHUK & SARIKAH ATREYA

**GANGTOK:** It's final now, come April and Sikkim will go in for simultaneous polls. In barely two months time. Hectic electioneering will now begin in the earnest and new permutations and combinations will be tried out as contenders to the next government work out arrangements to best buttress their shot at power.

Every political party will obviously claim that it is "ready." No one can go about asking for votes without at least putting across a confi-

## TWO-WAY FOR SURE, DEFINITELY EXPENSIVE AND POSSIBLY VIOLENT

dent face. That apart, it takes more than just for the political parties to be ready. The election machine is a colossal one and every cog has to fall into place before elections can be held. A case in point is the Andhra Pradesh experience where even though the government was dissolved long back, elections are still awaited thanks to the Election Commission's wet blanket on Chandrababu Naidu's plans.

No such speed-breaker seems possible in Sikkim with the State Election Department confident that it can have everything in place by April.

"We are preparing ourselves for the polls. Even though we have not received any formal directives from New Delhi yet, we have indications of an early poll," said Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, CP Dhakal said, while talking to NOW! Needless to add, preparations for the general elections he was talking about and state elections, which is now going to be simultaneous, are the same.

The Department is presently involved in completing the revision of electoral rolls and issuing photo identity cards. The photo voters cards have been made mandatory for the April elections. "We carried out the summary revision of the electoral rolls. The final revised electoral rolls is expected to be out on January 20 [Tuesday]," Mr. Dhakal said.

turn to pg 10

## We will ride the anti-incumbency factor to power: Thukchuk

### SARIKAH ATREYA

**GANGTOK:** "Yes we are. If the polls are scheduled for April or even earlier, say in end-March, the Congress is prepared for it," Thukchuk Lachungpa, vice-president and in-charge, General Elections, SPCC [I] said when asked whether his party was prepared for early polls in Sikkim.

In fact, the Congress seems all too eager to step into the election arena and take on the SDF in what it feels will be a closely fought match. These polls will also reveal how well the voters have taken in the Bhandari-led SSP-Congress merger. The polls will also be taken as a barometer to measure Mr. Bhandari's grassroots appeal and whether the Sikkimese voters will accept a national party. Congress, or for that matter any national party, has never been voted to power in Sikkim. They have only appropriated power through mergers and defections thus far.

But, the Congress is confident that they will emerge winners.

"The anti-incumbency factor will play a major role during the elections this time. The Congress is presently enjoying a popularity wave under the leadership of Mr. Bhandari never before seen in the State. People want a change and we are offering them just that," Mr. Lachungpa said.

The Congress, already in the cam-

paign mode, is promising an "attractive" package to the people that promises "much more" than good governance.

"Our election agenda will focus on issues such as security, unity, communal harmony and fulfillment of all the promises. We want to give the people result-oriented schemes and not those are populist measures," Mr. Lachungpa said.

The party will contest candidates from all 32 seats. "Candidates will be given tickets on the basis of their loyalty towards the party and their winnability factor," he said.

The party also goes back to the vote-share of the last elections. With Cong [I] having bagged some 4 per cent votes and another 44 per cent of the votes that were cast in support of the then Bhandari-led SSP, they are hopeful that some careful realignments, they will be able to swing the elections in their favour.

Apart from Cong [I], the ruling SDF will have some competition from smaller players in the State. The new-look BJP, its NDA ally at the Centre, and other parties like Sikkim Himali Rajya Parishad have already started working towards the elections. Then there is also the breakaway SSP faction. None has created any waves in elections thus far and as things stand the April elections, both to the Lok Sabha and the State Legislative Assembly, will be a direct confrontation between the two giants of Sikkim politics, Mr. Bhandari and Mr. Chamling.



instead focus on the campaigning from now on," he said.

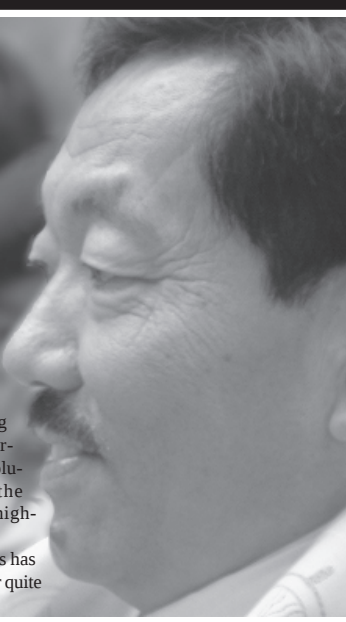
Incidentally, another decision taken at the CEC with the elections in mind was to hold the SDF Day at one venue this year. The day was being observed at the constituency level thus far. Sources reveal that the SDF Day, which falls on 4 March, will probably be held at Rangpo Mining Ground. The decision on a single venue should provide the ruling party with a opportunity to make a public statement of its support base. Minister Health, DD Bhutia, has been appointed the Chairperson of the SDF Day Organising Committee.

Also in preparation of the poll campaign, Lok Sabha MP, Bhim Dahal, has been appointed the Chairperson of the Publicity Working Committee of the ruling party.

Coming back to the party manifesto, although it is still in the draft stage, senior leaders hint that the SDF poll-plank will be its track-record on delivering development and good governance to the people in the past ten years. Emotive issues like social engineering of caste and

religious controversies will not be stoked and SDF's success in institutionalising "participatory governance" with the devolution of powers to the panchayats will be highlighted.

The party, it appears has been ready for polls for quite some time now...



# POLLS

## Gooroong sees winning combo in an issue-less Opp and SDF's people-oriented politics

### a NOW REPORT

**GANGTOK:** "The upcoming polls will obviously be a two-way fight between SDF and Congress, but the result will definitely be one-way in favour of Sikkim Democratic Front," believes a confident political advisor to the CM and former CM himself, BB Gooroong.

Mr. Gooroong points out that the people are tired of political parties which surface only when elections are round the corner.

"SDF has remained in consistent touch with the people throughout its two terms. We don't have leaders who forget the people when elections are over. By that logic, we never really stopped campaigning. Now, the party president has further revamped all the frontal organisations of the party and everyone is prepared. We always were," Mr. Gooroong contends.

Stressing another factor he sees as the SDF's strength and Opposition's weakness, Mr. Gooroong points out that SDF is "cadre-based" party while the Congress is in disarray.

"Our party workers and supporters have always remained with us. We go down to the grassroots while the Con-

gress makes only a superficial show of comeback every time there are election. At present, they are also in disarray with their composition confusing not only the people, but also the party-members. The Sangrami-

Congressi factor is disorienting everyone," he says.

"At present, Mr. Bhandari does not even have a safe constituency for himself. How does he expect to lead an entire party to victory?" he quips.

He further maintains that the Opposition has neither issues at hand nor promises to make. "In fact, they are taking the existing schemes of the government and just adding to them. They are that bankrupt for ideas," he said.

When asked to comment on SDF's gameplan, he says that they will go to polls with issues of development and good governance.

"We have a good a track-record on both counts and it will not take much convincing. We don't want to get into emotive issues. Our ten years in power reflect our commitment to such issues. We will let our performance speak for itself. The bhagidari [participatory] form of governance that we practice with more power at the grassroots will also work to our benefit," he adds.

**"BHANDARI DOES NOT EVEN HAVE A SAFE CONSTITUENCY FOR HIMSELF, HOW DOES HE EXPECT TO LEAD CONG TO VICTORY?"**



## Read on if you want to fight substance abuse in Sikkim

We all know that drug abuse exists. We've heard about it, read about it. Some of us have also dealt with it among friends and family. And yet, most of us are still unaware about how serious and widespread the problem is. Even we at NOW! when we started working on the three-part drug story serialised recently were not prepared for the onslaught of facts and figures that kept coming at us. The story kept getting bigger, and yet, in retrospect, we seem to have only skimmed the surface, only revealed the tip of the iceberg.

So where do we go from here?

Now that the story is done, do we just walk away, forget about it?

We couldn't.

We all felt the need to do more, to take it one step further.

We decided to sponsor Lakpa's rehabilitation. Today as he undergoes treatment and therapy at Hope Centre, we feel happy to have initiated the process. Along with Lakpa, we have sent two more boys to the same de-addiction centre. Money for this is being raised through contributions made by friends and even some strangers who have donated for the initiative.

We have now decided to take the initiative further. Get more involved.

We are launching the NOW! Fight Against Drug Abuse Fund. The money collected will be used for launching awareness campaigns, sponsoring youth for de-addiction and working out a long-term rehabilitation plan for recovering addicts. But we cannot fight the battle alone. We request our readers to contribute generously towards this fund. Donations can be made vide cheque to NOW! with a covering letter marking the cause or in cash at the office. The contributions raised in this fashion will be published in subsequent issues of NOW! and monthly details on how the funds have been utilised will be similarly published.

It will however take more than just funds to battle substance abuse. Recovered addicts need to be rehabilitated into the society and on this front, business houses can earmark positions in organisations where such candidates can be provided employment provided they meet the job requirements.

Substance abuse is a social problem which requires community participation to solve, hence this appeal in the public domain.

Let's hope that together we can make a difference.

-NOW!

**For further details and suggestions on how we can make the campaign against rising substance abuse more effective, please contact us at NOW! Gairi Gaon, Tadong, Gangtok, East Sikkim or call us at 270949 or email [sikkimnow@rediffmail.com](mailto:sikkimnow@rediffmail.com)**

12-19 JAN, 2004

# A WEEK FOR THE YOUNG

## a NOW REPORT

**GANGTOK:** National Youth Week was celebrated with great zeal and enthusiasm all over Sikkim from January 12-19.

The week long programme started from January 12 which falls on the birthday of Dr BR Ambedkar who is considered as the Youth Icon of India. The programme consisted of giving of awards to the most outstanding youth clubs and the best social workers in the district, with cultural programmes and awareness generating camps held throughout the week.

National Youth Week was organized by various NGOs in collaboration with Nehru Yuva Kendra, Gangtok at different venues in the East District. The week long programme started from Rongli on January 12 with other programmes being held at Chongey and Ranipool.

The programme commenced at Dikchu on 19 January. Organized by Dikchu Youth Welfare Association, the function had Nima Dawa Sherpa, Chief Advisor, DYWA, as chief guest. Also present were Panchayat members, Bazaar committee, local NGOs and the general public.

The day had activities like general awareness camp for the local people, cultural programme, physical endurance tests for the youth and athletics for the children.

Wangchuk Dukpa, Area NSV (National Service Volunteer) wholeheartedly thanked the District Youth Coordinator, NYK,

East, JK Limboo for providing and informing about the various schemes that were benefiting the local people of Dikchu. He said that Schemes like Youth Club Developmental Programme and Social Promotion Programme, as well as work camps and vocational training courses were making the villagers aware of the ways they can be self sufficient and happy. He further stated that the Dikchu Youth Welfare Association would always cooperate and work hand in hand with Nehru Yuva Kendra.

The National Youth Week was also celebrated at Ramabung, South Sikkim. Organized by NGO Yuva Jyoti Sang, the event which was sponsored by Nehru Yuva Kendra, Namchi was held under the guidance of Suren Mohra, National Service Volunteer.

The theme of the programme was 'Youth as the heritage of future'. More than thirty participants from 12 clubs took part in the programme. Minister for Rural Development, Girish Chandra Rai was the Chief Guest at the programme. Appreciating the effort of the youth, he sanctioned the building of a community shed costing Rs. 70,000 at Ramabung. Zilla Panchayat, HK Khaling was the Guest of Honour.

Cultural programme, quiz and debates were held at the function. These were sponsored by Raj Kumari Thapa, in the name of her late grandmother, Dil Sari Rai.

A volleyball tournament was also held, with the final match between YJS and 9 Star Sadam, with YJS lifting the trophy.

Zonal Cultural Centre, Kolkata.

All in all the Maghe Mela at Jorethang was a huge success for the organizers and a great event for the public. Police say they had no problems and everything went off quite smoothly. People in their finest clothes were happy and in the best of moods.

The festive air at Jorethang was symbolic of the great joy that the Maghe Mela brings to the people of the state.

## The fun gets stronger...

Contd from pg 6

tween CLC Chakung and Siliguri which CLC won with a cash prize of 30,000 with the runners-up team winning Rs. 20,000. There was also a friendly match between the MLA team and the youth team. Besides these there were folk dances and music from Sikkim, Assam, West Bengal and Orissa which were presented by the department of Culture, Government of Sikkim and Eastern

## RENTAL PROPERTIES

AVAILABLE FOR IMMEDIATE OCCUPANCY: 900 SQ FT FREE SPACE  
ACCOMMODATION WITH 14' HIGH CEILING AND ATTACHED TOILET.  
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## EMPLOYMENT NOTICE

Application are invited from the eligible local candidates for filing up of 15 posts of Jr.Engineer (Civil) under various Departments in the scale of Rs. 5000-150-8000 plus other admissible allowances under the Rules.

1. The above posts will be filled up from the following categories of candidates:

| 2. Categories of Candidates: | No. of post        |
|------------------------------|--------------------|
| S.T.                         | - 03               |
| S.T. (Women)                 | - 01               |
| S.T. (Blind or low vision)   | - 01               |
| S.C                          | - 01               |
| M.B.C.                       | - 02               |
| M.B.C (Blind or low vision)  | - 01               |
| O.B.C.                       | - 02               |
| U.R                          | - 02               |
| U.R. (Women)                 | - 02               |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                 | <b>- 15 Posts.</b> |

3. Any post falling vacant on or before the date of final selection will also be included and filled up in accordance with 100 Point Roster.

4. Education Qualification : Diploma or Degree in Civil Engineering  
& Eligibility conditions : from recognized Board / Institution of Technical Education.

5. Must be able to speak, read and write atleast one of the State Language namely: Nepali, Sikkimese, Bhutia, Lepcha or Limboo.

6. The age of the candidate shall not be below 18 years and above 30 years as on 31.12.2003.

a) Upper age limit is relaxable as under :-

5 Years (in service candidate on regular establishment)

5 Years for ST / SC candidates.

3 Years for OBC candidates.

7. Documents: Valid Local Employment Card issued by Department of Personnel in case of Un-Employed candidate, Sikkim Subject Certificate/ Certificate of Identification, School Final Pass Certificate, Mark sheets of class X & XII, Degree / Diploma Certificate, ST/SC/ OBC certificate as the case may be. No Objection Certificate from the Secretary/ Head of the Department in the case of in service candidate.

8. The selection will be made through open Competitive Examination. Syllabus of the written Examination are as under :

|                  |                                             |
|------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Paper/ Subject : | a) All Subject of Civil Engineering Course. |
|                  | - 50 marks -                                |
|                  | b) General Knowledge /Current Affairs       |
|                  | - 20 marks -                                |
|                  | c) English - 30 marks.                      |

Candidate seeking admission for the Examination should obtain a prescribed form from the Office of the Deputy Secretary, Roads & Bridges Department, Gangtok on production of S.B.S Bank Receipt for Rs. 50/- credited under Revenue Head : 0059 - Public Works - 80 - 800 other receipts (i) Roads & Bridges along with attested photocopies of the documents must reach the Deputy Secretary, Roads & Bridges Department, Gangtok on or before 17.02.2004 thereof and no application will be entertained after due date. Selection of Candidate will be made on the basis of Written Examination followed by Viva- Voce test. Date of Written Examination and venue will be announced later on.

No TA / DA is payable to those sitting in the Examination.

**Joint Secretary,**  
**Roads & Bridges Department**

# THE JUGGERNAUT ROLLS NORTH

Mangan Janata Mela, 12 January, 2003



Perhaps the most interesting display at the Janata Mela was the one at the Roads & Bridges Department. The model of the Jorethang Suspension Bridge attracted a large crowd and provided the Department with an opportunity to disseminate information on its efforts at improving the road network in north Sikkim.



On display at the Cooperative Societies of North Sikkim stall at the Mangan Janta Mela were local, bio-organic products from villages of north Sikkim. The exhibition-cum-sale displayed reasonably priced items ranging from vegetables to pickles to churpee to locally woven carpets and mattresses. The stall provided an encouraging outlet for local cooperatives.

DEEPAK SHARMA

**MANGAN:** The Janata Mela shifted to North Sikkim with the Chief Minister Pawan Chamling kicking off the Mela for the Lachen-Mangshila and Dzongu constituencies here on 12 January.

Area MLA, Lachen-Mangshila and Minister for Power, Hissey Lachungpa, Minister for Tourism and Land Revenue, KT Gyalsten, MLA [Dzongu], Sonam Gyatso Lepcha, Deputy Speaker, Palden Lachungpa, Rajya Sabha MP, PT Gyamtso, District Collector, North, secretaries and senior officials of various government departments and local Panchayats represented the state administration at the Janata Mela.

The Chief Minister made a token distribution of various schemes under Rural Housing, Chief Minister's Self-Employment Scheme, LPG connection, Old Age pensions, etc to the beneficiaries. He also handed over a scholarship certificate and award to Rinkila Bhutia, a student of Mangan Senior Secondary School for winning the first prize in an essay competition and also making it to the merit list of the Class X examinations in the State.

And then, it was time for politics. Addressing a huge gathering

at the Public Ground here, Mr. Chamling said that the Janata Mela, launched by the SDF government two years ago with the sole intentions of providing benefits "directly" to the people at the grassroots, has been a big success.

He refuted allegations made by the Opposition parties that the various schemes launched by the SDF government were populists in nature by saying that the Opposition parties were hardly aware of the difference between terms such as "grants, loans and benefits."

"The Opposition leaders are involved in spreading rumours and misguiding the people of the State on the various welfare schemes launched by my government directly for the people. The previous government under Nar Bahadur Bhandari came nowhere close to providing such benefits to the people. That our efforts have directly benefited the people is evident for all to see," he said.

Mr. Chamling said that the opposition leaders should remember that it was his government that managed to achieve OBC status for the left out communities in the State.

"During his tenure when the Mandal Commission was formed and the demand to include the Chettri, Bahun and Newar communities was raised, Mr. Bhandari opposed the inclusion. It was only after the SDF came to power that the matter was again pursued and achieved. We were also success-

ful in achieving tribal status to the Limbu and Tamang communities," he said.

The Chief Minister also asked the people not be get swayed by the false promises and rumours spread by the Opposition parties.

On the issue of the seats reserved for the Bhutia-Lepchas in the State Assembly, the Chief Minister said that he has been consistently reiterating that the BL seats were safe, even after the inclusion of Limbu-Tamang in the Scheduled Tribes list.

Mr. Chamling then spelt out the various people-centric policies and programmes of the SDF government and his vision to make Sikkim a model State by 2015 - free of poverty and complete in literacy.

Given the scale at which the Janata Melas have been launched and perhaps because there is still some red tape involved in shortlisting the beneficiaries, some potential beneficiaries approached NOW! with the complaint that their "panchayat" has repeatedly duped them into submitting detailed records and documents, but never getting them included in the list of beneficiaries. Some had already received the first instalment of benefits, but were being made to run from pillar to post by the panchayats to receive the second instalment, they alleged.

## SHRP makes its SDF-hating ways clear in Mangan

a NOW REPORT

**MANGAN:** The Sikkim Himali Rajya Parishad party [SHRP] kicked off its election campaign in North Sikkim at a public meeting held here on January 16.

SHRP president Dr. AD Subba led the meeting here at the Old Bazar, which was also attended by the party's North District president, Peter Lepcha and other prominent members of the party.

Addressing the gathering, Mr. Lepcha gave his reasons for joining the party, which he said was "democratic" and "committed" to welfare of the people. He said that the SHRP was the only party where the distinction between the rich and the poor was nil and therefore, it understood the problems of the poor people.

"Being a retired Revenue Of-

ficer, I decided to support Dr. Subba's party because I am convinced that this party can do a lot for the underprivileged people of the State," he said.

Criticising the ruling SDF government's Janata Mela and the welfare schemes, Mr. Lepcha said that these welfare schemes were actually central schemes just being distributed by the State government. He said that the SDF was misleading the innocent people of the State by claiming the schemes to be theirs.

Various senior members of the party also addressed the crowd, and all preferred to criticise the ruling SDF government. They blamed the SDF government for the rising crimes in the State, saying that murders and rapes were occurring almost on a daily basis. They all expressed their concerns over the safety of the people in

the State and criticised the administration for failing to check the rising crimes in the State.

The various speakers also spoke at length about the unemployment problem in Sikkim, the drug problem and increasing mental illnesses and suicides. They all said that the SDF government had failed to fulfil the aspirations of the people of the State.

Dr. Subba, in his address, said that the main reason behind the formation of the party was to work for the welfare of the people and fight corruption in the State. Echoing the same anti-SDF sentiments as his fellow party members, Dr. Subba said that the benefits are only reaching those people who are members of the SDF party and have put up an SDF flag on their houses. He said that most of the Central grants are being "misused" by politicians and bureaucrats.

## Gtk safai karmacharis thank EHTA

a NOW REPORT

**GANGTOK:** The Gangtok Safai Karmachari Welfare Association [GSKWA], has thanked the Eastern Himalayan Tourism Association, Gangtok for monetary contributions

made by it to the Association. Pempa Bhutia, president, GSKWA, in a letter to the General Secretary, Eastern Himalayan Tourism Association, has expressed the Association's gratitude for donating Rs. 10,001 towards the welfare of the safai karmacharis of Gangtok.



WATCH SPACE OVERHEAT

# Two-way for sure, definitely expensive, possibly violent

Contd from pg 6

On the issue of voters' identity cards, the Department recently launched its second round of issuing photo IDs. "From January 12 this year, we have relaunched the photo identity cards programme in all the four districts of the State. This is mainly for those who were left out during the first round held last year. Also, those voters who have lost their cards can get new ones made during this round, along with those newly enrolled in the voters list and those who have attained 18 years of age for these polls," Mr. Dhakal said.

The Department is confident that the entire process of issuing photo identity cards would be over by the end of February.

"We have already completed about 76 percent of the process and hope to achieve 100 percent target by the end of February," Mr. Dhakal said.

This year's polls will also see electronic voting machines being used for the first time in the State. The Central Election Commission has already directed the Depart-



THE TIME WHEN LEADERS START TAKING A HEADCOUNT OF THEIR SUPPORT-BASE

ment on the compulsory use of EVMs during the polls.

The elections don't come cheap either. Simultaneous polls will tote up a bill of not less than Rs. 1.5 crores in organising. This is just what the State will spend. What the parties invest will be completely different set of economics.

In fact, the Opposition leader Nar Bahadur Bhandari is already making public declarations that the upcoming polls will be a contest between "dhan-shakti and

jan-shakti." He would obviously have us believe that the money is with the ruling SDF and the people with him and Congress [I]. Expensive elections will not be new to Sikkim. The 1999 polls saw every side pump in a lot into the campaigning. It will not be much different this time around.

What is however clear is that the polls will be a two-way contest between the Bhandari led Cong [I] and Mr. Chamling's SDF. The equations were only a little different last time around. Although Congress was in the contest, as the final tally showed [Congress bagged barely 4 per cent vote-share], the fight was always between SSP and SDF in the people's minds. And, since politics

and parties in Sikkim are so personality driven, this time again, it will be a face-off between Mr. Chamling and Mr. Bhandari.

There will be of course the usual round of defectors from one party to the other, when the tickets are decided. But that is a giveaway of a "leaders" lack of vote-base. If strong enough to win, why wouldn't the parent-party have given him a ticket instead. Elections are after all about winning. They at best play the role of spoilsports, splitting some votes away.

As things stand, Mr. Chamling by virtue of being in power and having had a decent two terms holds the upper hand. Mr. Bhandari, on the other hand, will

have to first convince the people on the reasons why he joined a national party that he had whipped so often from public platforms in the past. He has also been a rather reticent Opposition leader throughout the present term and Mr. Chamling's constant reminders that only SDF remained with the people throughout while "others" surfaced only when elections came about, will be a difficult argument to downplay. Specially so because Congress in Sikkim has traditionally been a party which activates itself when elections are round the corner.

Also the fact that Congress is not yet riding an anti-SDF wave will make a bid at its power difficult. SDF, in 1994, when it rode the strongest wave since the seventies, it made it power barely by the skin of its teeth. Ditto for Mr. Bhandari back in 1979 when he had managed to catch the mass imagination.

But then democracy has matured much even since 1994 and the voting preferences are something that not even the most "scientific" of psephology cannot predict accurately. What is certain is that Sikkim is going for simultaneous polls in April; that it is going to be a two-way contest; expensive; and, if Congress is convinced of its chances, also violent.

## APPEAL

The Power Department has been making earnest efforts to maintain regular power supply in the State. In the last few weeks there has been interruption in power supply in Gangtok and in the East district of the State. The main reason for this is limitation of power drawing capacity from the grid. We strongly feel the importance of maintaining regular power supply in view of the fact that our young ones are preparing for their Board Examinations.

**- If all the consumers extend their co-operation the Department can continue to maintain regular power supply in the state.**

**- We appeal to all our consumers to take the following actions to help the department to maintain regular power supply.**

1. Do not use heaters, geysers, electric irons and other electrical gadgets during the peak hours i.e. 17.00 hrs to 21.00 hrs.
2. Switch off the lights, which are not necessary.
3. Replace your bulbs with compact fluorescent lamps
4. Do not use compound with lights and flood lights.

Use of electric welding sets, industrial loads, motor of any kind is restricted from 06.00 hours to 09.00 hours and 17.00 hrs to 21.00 hrs till further notice. If anybody is found using electricity for such purposes the service connection will be disconnected and heavy fine will be imposed.

The Department Appeals to all the consumers for their kind co-operation in the interest of our consumers and their children.

**R. K. Pradhan  
Chief Engineer (HQ)  
Power Department  
Gangtok**

## STREET PLAYS ON MAN AND HIS WASTEFUL WAYS

To spread awareness about the detrimental effects of pollution and the hazards of dumping garbage in the open, the State Pollution Control Board has sponsored a series of street plays to drive home the message.

The first of the street plays was performed at Jorethang during the Maghe Sakranti Mela on January 15, at two venues.

"The main pollutant during such large gatherings is the waste generated by the people, and the main aim for conducting such plays is to sensitize the people and generate awareness amongst them," said Dr Gopal Pradhan, Senior Scientist, SPCB.

The play, called 'Shanti' was performed by Sikkim Amateur Theatre. Written and directed by Ranjit Kumar Singh, the main roles were enacted by Dilip Rai, Devendra Sunar, Sampten Bhutia and Prakash Chettri.



The large gathering watching the play seemed quite keen to hear about the various ill-effects of pollution on the environment and the people.

Speaking to NOW!, a group of bystanders admitted that the "message had gone through" and the gathering had appreciated the

efforts of the participants to give them this message. Some even wanted these plays to be conducted in other districts.

SPCB sources inform that although the dates have not yet been fixed, these plays will be performed at all the four districts.

# LOCAL POST-GRADUATES TO MARCH THE STREETS IN AN AWARENESS DRIVE

## a NOW REPORT

**GANGTOK:** The Sikkim Post Graduate Association, on Tuesday, 20 January, launched a state wide peaceful agitation to express its dissatisfaction over the existing policies of the government, particularly on education and unemployment and also to impress upon the youth the need to be aware and self-sufficient at all times.

The SPGA has started a state-wide "Walk for a Cause" from

Tuesday and are confident that this unusual initiative will create the right awareness among the youth.

"We will reach our message to every nook and corner of the state, this will hopefully make our youth become aware of their untapped potential," say members of SPGA.

This was decided at an executive body meeting held at Sikkim Employees Guest House a day earlier.

The SPGA General Secretary, Padam Bahadur Chettri, who pre-

sided over the meeting expressed the disappointment of SPGA over the non-inclusion of the locals in various posts of lecturers in the State Government College in the year 2001 and said that non-Sikkimese people should be only appointed when "suitable and qualified" local people are not available in the state as per the rules of Article 371, which gives the state special concessions.

He has also filed a writ petition about this in the High Court, with regard to non implementation of the rule which

guarantees this right.

SPGA, which was formed last year, has been continuing its fight over what they see as an unfair policy of the state government.

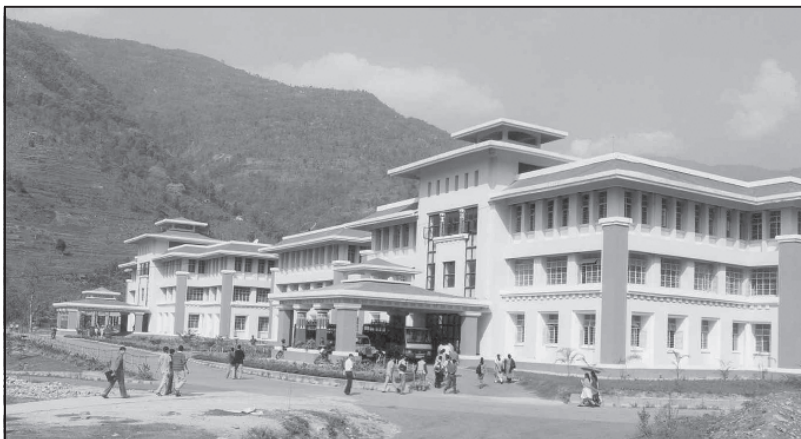
The association has been emphatic over the cancellation of the controversial list for the appointment of lecturers prepared by the State Public Service Commission. The list, the association says, goes completely against the protection of the public interest in the state government employment and disregarded a number of deserving local candidates. They subse-

quently pressurized the Department of Education and the SPSC to cancel the controversial appointment of lecturers.

The meeting emphasized on the need to create a state employment exchange for recruiting candidates. They have also demanded for State Level Eligibility Test [SLET], the setting up of a State Council of Educational Research and Training, and state cadre for assistant lecturers.

It will be interesting to see how far the SPGA's talk and walk takes them this time.

## An exposure to the Industry for SMITsonians



## a NOW REPORT

**GANGTOK:** With the idea to equip students with techno-managerial skills to enable them to make them "industry-ready" by the time they pass out, the Sikkim Manipal Institute of Technology [SMIT], Majhitar, has put lot of emphasis on Industry-Academia interaction as part of its curriculum.

Under this innovative programme, the final semester students of B-Tech and Masters of Computer Applications [MCA] are deputed to work on specified projects in the Industry for one complete semester of 16 weeks. The basic aim behind this is to give the students a feel of the prevailing environment of the industry and to expose them to problem solving techniques. The exposure to the Industry gives the students some hands on experience and provides them with an opportunity to put theoretical knowledge into practice. This in-

novative structuring of the curriculum has helped the Institute in its placement services.

According to a press release, this year, 259 students have been deputed to work in various technological establishments from the first week of February to the last week of May.

The students will return to the College in June to present their Project Reports. Experts in the Industry as well as external examiners from the University will evaluate the Reports. Students will be doing their projects in reputed companies and establishments such as Tata Consultancy Services, Cognizant Technology Solutions, HCL, IBM, Bharti Telecom, BARC-Mumbai, CSRDH-Hyderabad, ISI-Kolkata and ISRO-Kharagpur.

The Sikkim Manipal University also awards merit scholarships to those meritorious students joining the B Tech courses at SMIT. In a meeting held on

January 17, the SMIT Scholarship Committee awarded scholarships to 32 students who obtained more than 80 percent marks in Class XII and whose parents' income were less than Rs. 3,00,000 per annum.

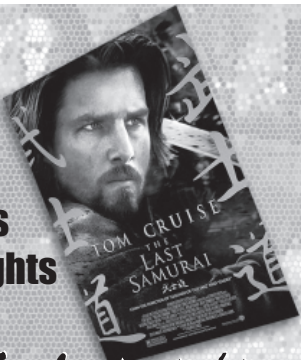
Out of the 32 students, Mallika Mohan topped the list with 97.66 percent marks.

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- A self-addressed stamped envelope of size 22cm x 12 cm.
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- Only the students applied for AIEEE-04 studying in Sikkim should apply.

Applications should reach on or before **31 January 2004** at : Bright Careers Academy, Opp. Rajeev Distributors, Tadong, Gangtok.

**Centre of Exam: Kyi-de-Khang School, Nam Nang Road, Gangtok.**

**Date: 8th February 2004 (Sunday). Time : 10.00 AM. Reporting time : 9.15 AM.**

For details contact - Bright Careers Academy, Opp. Rajeev Distributors, Tadong, Gangtok.  
Phone 270797, 9434070797, Mr. Sudershan - 98320 55140.

**Note: No applications after the above mentioned date will be accepted.**

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**extras**  
THE **NOW!** 8-PAGE SPECIAL

The Rajdhani these days is abuzz with anxious students preparing for the upcoming board exams. With free coaching classes and new tutorials coming up every other day, the promise of taking students here to a new level of competition seems close to deliverance. In a first, an education Help-Line has also been set up to offer free counselling and guidance to the students over the phone.

Old timers will recall with nostalgia how easy things were earlier. But times change and so do the ground rules. A new competitive world means students have to try that much harder to carve a niche for themselves.

Gangtok has been witnessing the mushrooming of coaching classes and tutorials. Whatever detractors may say, fact is most students find this last minute guidance quite helpful.

*Career Counselling*, as the name suggests has been counselling students on board examination question patterns and also offering expert guidance on medical and engineering entrance examinations. The institute also offers coaching classes for the board exams.

"We have now started online facilities for students appearing for the board exams. Students from any part of the state can contact us and take suggestion about new syllabus, suggestions on question pattern, etc. on the phone," informs Mr. Dey, of Career Counselling.

The institute will also conduct

**The board exams are almost upon us and with the schools closed for the winters, more and more students are opting for tutorial classes to firm up their chances of not only tackling the board exams, but also the competitive exams that come later. SAGAR CHETTRI reports**

## GET COACHED



## FOR SUCCESS

### INTHECITY

a mock test for students appearing for the board exams, to familiarize them with the style and format of question papers. Future plans include providing library facilities for high quality books and teaching through the audio-visual medium.

Another tutorial, *Bright Careers Academy*, is now focussing especially on students who want to sit for the All India Engineering Entrance Exam [AIEEE]. It

was only last year that the first batch of students appeared for the AIEEE, the students who sat for the exam were not prepared or familiar with the exam pattern, due to lack of coaching guidelines and model papers and could not perform well.

"Earlier the students used to get placement in engineering colleges on the basis of marks, but now they are selected on the basis of their performance in the AIEEE, and in the near future they may have to compete on an all India basis, we want to help the students who are struggling to come up but are not getting the way," say teachers at the institute.

To help the students, Bright Careers Academy will conduct a model exam of AIEEE to prepare and increase their confidence level. BCA will conduct the model exam at Kyi-de-Khang School, Nam Nang, on February 8 at 10 am.

Their answers will be checked and results will be sent by post. Applicants should fill up application form printed in the paper and submit it by hand at Bright Careers Academy on or before February 1.

What the mushrooming of coaching institutes has done for the local students is that it has cut down on the budgets set aside earlier for "board preparation." The availability of professionally run tutorials conducted by experienced teachers has seen to it that they no longer need to walk from one tuition class to the other the whole day or camp in Siliguri after enrolling in a tutorial there.

Fact remains that most students, specially those who have opted for the Science stream need to be coached in the run-up to the boards and since schools are closed for winter vacations, they seldom have any other options available.

BCA is going to start its regular classes for AIEEE from March 20 onwards. For further details call 270797, 9434070797 or 9832038669.

For online guidance, call Career Counselling at Ph. 226510, 9434153355.

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M.G. Marg, Gangtok

# From the World Music Charts to SGC, Gangtok

## NEPAL'S MUSICAL AMBASSADORS TO BRING THEIR COMBO OF THE CLASSICAL AND THE FOLK TO SIKKIM...



The trio who make Sur Sudha

## AROUND TOWN

### a NOW REPORT

Come 31 January, and Gangtokians are in for a musical treat. The much-acclaimed trio who form "Sur Sudha" will be performing at Sikkim Government College auditorium from 4 pm onwards. Although music concerts are nothing new to the capital, this one promises to be, well, different.

With Surendra Shrestha on tabla, Prem Rana Autari on flute and

Tara Bir Tuladhar on sitar, *Sur Sudha* offers music for the soul. The trio who came together 14 years ago with the aim of interpreting and presenting the myriad musical tradition of Nepal, seek out traditional tunes from the many remote areas of Nepal, from the Terai, or lowlands, to the villages high in the Himalayas. Their compositions take listeners on a musical journey through Nepal.

The programme, at Gangtok, is being organized by Pure Platinum Entertainment, a unit of Falcon International, with Sikkim Tourism playing the role of the major event supporter.

A portion of the funds raised will go to **Hope Centre**, a drug rehabilitation centre, in Gangtok.

Through its music, *Sur Sudha* bring to the world the message of peace propounded by Lord Buddha, and demonstrate how two of the world's great religions Hinduism and Buddhism find perfect fusion in Nepal.

*Sur Sudha* seeks to promote these ideals through traditional Nepali instrumental music rendered with the flute, sitar and tabla - three instruments most popular in Nepal.

The three talented musicians have built a reputation for their innovative interpretations of traditional Nepali folk tunes and

for composing their own original music, stretching the parameters of a formal setting of a trio.

Known as Nepal's musical ambassadors, the trio have performed extensively all over the world and have many international music awards to their credit. They have been the subject of television documentaries in France and Germany and have played in over 2,000 concerts, travelling from the steps of ancient Hindu temples to the concert stages of Europe, India, Japan and the USA. They have also performed many times at the Nepal Royal Palace as Royal Musicians.

The group held second position in the KALX World Music Chart for the week ending May 11, 1998 as the most frequently played international music. This apart, *Sur Sudha* remained in the top ten in the KALX World Music Chart for months as popular world music in 1998.

The trio have already released five CDs - *Melodies of Nepal*, *Image of Nepal*, *Festivals of Nepal*, *Third Eye* and *Symbol of Nepal* and are coming with new album dedicated to Mt. Everest.

All are trained in classical music, but it is the blend of the folk that imbues their music that makes them stand apart. Not a performance to be missed.

# SHEHAR MEIN KAALA!

### a NOW REPORT

The Information & Public Relations Department office here at Tibet Road had an entertaining Saturday. A Kaala [Civet Cat] was noticed, despite its rather effective camouflage, sleeping on the ledge of the opposite building.

The fact that it is a wild animal, even though barely as big as a dog, was enough to spread panic. Frantic calls were made to the Forest Department to despatch its trappers to whisk away the animal.

The Kaala, on its part, after some disinterested looks at the crowd that had collected under the building, decided it was time for its Saturday nap. It slept through the several pebbles thrown, perhaps warmed by the heat from the sub-baked concrete slab.

And, the Forest Dept. trappers never turned up. Perhaps they knew only too well that the animal is harmless and essentially a herbivore with a weakness for large cardamom and

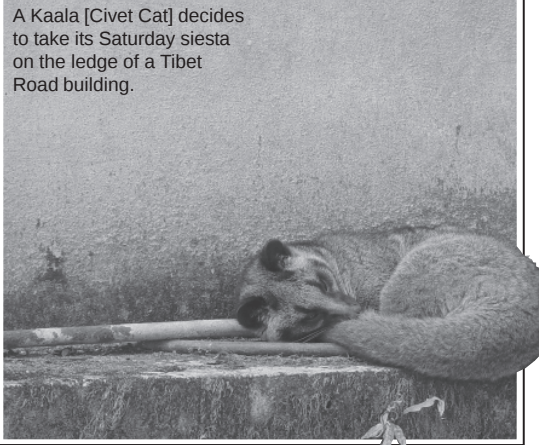
an occasional taste for small birds and eggs. Its surfacing in Gangtok is not even rare. A common visitor to areas like Forest Colony and Burtuk, a Kaala was also trapped in the Power Department office some years back. At that time, it caused a near stampede in the corridors of power when it strolled through.

They are not shy animals so they don't normally run away when they see people and many mistake this attitude

for aggressiveness and panic. Needless to add, the forests and cardamom fields are the usual foraging grounds for the Civet Cats. They go urban only when their natural habitat starts shrinking. The Himalayan Bear that terrorised SITCO some years back being a case in point.

A wildlife expert from the State, when asked whether the animal was dangerous, said: "Not at all. In fact the only dangerous animal is man."

A Kaala [Civet Cat] decides to take its Saturday siesta on the ledge of a Tibet Road building.



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# Xscape

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# JAISE THE!

## Lack of public initiative scuttles drive to keep jhoras clean

### a NOW REPORT

The joint jhora-cleaning operation launched by the State Pollution Control Board and UD&HD is almost complete. According to the departments, 9 jhoras in and around Gangtok were cleaned by UD&HD labourers in the last month and a half since the 'Abatement of Pollution' campaign was launched.

But things seem to be back where they started. There is no perceptible difference as the residents continue to dump garbage directly into the jhoras with impunity. Although the concerned departments had made it clear to the local residents that this cleaning drive would be a one time initiative, with the responsibility thereon being of the local people of the area, the message, it seems, has not got through.

The centrally sponsored scheme, the first of its kind in the country is aimed at catalyzing improved civic sense among the Gangtokians but the people remain unconvinced that they must share the responsibility for keeping their own area clean.

Minister UD&HD, TT Bhutia, in his speech on 30 November at Bishal Gaon, when the drive was launched had urged the local residents to form committees to ensure the general cleanliness of their neighborhoods, "This is your problem and the solution should be initiated by you. We can of course facilitate the process", he had said.

But till now no committees have been formed as advised by the department. No one has yet come forward to take the initiative.

According to Dr. Gopal Pradhan, Senior Scientist, SPCB, most of Gangtok's daily generation of 27,500 kgs of garbage is dumped directly into the jhoras. The damage this un-



healthy practice does to the environment is drastic and its time for the people to start doing their bit.

"The concerned departments have already done their duty, they have also given special initiatives like the cleanest jhora award to the most responsible locality, but it does not seem to be working," he said.

"There's no point blaming us for everything. The departments are doing so much but there is no feed back from the people, although the work is for their benefit, there is no appreciation and

The Sikkim Pollution Control Board and UDHD initiative at work. A total of nine jhoras were cleaned in the rajdhani in the hope that the local residents would take care not to "pollute" them again. It remains a hope.

no participation from them," he complains further.

The SPCB and UD&HD have taken the initiative to keep the jhoras clean, now it is up to the local residents to come forward. Local NGOs, Panchayats, elders and youth should take part in making this drive work. The Departments will welcome suggestions and views from the people and say they are ready to cooperate in any way.

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Question of the week:  
FAT stands for

- ☐ File Allowed Task
- ☐ File Allocation Table
- ☐ Frequent Asked Task
- ☐ None of these

RUSH YOUR ENTRIES TO NOW! and ONE lucky correct entry will get a 50% DISCOUNT on Diploma & Hardware Courses in APTECH

Last week's answer: .doc. No correct entries

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Identify the venue shown alongside and one lucky correct entry will win RELIANCE RECHARGE COUPON WORTH RS. 200/- from



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LAST WEEK'S ANSWER: Samduplse

WINNER: Yogen Chettri, Tadong

## VAJRA MOVIE Contest

A correct entry (decided by draw of lots) will win 2 FREE TICKETS to the latest flick playing at VAJRA CINEMA, Digital Surround Sound.  
Last week's answers: Tom Hanks. Return of the King  
WINNER:

1. Khakee is about which profession?
2. Name Tom Cruise's latest film?

NAME: .....

ADDRESS: .....



- QUESTION OF THE WEEK -  
In 1721, where did the first Coffee House open?

- ☐ Gangtok
- ☐ Berlin
- ☐ Kathmandu

NAME: .....

ADDRESS: .....

Last week's answer: Jamaican Blue Mountain  
WINNER: Sandhya, Gangtok

Tick the right answer and rush entries to NOW! office at Tadong to

WIN A COFFEE & SNACKS COUPON  
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## FICTION

amala  
& the  
worm

by PRAVEEN MOKTAN

Nabin Limbu led as normal an existence as any 23-year-old freelance DTP professional who dreamed of landing a government job before he crossed the age limit for such luxury. He did not smoke, but occasionally hung out with his friends to binge-drink with them at the neighbourhood chaang joint run by Amala, a middle-aged Tibetan hag who had come to Kalimpong during the early sixties.

This woman had one daughter who was majoring in American studies from a university in the US and a son somewhere in Dharamsala with His Holiness's government in exile. Both were acutely embarrassed by their mother's present vocation but they could do little to convince Tshering Nima to take up an alternative career. Her daughter, a pragmatic girl who valued the entrepreneurial skills of her people, suggested that she sell noodles, while her son would rather have her live a quiet religious life spent counting her 108-beaded rosary. But Tshering Nima would have none of it. She had struggled all her life and she would not suffer these upstarts to tell her what to do. So she religiously got up at five every morning to visit the beef stalls to fetch her daily quota of ox-tail bones, lungs and a general assortment of other bovine appendages from which she could conjure up a tasty side dish for Nabin Limbu and company.

Nabin loved the spongy lung curry that went down so well with Hit beer. Tshering Nima had a little secret up her sleeve as far as the beef lung was concerned. The dish that she prepared was like no other and Nabin Limbu and his friends would feel a nagging incompleteness in their lives if they stayed away from it for more than three days. The lung curry did not cost much and was perfect for the conscience - whatever guilt they felt in squandering their money on beer and chaang was considerably allayed by the protein-rich nourishment that they imbibed from Tshering Nima's delectable lung fries.

Today, once again, Nabin Limbu found himself being drawn by an inexorable force towards Amala's establishment. This time however the call was not so inexplicable. He knew exactly why he was moving with such great sense of purpose towards Amala's bedroom that also served as a makeshift pub and prayer room. The simple reason was, he had failed the primary teacher's exam for the third time in a row and although he was no escapist, he really needed

the consolation that a bottle of Hit and a plate of lung curry would provide before he drowned in that inevitable avalanche of self pity that was slowly building up somewhere inside him. He had in his pocket about a hundred rupees that he had earned from a designing job for a local daily. The rest depended on Amala's mood.

Amala seemed a little surprised to see Nabin at 10 in the morning but she kept it to herself and instead asked him what he wanted. Nabin told her that he needed the usual and then sat on the wooden bench quietly contemplating the prayer wheel that rotated in the thermals provided by the butter lamp that flickered obsequiously before the scarfed idol of Buddha. He could sense that he was alone and this realisation made him jealous of all the lucky folks at the government offices - folks, who would be at this very juncture, pushing files, typing letters, sipping tea and engaging in sundry other useful acts that would guarantee them the reassuring comfort of a salary at the end of every month. It was too bad that in the greater scheme of things he was out of this loop of welfare and would remain so if he kept failing in these little exams that were meant to test whether he was good enough to teach something, anything, to kids of class one or lower.

The more he thought about it the lesser sense it made and he had almost reached the breaking point of this cognitive endeavour when salvation arrived in a bottle of Hit beer and a plate full of lung fry. He took a sip of the beer and then nibbled stingily at a tiny morsel of the fry. It tasted just divine and he then realised just what he had been missing. All that negative emotion began to simply melt away. He was once again filled to the brim with a brave confidence that all was not lost and that his time would yet come.

Amala, sensing that Nabin had regained a measure of good humour, decided to launch her own little investigation into the probable causes of his early morning melancholy. Nabin rudely interrupted by the down-to-earth nature of Amala's query opened his heart out to her. Somewhere in his mind, fogged by the potent vapours of that noxious fluid, he reasoned that Amala was genuinely empathising with his predicament and that she would really do something for him, like ask her daughter to take him to America or something as wonderful. She was after all his own age and maybe there were things written in his karma that promised him rewards far greater than the government job that he so desperately sought. Amala indeed empathised but in a manner different than what Nabin thought in his inebriated optimism. Amala wished the best for Nabin but knew that he was too much of a loser. A sense of overpowering pity welled up in her bosom and she felt she that she had to do something for him. It had to be something more compelling and effective than the lung curry which so many thought was the pinnacle of her culinary accomplishments. And she knew what exactly it was that Nabin needed.

Nabin's hurt meanwhile had turned a full circle and that artificial high that the beer had generated was now slowly giving way to a quiet, simmering, nasty, indignation that he felt not just towards the world and the government and his life but more immediately towards Amala who stood there in front of him in that confident, rich pose of hers with her good life, so successful, so carnivorous and commercial. His money was now running out and it would need just one indiscreet remark on Amala's part to let his latent rage spill out in one

turn topg 22

A strange delusion  
Surrounds me tonight  
I have the urge to create  
It's all alive and booming  
Yet in its dearth, its held back  
Almost subdued and negate.

So much fire burning  
Yet so little heat so less light  
Like knowing a lot  
Only to be uselessly forgot  
Still then I write  
To satisfy the urge  
To play with an ocean, splurge  
Even with a pen in my hand  
Grazing upon this page  
Like clouds just drifting over bald land  
All of these emotions trapped in a cage  
Fighting battles to be free  
Merely to come out in vivid  
expression.

So is the desire to give birth  
To the flame burning within.  
Make it rise from the solid still  
Burn ravaged like oil and stop as ash

Twisted irony likeness to a Prima Dona.  
Tumbling down a void in dark destitution  
Only to gush out like quicksilver  
flowering  
A flame of words, on paper burning  
No wonder this is like the hunger  
To be forever learning  
Discovering new secrets of oneself  
In an endless symbiosis  
With insatiable tides of unclear  
synapses.  
As endlessly burning as true love and  
its fire  
To end but with one event  
Then again it begins, all over again  
Till then it ends.  
The cycle infinite  
Going on and on  
Similar to another day that finished  
By the night,  
The hunger never done  
Never satisfied.  
Forever then spent in searching  
For I know I've been inspired,  
To say I know, I know nothing.

The  
Infinite  
CyclePRAMOD HINGMANG  
Holy Cross School

# CHILD-REARING CAN BE WICKEDLY FASCINATING

Struggling to graduate from New York University and afford her microscopic studio apartment, Nanny takes a position caring for the only son of the wealthy X family. She rapidly learns the insane amount of juggling involved to ensure that a Park Avenue wife who doesn't work, cook, clean, or raise her own child has a smooth day.

In between looking after four year old grayed and running a thousand errands for Mrs. X, his rich uptight mother, Nan is trying to have a life. There's college, shopping, her friends, her cat George. And the gorgeous

Harvard boy from the sixth floor. But the X family's dramas keep intruding – visits from Mr. X's predatory mistress, catastrophic family outings and as a final straw, the case of the marriage-destroying panties.

When the Xs marriage begins to disintegrate, Nanny ends up involved way beyond the bounds of human decency or good taste. Her tenure with the X family becomes a nearly impossible mis-



## "The Nanny Diaries"

by Emma McLaughlin & Nicola Kraus  
Two real-life nannies paint a wickedly funny portrait of their pampered charges — and the kids' even more spoiled and demanding parents

sion to maintain the mental health of their four-year-old, her own integrity and, most importantly, her sense of humor. Over nine tense months Mrs. X and Nanny perform the age-old dance of decorum and power as they test the limits of modern-day servitude.

The wicked fascination of this novel lies in all the wacky tidbits about life in the social stratosphere.

The details, devastating as they are, ring true, making the book impossible to put down. An absolutely addictive peak into the utterly weird world of child rearing in the upper social strata, the book is required reading for parents and the women who they hire to do their parenting.

The book has become a bestseller with the film rights already sold. Julio Roberts lent her voice to the audio book version.

In Gangtok, the book is available at **Rachna Books**, Development Area.

Winter is the time when your skin and hair needs that extra care to keep that glow going. **Rejoice**. Yes, that's the name of a new shampoo launched by Procter & Gamble. The three-in-one family pack shampoo promises silky smooth hair, long lasting fragrance and is anti-dandruff. If you think that's promising too much, take a look at the price. Only Rs. 39 for a 100 ml bottle and Rs. 75 for double the size. More on hair. **Dabur Anmol Mustard-Amla hair oil** is now available for only Rs. 10.



If dry skin is bothering you, you can try the new offering from Lotus Herbals. A **Shea Butter and Real Strawberry** combo, this 24 hr moisturizer costs Rs. 135 for a 120 ml sachet.

There's no stopping Lakme, who keep coming out with new stuff all the time. This time it's **Lakme Rose Powder** with sunscreen. Powder and sunscreen! Now I've seen it all. Cost Rs. 50.

Enrich your chapped lips with **Lakme Enrich lipsticks**. Priced at Rs. 115 each, these come in various shades and promise that extra care your lips need in this cold season. Also new, the **Lakme**

**twist-up eye pencil** for Rs. 125 and the **Lakme Treasurers Sparkle Dust**, a roll on powder that will add that extra shine to your skin for Rs. 105.

Check these out at **Yeti Cosmetics, MG Marg**.

Ladies who have time and money to spend can also visit the **Liberty Shoes Showroom**, New Market. Fancy blankets, quilts, cushions, pillow covers, bed sheet and many other items are available to give that extra warmth and color to your home. The sale, which started on December 30, will continue till February. Discounts offered are between 20% to 30%. The sale is heavy on blankets of all kinds with brands like Eskimos, Signature, Platinum and **Korean blankets** fighting for shelf space. **Jaipuri washable quilts** and thermal blankets also sold at quite reasonable prices. No reason you can't stay warm now.

Small baby blankets and soft toys are also available for the little one. You can also check out the new arrivals, **laundry bags** and **traveling chairs**. Perfect to plunk them in the middle of the road and park yourself after that big shopping trip. We think of everything to make life that much easier for you. Till next week then. Enjoy!



## Sikkim's promotion of breastfeeding judged best in country

### a NOW REPORT

**GANGTOK:** The Breastfeeding Promotion Network of India [BPNI] has chosen Sikkim for the Best State Award for creating awareness on the importance of breastfeeding for infants. Sikkim promoted the concept aggres-

sively during the 12th Breastfeeding Week that was observed from August 1-6, last year.

With a theme of "Breastfeeding in Globalized World for Peace and Justice," the programme was organized in all four districts of the state.

Radio talk shows, quiz com-

petitions and other programme were held for women promoting the concept of breastfeeding being best for baby. Officials at the Social Welfare Department are obviously happy with their success on the programme and say that it's an honor to get recognition from a national level organization like BPNI.

## the FUTURE is NOW

**ARIES** You will be dissatisfied. You must ensure that your vehicle is properly maintained. Students may not do too well. You may face some enmity. There is a chance of a change in surroundings. There may be a need to borrow more money. Minor health problems are indicated. **TAURUS** You may take on new business. You will have to put in extra effort towards this. You will not get much support from others. Your family, with the exception of your mother, will help you. You may suffer throat infection, cold, cough and gastric problems. **GEMINI** You will be happier

making money through speculation. Those in the teaching profession and lawyers will do well. You may travel more. Popularity and fame will be high. This will be a more peaceful week. **CANCER** There will be greater responsibilities. You will need to put in a lot of effort in order to get better commissions. You will have the support of some juniors and creativity will flourish. You make new purchases. You might have to travel. **LEO** Expenses will be more this week. There will be no peace at home. You may take a wrong decision and get involved in arguments. Minor accidents are

indicated. This is not a good time to make an investment. You must be careful around women. **VIRGO** Those who are in the partnership business will make a profit. Your wife, and some elders are likely to lend you their support. You will be in a financially sound position this week. You must watch your health, since there are indications of cold, tonsils or TB. There are chances of travelling abroad. **LIBRA** You will face greater tension in business. You must take less risky decisions. You are likely to face greater anguish and distress. You may lack ability in certain kinds of work. You will have to ask others to help you, and possibly postpone new things if you want them implemented successfully.

**SCORPIO** You will have excellent support from others. Speculation will be profitable. You may have minor health problems. Family life will be good. Career growth will be excellent. You may make new purchases. **SAGITTARIUS** You will have more problems in business. There is a lower chance of getting things done. You may get irritating feedback and you may find yourself helpless in a tough situation. So you should be prepared to give up. Also be cautious around those may not have your best interests at heart. **CAPRICORN** You will have unexpected, effortless luck. This promises to be a good time for everybody, especially for professionals. Health and education will be good. However you may

be unrealistically hopeful about the future, and are likely to be disappointed. **AQUARIUS** You will have higher profits. There is a chance of a change of surroundings. You may have short trips also. Children's health may not be good. There might be a misunderstanding between husband and wife. You may introduce new technology to build up your business. Family life will be good. You will manage your affairs well. **PISCES** You will be more engaged in work. You will enjoy popularity, health and wealth. Family life will be peaceful and there will be cooperation between all the members of the family. There is a bright chance of going abroad. You might get

## BRIGHT CAREERS ACADEMY

NH-31A, Opposite Rajeev Distributors, Tadong, Sikkim - 737 103

Closing Date: 1st February, 2004

Date of Screening Test: 8th February 2004

Name of Candidate

Date of Birth Sex Nationality Religion

Father's Name [Mention Occupation]

Mother's Name

Local Guardian's Name

Permanent Address [Do not repeat Name]


Telephone:

Pin:

Address of Correspondence [Do not repeat Name]


Telephone:

Pin:

Qualification

- a] Appearing Senior Secondary Examination? ☐ 1. Appearing
- b] Completed Senior Secondary Examination? ☐ 2. Completed

School Name [Mention the location]

Signature of the Candidate

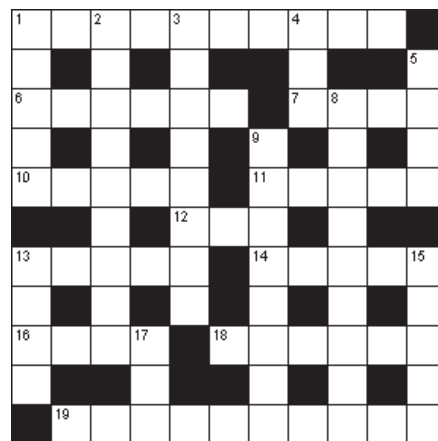
Affix your recent  
passport size  
photograph  
here

## THE LITTLE CROSSWORD - 077

WINNER GETS FREE DINNER FOR TWO AT

little  
**italy**  
SNQD Complex, Deorali,  
Gangtok. Ph: 281980

Solve the crossword correctly. Rush it to Oberoi (MG Marg) or NOW!, on or before Sunday and a lucky draw of all correct entries will decide who wins FREE DINNER FOR TWO at LITTLE ITALY, DEORALI. SNACKS COUPONS TO BE COLLECTED FROM NOW! OFFICE



### ACROSS

1. Limited (10)
6. Wanders away (6)
7. Command to stop a horse (4)
10. Dexterity (5)
11. Worn to protect the clothing (5)
12. Climbing vine (3)
13. Palm tree fruit (5)
14. Dog (5)
16. Old (4)
18. Movement (6)
19. Increase in speed (10)

### DOWN

1. Ascends (5)
2. Table napkin (9)
3. Supporter of a monarch (8)
4. Haul (3)
5. Shower (4)
8. Mouth organ (9)
9. Public telephone (3-5)
13. June 6, 1944 (1-3)
15. Pivot (5)
17. Doctor (3)

**LAST WEEK'S ANSWERS:** ACROSS: 1. Electrical 8. Eager 9. Dying 10. Yeti 12. Clocker 14. Kirkby 17. Brew 21. Bacon 22. Tours 23. Bermondsey DOWN: 2. Light 3. Cure 4. Rodeo 5. Chick 6. Lager 7. Very 11. Irk 13. Cub 14. Kebab 15. Racer 16. Banjo 18. Rouse 19. Wise 20. Stud

**WINNER: SHIVA GAUTAM, TADONG.**

## STYLE Nothings

**A PEPE T-SHIRT FREE**  
FOR THE BEST MESSAGE EVERY WEEK FROM STYLE

Dear Mom and Dad,  
Happy Anniversary! Wishing  
you two many more years of  
undying love and  
togetherness.  
**Much Love, Nannu & Chhotu**

**Hey D and R,**  
Looking forward of seeing  
the two of you soon. Do  
whatever, but please, please  
don't take the bus!  
**Hugs, Sweets**

**PrettyinPink,**  
Thinking of going bald pretty  
soon. Now, dare copy that!!!  
Love you as much  
anyways!!!  
**BlackMagicWoman**

Dear IVY,  
Many Many Happy Returns  
of the Day! (25<sup>th</sup> January).  
Hope our friendship remains  
forever.  
Love,  
**Diki, Tashi, Yeshi & Seden**

**Dahling Honeybuns,**  
Lets make beautiful music  
together. Now that I know  
from where you get the  
inspiration from!  
**Toffee**

**last week's winning message:**  
Dear Shikha [Sichey] here's wishin u  
and u'r family a happy New Year and  
may prosperous and joyful times lie  
ahead. Goodspeed in everything u  
do. An ardent admirer. **Lazy Snake**

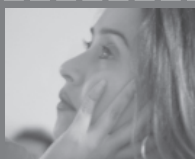
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QUESTION WINS 2 TICKETS TO

**DENZONG**

ONLY DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND - EX CINEMA HALL IN THE HIMALAYAS



Identify the actress in the still

Answer:   
Name:   
Address:

LAST WEEK'S ANSWER: Rahul Bose  
Winner: Raju Chettri, Gangtok

## DARJ GIRL BREAKS KOLLYWOOD ICE

## Niruta "Darpan Chaaya" Singh bags best actress award

Niruta Singh, of Darjeeling, has been recognized as the best actress in the Nepalese film industry.

She was honored at the largest Nepali film awards ceremony ever, organized by Dabur Nepal and TV channel Nepal One last Saturday in Kathmandu.

At a five-hour extravaganza, the Dabur Anmol awards were given away for the first time to honor excellence and achievements in the 52-year-old Nepalese film industry.

The programme, attended by Nalini Singh who heads Nepal One, had a strong Indian presence.

"Lahana", directed by Tulsi Ghimire who hails from Kalimpong was nominated for most of the 26 categories, ranging from best costume to best film and best actor. However, though Ghimire bagged the award for best editing, and "Lahana's" lead pair was selected for the best actress and actor awards, the best film and best director tributes eluded him.

Readers will recall the grand premier of 'Lahana' in Gangtok in August 2002, which had Niruta Singh and Dilip Raimajhi, along with Director, Tulsi Ghimire in attendance.

The presence of local boys Uttam Pradhan from Singtam along with Karma Loday from Baluwakhani and Bikash Chamling, son of the Chief Minister drew huge crowds here.

The film had also been extensively shot in Sikkim. In effect, the Nepali film awards had more connections to Sikkim than just the organiser, Channel One, Nalini Singh's more successful venture since the botched TV-Live experimented in Sikkim.

At the awards, Nepalese actor Dilip

Raimajhi, the Shah Rukh Khan of Nepal, pipped Rajesh Hamal, the Amitabh Bachchan of Nepal, for the best actor award, and music director Sachin Singh picked up the trophy for best background score.

Niruta had the joy of being chosen the best actress after having lost the place earlier. Last year, she had lost to popular star Jal Shah, who won the Lux Film Awards. Despite the roaring success of Darpan Chaaya and Lahana, Niruta has had a rather rough run as far as acceptance in Kollywood [as the Nepali film industry is referred to]. The industry, for example, has awarded on Ugen Chopel of Sikkim for contribution towards the Nepali film industry. Tulsi Ghimire has been routinely ignored for any major award thus far.

Niruta Singh, who scaled new heights of success with her earlier film "Darpan Chaaya" had said in an interview to NOW! that she was overwhelmed by the response from the people of Sikkim

to her performance in both 'Darpan Chaaya' and 'Lahana'.

Ghimire's film also enabled Bollywood-based singer Udit Narayan to win the award for best male playback singer. In the singer's absence, the trophy was collected by his wife.

Besides Ghimire's film, director Bijaya Chalise's Sholay-like thriller "Muktidata" was the other major contender, sweeping many of the other awards.

"Muktidata" had hit the headlines last year when it was shot in the Tibetan area of Mustang, setting a record for being shot in one of the highest altitude locations.

Besides bringing the whiff of a unique way of life and culture, "Muktidata" was also unusual because of the confession by its producer Rajendra Thakuri, who also owns a tourist agency, that the film was made to boost visitors to Mustang.

Dabur Nepal established itself in the cultural calendar of Nepal by becoming the sponsor of the Miss Nepal pageant.

## FACE of The WEEK



Noorjehan loves interacting with people

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Teachers, Parents and Students  
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Bipasha Basu & John Abraham

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SIMULTANEOUS RELEASE 11:00 2:15 5:30

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Khakee

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Lucy Liu)HOLLYWOOD HOMICIDE  
(Harrison Ford)

## alphabets

A BOOK SHOP

wishes  
everyone  
a very  
Happy  
New Year

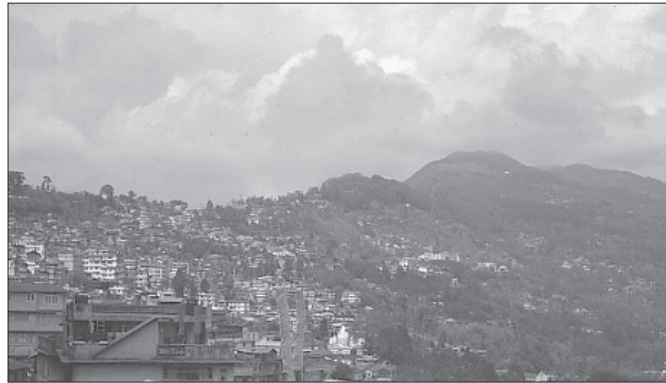
PS ROAD, OPP. HOTEL TIBET

The most perfect thing about Kalimpong is its weather. This is not what you can say for Darjeeling where it becomes a kind of a necessity to invent poetic excuses for the inconsistency of the weather gods. In Kalimpong there is perfection about the way the blue skies spread their benevolent tents above us in the winters. The dryness is almost benign. The grasses have to dry; the skin has to give away to the winter cracking that can only be cured by the perfumed antiseptic-ness of Boroline. Boroline – that white petroleum jelly so redolent of the winter memories that it makes one almost pine for those nights of deep sleep under the warm security of freshly fluffed cotton and the smell of the good liniment whose aroma symbolises an entire season.

The good thing about the Kalimpong winter is its lack of pretension. There are no snowfalls. Thus no shifting of the snow to make second hand snowmen that fit into our Enid Blyton ideals. Also no Archie comic hangover in trying to roll over the hillside in improvised skies. That is for other places where things have to be worked out so that they can sell or fit into some postcard prescription.

Kalimpong's is a season of its own. The winter comes and goes. No one wants to sell it. For the Lepchas it's a harbinger of the New Year, which they never fail to celebrate the old way. For the secular rest, winter is the time to go for picnics. This is a ritual that is as pleasantly persistent as Boroline. There is, as the good book says – a time for everything. A time to go to Deolo and look down upon the town and a time

# OUR WINTER OF CONTENT



to rest it out at Relli and look up at Kalimpong. The picnic like the momo is a Kalimpong metaphor. It comes after the hard work and the usual heartbreak of the harvest. [By the way, Kalimpong still has its terraced fields of paddy and the bi-weekly haat where amidst the noisy, smelly confusion of commerce, people still find fulfillment in displaying or touching, feeling and experienc-

a Kpg  
state  
of mind  
by PRAVEEN MOKTAN

ing the colour and texture of diverse heaps - be it that of the pumpkin or the avocado. After all, it does not make sense to sell pumpkins if you are not proud of their benevolent rotundity.]

Picnics in Kalimpong hark at many good things under the umbrella of one enterprise. Families rebound, the driver union finds an opportunity to reunite its flock and engage in one last annual activity that will cap their year-

long profligacy. It's a hiatus, a reason to escape, to displace oneself geographically and temporally to a different realm by the riverside in the sand or some other locale where the anonymity of the exercise will allow one to express oneself in many gestures.

For the students the winter is a vacuum that can be filled by any kind of growth. So while an entire generation once wasted its winter with catapults chasing after elusive bulbuls the present lot much more street-smart and cocky would rather haunt the NIIT or the APTECH.

Winter in Kalimpong is that twilight season where, allegorically speaking, one is caught between the coldness of colonial Darjeeling and the pretentious heat of a hasty, all-selling Siliguri. Kalimpong is warm. It's not just the warmth of temperature. It's that human warmth of closeness that comes in doing things together – of sitting beside the fires and swapping tales, of going for tuitions, of just playing out in the streets to test out the truth of that old adage that the "cold of the young are nibbled way by the goats".

It's also the bright botanical warmth of the bougainvillea blossoms and the poinsettia petals that sometimes send their hybrid fingers a little hesitantly into the same balmy blueness that their wild cousins have been piercing with instinctive impunity for aeons.

## Bhutan's Royal Monetary Authority issues warning against lady from Sikkim and her get-rich-quick scam

Bhutan's Royal Monetary Authority [RMA] has issued a notification cautioning Bhutanese public against a get-rich-quick money making scheme, Gold Coin Pyramid, getting popular in Thimphu and Phuentsholing. This scheme could jeopardize personal savings and drain out foreign currency from the country, the RMA has warned reports Bhutan's only English weekly, *Kuensel*. Apparently it is still unclear who brought the scheme [or scam as RMA would have its people believe] to Bhutan, but the weekly reports that "a lady from Sikkim" is marketing it in the Land of Thunder.

The pyramid scheme, it is learnt, uses commemorative coins from Gold Quest International [an international company retailing gold coins based in Hong Kong]. The scheme promises a 13-gram Bhutanese gold coin for becoming a member and subsequent returns in hard currency. The first investor pays Nu [Bhutanese currency Ngultrum is exchanged at par with the Indian Rupee] 30,000 and gets a gold coin. He or she has to persuade another two people to be-

come members who also pay Nu 30,000 each and get a gold coin in return. In the meantime, the introducer is promised a commission of US\$ 40, which will keep on growing in relation to the number of members in the pyramid.

According to the RMA, the scheme is illegal under the Bhutanese law which bars Bhutanese nationals from engaging in any financial services "without a license to operate in accordance with the requirements of the Act".

The legality apart, the very fact that the pyramid cannot be sus-

tained for long and that only those at the top of the pyramid can expect to make any money out of the scheme does not seem to have discouraged too many Bhutanese from giving it a shot.

The scheme reportedly sprouted from Chennai and has duplicated the RMA seal of authentication to make it look like a legalized financial business. A very subtle misleading since RMA officials have clarified that the seal was to certify the authentication of gold given to the Gold Quest company in Hong Kong, the authorized coin minter of RMA.

Many countries have banned the Gold Quest pyramid scheme. In Chennai, where the company's India headquarters is based, there are reports of complaints alleging payments ranging from Rs. 16,000 to Rs. 43,000 without any gold coin or cash in return. The pyramid may have run itself out in India, but was just warming up in Bhutan when the RMA dampener came about. It will, however, be interesting to know who the "lady from Sikkim" is and whether she was actually playing out a scam in Bhutan or was herself conned into it.

## Academia Sikkim

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Session starts Feb 2004

Contact: 9832067886

## NATHULA CAN WAIT. INDIAN GOODS SMUGGLE INTO LHASA THROUGH NEPAL

Even as India and China debate the hows and whens of trade over Nathula, a large number of Indian brands of rice and other consumer goods, which should legally not be there, find pride of place on display counters all over Lhasa and other cities of Tibet. These goods are not imported from India but

smuggled into China from Nepal, it is learnt.

Interestingly, such activities are going on right under the nose of officials at the Nepal-China Tatopani customs checkpoint, despite the fact that the country's trade treaty and treaty on control of unauthorized trade with India bars Nepal from re-exporting fin-

ished Chinese goods to India and Indian goods to China. As a visit to a local shop even in Gangtok or shops in Lhasa will prove, no one takes these treaties seriously.

A news report in a Kathmandu weekly quotes Nepal's Consular General at Lhasa, Lila Mani Paudel, as conceding that such activities, which go against the trade

treaty, are going on at rampant rate.

Quoting information culled from the Lhasa commerce mission, the Kathmandu weekly, claims that brands of Indian rice including Lalkila, Nature's Gift Regular, Aarati and Long Grain Premium White Rice, among others are widely seen in the Chinese market.

Interestingly, the Nepali traders in Lhasa deny having any knowledge of how the Indian rice

turn to pg 22



Dipshika



Shristhika

## ANTHYESTI KRIYA

The Anthyesti Kriya of late Dipshika Pariyar (aged 3 years, D/O Mr. Sujit Pariyar) and late Shristhika Pariyar (aged 5 years, D/O Mr. Subash Pariyar) of Rhenock Bazar, East Sikkim, who were brutally murdered on January 11, 2004 at Rhenock falls on January 22, 2004 (Thursday).

All relatives, friends and well-wishers are requested to join us at our residence, above Haat Bazar, Rhenock on January 22, 2004 to offer prayers to the departed souls.

*Mr. Subash Pariyar  
Mr. Sujit Pariyar and all members of the bereaved family.  
Rhenock Bazar, East Sikkim*

## Kutse Shegu

The 49th Day Kutse Shegu of our beloved mother Late B. Bhutia who left for her heavenly abode on 10th December 2003 falls on Tuesday the 27th January 2004. All well wishers, friends and family are cordially requested to join us in offering prayers for the departed soul at our residence at Middle Tadong (near Maskay Petrol Pump). We would also like to take this opportunity to thank all those who stood by us during the time of our bereavement.

*Karma Tsering Bhutia (son)  
Ninje Bhutia (daughter)  
Phones: 231532 / 231629*

## Kutse Shegu

The Kutse Shegu (49th Day) of Late D. B. Lama Theeng (88) falls on 23rd January 2004 (Friday). All friends, well wishers and relatives are requested to join us for the prayer ceremony at our residence at Upper Sichey below Holiday Hill, Gangtok on the above date. We also take this opportunity to thank all those who stood by us during the time of bereavement & regret our inability to thank them individually.

*Mingma Lhamu (wife)  
Suren Lama, ST Lama (sons)  
Laxmi, Jayanti, Indu, Meera, Kanta, Usba, Asba, Anupama (daughters)  
HP Chettri, BK Rasaily, Col. K. S. Salaria, SD Tsering, Khandu Thungon,  
Tsering Thendup Bhutia, Sonam Dawa Lepcha (sons-in-law)  
Lamin, Purnima and Sarala (daughters-in-law)*

## T'NITES ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

(An Association of Ex-Students of TNSS School)

### PICNIC-CUM-ELECTION

All the members of the T'nites Alumni Association are cordially invited to a picnic party at Saramsa Gardens, Ranipool at 9 am on Sunday the 1st February 2004 where election of the Executive Committee for the session 2004-2006 will also be conducted as per Clause 9 of the Memorandum and Articles of the Association.

**MENLA ETHENPA  
GENERAL SECRETARY**

# Sikkim roads get their first Vitara

## a NOW REPORT

**GANGTOK:** The highest selling Sports Utility Vehicle, or SUV as they are known in short, in the US [and the Americans know their cars], the New Grand Vitara XL 7, made its Sikkim debut on 16 January, last Friday, when Entel Motors, the Maruti Suzuki dealers in the State, handed over a sparkling "Grove Green Pearl metallic" beauty, all waddled in khadas and festive balloons to a beaming local customer.

Priced at just under Rs. 18 lakhs, the new Vitara was launched in India in November last year and Entel now holds the privilege of selling the second such vehicle in the Eastern region. Powered by a 166 bhp engine, Vitara is also the most powerful SUV on Indian



Maruti Suzuki's New Grand Vitara XL 7, the most powerful SUV on Indian roads, gets dolled up for its handover to a local customer at Entel Motors.

a NOW! pic

roads. Little wonder then that it is also the flagship vehicle of Maruti Suzuki. It is also the only vehicle

in the Maruti Suzuki lineup which is imported as CBUs [Completely Built Units].

# Nathula can wait. Indian goods smuggle into Lhasa through Nepal

## Contd from pg 21

enters Lhasa via Nepal. The Indian traders, however, openly admit that they smuggle these through Tatopani.

"On one hand, such smuggling is eroding away the market of genuine Nepali exports, as cheaper smuggled goods are displacing expensive Nepali goods, on the other, this has increased fear of developing Nepal as a transit for unauthorized trade between India and Tibet," said Paudel, the weekly reports. Nepali branded rice, for example, is priced at Rs. 115 per kg while similar quality Indian rice prices at Rs. 80 per kg.

Many in Nepal believe that the existence of this smuggling route

is the reason why a large quantity of rice enters Nepal, both through official and unofficial gateways, even during the season when local supply is good and the government imports millions of tonnes equivalent of rice to bridge the national deficit.

However, the cross-border smuggling is not limited to rice alone. Raw leather, various brands of powdered spices of Baba Masala Company, shampoos, soaps, toothpaste and fairness creams of Hindustan Lever, Nestle and other reputed brands of Indian companies too are smuggled through Tatopani for sales in Lhasa, the report alleges.

Although the traders on either side are not complaining, the

Nepal government appears to have taken strong note of the practice. Nepal's Consul General has reportedly contacted concerned Nepal government offices like Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies [MoICS] and Department of Customs in this regard. It may be noted that citing "trans-shipment" of Chinese garlic via Nepali territory, India had imposed a ban on import of all Nepali garlic to India. China, too, fears Nepal can raise similar problems if the issue is not dealt with immediately. This could cost heavy to Nepal considering the fact that it already suffers a trade deficit of Rs 9 billion with the northern neighbour including Rs. 3 billion with Tibet alone.

# AMALA AND THE WORM

## Contd from pg 17

violent fit that his Limbu blood made him genetically capable of. Amala understanding everything about what was going on inside Nabin Limbu quietly strode into her kitchen and opened the lid of one of the giant vessels in which she kept her stock of chaang. She unfolded the blue polythene that was responsible for keeping the stuff airtight and with a pair of pincers took out a wriggling pair of maggots that had gorged themselves on that over-fermented

mixture of millet and wheat and were now tumescent and heavy with the richness of white maggoty protein. She put them inside a glass full of water and watched them sink in a short white cloudy burst of disintegrating worminess. Tshering Nima then stirred the organisms so that they were completely subsumed into that swirling syrup of turbid potency.

Nabin Limbu was swimming in a confused blurred fluid of emotions that he could barely comprehend, when amala served him that wormy concoction with

such a sweet, innocent beatific smile on her face that the last thing that he remembered as he slumped on the table was a fuzzy image of her countenance perfectly at peace with itself.

Nabin Limbu, DTP professional, who dreamt of a government job, quietly disengaged himself from consciousness and enjoyed at the courtesy of an empathising Amala a few hours of a wormy nirvana that was to say the least very organic and spiritual.

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sikkimnow@rediffmail.com

**ROBBED**

While the public enjoyed the Maghe Mela at Saramsa, the manager of the Anand Mela was not too happy at the end of the day. In a written FIR to the local police, the manager, SK Khawas, claimed that one Kunga Bhutia of Ranipool Bazaar, had stolen Rs. 7,000 from Meena Bazaar, Saramsa and fled away. After the FIR was filed, the police took immediate action and arrested Kunga Bhutia. However, only half of the stolen amount was recovered from him. Further investigation is going on to recover the rest.

**HIT & RUN**

Ramesh Sharma of Tibet Road and two of his friends were hit by a speeding car at Goshkhan Dara, Tatangchen. A speeding Maruti car hit the trio causing injuries to all three. While Mr. Sharma suffered a broken leg, the others got away with minor injuries. The victims were sent to STNM Hospital, Gangtok, for medical examination after they filed a FIR with the police. The police subsequently arrested the driver of the vehicle who was then released on bail.

**SHOT DEAD?**

On 18 January the body of JCO OPS Yadav of 617 EME was referred to STNM Hospital, Gangtok with gun shot wounds on the head. According to official records the Army Duty

Medical Officer, recorded that Yadav received the wound while on duty.

After investigation of the body by military doctors, in the presence of witnesses, the body was taken to STNM for the post mortem. During the course of the investigation police officers visited the spot but could not inspect it as it was sealed by the army authorities. The police will now carry on the investigation with assis-

**crime watch**  
tance  
from the army.

**ASSAULTED**

Returning home from the Maghe Mela at Jorethang on January 15, Bishal Subba and friend Tenzing Bhutia were allegedly assaulted by Bimal Subba and others of Majhi Gaon, Jorethang. Both sustained injuries. No arrest has been made so far and the case is still under investigation.

Local Police of Jorah received a complaint from Bishnu Rai of Jorah stating that on 18 January at 8:30 am, her husband was badly beaten up by Nirmal Pradhan and Binod Pradhan of Jorah with blows and stones causing severe head injuries. The victim was referred to STNM Hospital, Gangtok for medical examination and the case is still under investigation.

**ANOTHER CRIME SOLVED WITHOUT A COMPLAINT FILED**

The Tadong Outpost seems to have fine-tuned the knack to solve crimes even before they are reported.

While the arrest of two persons for the double-murder of a mother and daughter at PS Road a month back was a high-profile case, last week, the beat-duty cops did a repeat. This time, recovering a cache of stolen goods even before anyone had noticed the theft.

Apparently, cops on patrolling duty last week found a stack lying on the road. On closer inspection, they realised that the stack included a colour TV, a gas stove and cylinder, a VCD player, a music system and other household items. Obviously, the burglars had run away when they saw the cops approaching and left the loot behind. The burglars were not caught.

The theft was noticed only the next day, since the tenants of the burgled flat were away on holiday and it was only after neighbours pointed out that the door was ajar that the landlord noticed the break-in. When he approached the Tadong OP to file a complaint, he was pleasantly surprised to find all the items burgled, safely in their possession. No wonder Tadong residents feel among the safest in Sikkim.

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- 3) MATHEMATICS XII on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2004
- 4) PHYSICS XII on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2004

BCA charges Rs. 25/- per exam towards printing and postal charges. Interested applicants must apply before 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2004.

Contact:  
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## CM'S GOLD CUP ARCHERY TOURNAMENT

### Top-seed Pagang Gumpa crashes out on Day 1

#### a NOW REPORT

**GANGTOK:** The Vth Chief Ministers Gold Cup Archery Tournament got off to a flying start on Sunday, January 18 with last years winners Pagang Gumpa knocked out of the tournament by Sikkim Police. The three-set game saw Pagang Gumpa winning the first set, while Sikkim Police won the second and the third set.

Organized by the Sikkim Archery Association (SAA), the tournament will have 20 teams from Sikkim, Bhutan, Darjeeling and Kalimpong battle it out for the tournament trophy.

The tournament follows the knock-out system with each team playing seven players in a three set game.

The opening ceremony had Rajya Sabha MP PT Gyansto as the Chief Guest, who also declared the tournament open. Also present were PK Pradhan, President, Sikkim Olympic Association, V.B. Pathak, Secretary, Information and Public Relations and many other officials from Sports & Youth Affairs Department along with a big gathering of local people.

Speaking to NOW! officials of SAA said that the tournament will offer the local teams a good opportunity to hone their talent. Sikkim is home to many archers of repute, including Tarun Deep Rai, Chungta Sherpa and Ram



Bahadur Tamang.

The state government has also been encouraging the sport by offering financial incentives for good performance.

The winning team of this year's tournament will walk away with a

gold cup made of 8 kilos of gold and 9 kilos of silver, costing Rs. 2.6 lakhs along with a cash prize of Rs. 25,000 along with certificates. The cash prize for second and third position are Rs. 15,000 and Rs. 10,000 respectively.

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**SINCE OBLIGED BY**  
K. N. LAMA, Supdt. of Custom, Siliguri, Ph. 2661602 (R), 98320-61432  
DR. R. K. AWASTHI, Senior Scientist, Sikkim, Ph. 03595-23130 (O)  
D. B. SINCHURI, Manager, Youth Centre, Ministry of Education, Thimpu, Bhutan, Ph. 324506 (O)  
SAILAZA CHHETRI, Senior Air Hostess, Kathmandu, Nepal, Ph. 4780873  
HIRAMANI SEWA, Salbari, P.O. Sukna, Ph. 0353- 2512523 (O)

#### Contact: RATNARAJ

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