

introducing
State Bank

Vishwa Yatra

Foreign Travel Card

No more foreign cash or Travellers Cheques. Just carry this magic card to access ATMs and shop anywhere in the world

Contact SBI, Gangtok. ph: 202224

NOW!
DAILY
FIRST WITH THE NEWS

Air-Conditioned Grocery shop

for Provisional Goods, Dry Fruits & All Hotel Requirements (for kitchen)

WHOLE-SALES RETAIL-SALES
at the most reasonable prices

Rajdeep

Spectrum Color Lab Building, Near Amar/Chaman Garage, Sevoke Road, Siliguri
ph: 2640799, 2640599

ABGL's primary concerns

AMITAVA BANERJEE

DARJEELING, March 11, 2004: The Akhil Bharatiya Gorka League [ABGL], has launched a massive agitation regarding non-receipt of various benefits that primary students are entitled to.

"Mid-day meals are irregular in hill primary schools and so are free school books and uniforms," alleged T. Sharma, sub-divisional secretary, ABGL.

According to Sharma, when mid-day meals were first introduced, 3kgs of foodgrains were being distributed to each student
turn to pg 3

CON COPS STRIKE AGAIN!

DRESSED IN CAMOUFLAGE UNIFORMS AND ARMED WITH TOY GUNS, CONMEN GET AWAY WITH DACOITY

a NOW REPORT

GANGTOK: The next time a group of "official looking" people dressed in camouflage uniforms and sporting mercenary crew-cuts come knocking, think twice before you allow them in. Better still, call up the nearest thana and check whether a mass raid is underway in your area. The group outside could well be con-artists on the loose who have followed the same modus operandi to effect two [as reported to the cops] dacoities in the past one year. Their latest hit came on 9 March, when an unsuspecting family from Raley/Gerathang [on the Singtam Dikchu axis, about 24 kms from Dikchu] were left poorer by Rs. 42,000 in cash and 11 tolas of gold.

Informed sources reveal that at around 10 PM on 9 March, a group of young boys, dressed in battle fatigues and some even carrying weapons [subsequent debriefing of the eye-witnesses revealed them to be toy guns] arrived at the doorstep of one Devi Prasad Ghimire. He was told that they were "troops" deployed from Rang-Rang checkpost in north Sikkim to conduct a house to house search for explosives stolen from the dam-site at Dikchu.

An unsuspecting Devi Prasad let them in and no sooner had they crowded in, did he realise his folly. While the group moved around officiously at first, they started behaving suspiciously the moment they entered the main room and started asking for the keys to the almira. When Devi Prasad protested, the group started acting even more businesslike and on the threat of booking the entire family, which included two seventy-year-old grandmothers, for obstruction
turn to pg 6

Why not Jelepla? asks Kalimpong

KARAN SHAH

KALIMPONG: Why Nathula? Why not Jelepla? That seems to be the question plaguing Kalimpong ever since hints that trade links would get re-established with Tibet [China] over the high passes in Sikkim. Now, with the Union Ministry for Commerce giving Sikkim the go ahead to start the Tibet Trade via Nathula from this summer itself, the resentment is naturally rising.

"Kalimpong has historically played a more important role and Tibet was more influenced by Kalimpong rather than Sikkim,"

states, Karma T. Pempahishey, a senior Tibetan resident of the town.

Kalimpong, which used to be known as "mini-Tibet" was a flourishing trading centre. Areas like 10th Mile and Topkhana were important business centres with major Tibetan colonies. The spin-offs of being a trading outpost meant a huge indirect source of income - from sale of fodder for mules, to accommodation and transportation for traders.

The older generation here still remember Pandu Tshang and Sandhu Tshang, two legendary trade agents. It is obvious that with connections like these, Kalimpong is not happy being given the go-by

this time round.

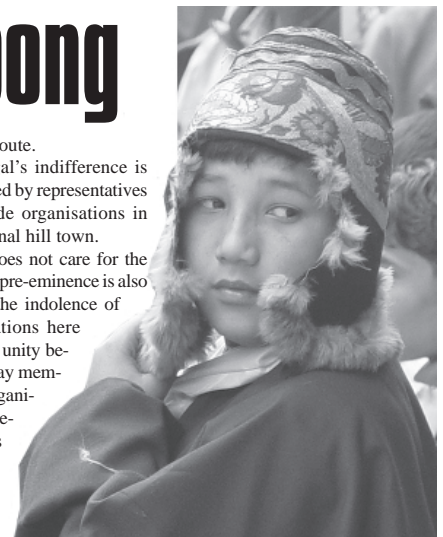
"Jelepla literally means the *Easy Pass*. Compared to Nathula, it is a more suitable route. It remains open for most part of the year while Nathula would be difficult to negotiate in winter. Also, the next big metropolitan centre, Siliguri is closer to Kalimpong," adds Mr. Pempahishey in support of Kalimpong again being allowed to play a bigger role in Tibet Trade. At present, there is no mention of Kalimpong in the scheme of things. Sikkim is understandably silent on Kalimpong and the policy-makers in West Bengal are expending all their energies trying to slip Siliguri

into the trade route.

West Bengal's indifference is further amplified by representatives of various trade organisations in this subdivisional hill town.

"Kolkata does not care for the hills. Nathula's pre-eminence is also the fallout of the indolence of trade organizations here and the lack of unity between them," say members of these organizations. "Is it because there is no proper Memorandum

turn to pg 6



Coffee'd Out?
Chai-d Out Valentine-d Out
Momo-d Out? Smoked Out?
Election-d Out?
Ganesh Tok-d Out?
a break from the norm?

how about?
2004 YEAR OF THE SIZZLER!

Succulent Juicy Sizzlers
Colourful Salads
Steaks

Sometimes, Life has just got to mean
ONLY ...more little
italy
ph: 281980

NOW!

FIRST WITH THE NEWS

Nathula vs. Jelepala

Kalimpong was the gateway to Tibet which did not only launch colonial Britain's Central Asian ambitions into the roof of the world, but also provided Tibet with a ladder down to the supply-chains fed by the Indian markets. When trade peaked, Kalimpong bustled with activity. Caravans, spies, traders of all nationalities, even Counts from Eastern Europe sought Kalimpong out and based themselves here. Kalimpong was discovered by the British administrative machinery and fostered because it was the closest British Indian town to Tibet. Since Britain's interests were always driven by commerce, it was only a matter of time before the traders arrived here and Kalimpong boomed. Kalimpong was where the action was and Darjeeling still a place to convalesce. A change of authority in Delhi did little to mellow the buzz at Kalimpong. In fact, it hummed even stronger. And then trading ties with Tibet snapped. Kalimpong's economy collapsed within a year and many traders deserted it, seeking out fresher pastures elsewhere.

The dejection apparent in Kalimpong over having been left out from the plans for resumption of Tibet Trade is thus understandable. But much has changed in the decades since trade stopped. Most importantly, Sikkim has become a part of India. Kalimpong, as mentioned earlier was chosen because it was the closest Indian town to Tibet. Now, it is Gangtok. In fact, Gangtok is even closer. Nathula is also lower than Jelepala and thus expected to remain open for slightly longer. Time is at a premium in trade nowadays and this factor, when added to infrastructural advantages that a State capital has over a subdivision obviously tilts the balance in Sikkim's favour. That said, West Bengal should have lobbied for Kalimpong when negotiations were afoot to resume trade. But then, the Hills begin and end with Darjeeling for Kolkata and Lal Kothi seems to have forgotten that it also got Kalimpong as part of the Hill Council.

What Kalimpong has to do is play its strongest card - its human resource. This town has survived the collapse of trading activity and its people are perhaps the most resourceful lot around. Even if Kalimpong cannot become the trading hub again, it can become a major supplier to the chain that links India to Chinese Tibet. It can also start popularising lores from its heydays and attract tourists wanting to relive the romanticism of adventurers who passed Kalimpong's way. Even though Nathula is open only for trade and not tourism at present, people are bound to follow once goods start moving. Kalimpong's best bet is perhaps to target trade-related tourism instead of the trade itself.

On Nepal-India Relations

neighbours

PRAKASH CHANDRA LOHANI looks into the Indo-Nepal bond in the present times of globalisation and decides that the economic interests of the neighbours are not in conflict

to a multiparty form of government within a constitutional framework based on the core principle that sovereignty resides on the people. We, in Nepal, are in the process of institutionalizing this principle within the framework of a constitutional monarchy - an institution that remains vital to the transformation of our socio economic system. India's support to our endeavour forms another pillar of a political relationship that is fully consistent with our national interests. It does provide an overarching political environment for greater mutual trust and confidence between the government of the two countries.

ECONOMIC FACTOR:

From an economic perspective we are living in unprecedented times. Since the second half of the 20th century, it has been possible to think that nations that are poor need not remain so in the future. In India the commanding height model that relied on an interventionist government was the paradigm for development for many decades. We know that it did not achieve the results that were expected. Then there was the change and it came after the foreign ex-

change crisis in the late 1980's. It was remarkable change in the strategy of development that could even be labelled as a paradigm shift.

What makes a nation great is its ability for introspection and the willingness and boldness to chart out a new course of action without losing sight of its core values. India's economic policies during the last decade have shown that as a great nation its politics and leadership have the vision and strength to move on a new path of action that seems radical and yet consistent with its democratic ethos and the welfare of its people.

This is good news for Nepal. The overall economic policy framework of both our countries is in the same direction minimizing chances of conflict and friction based on divergence in the strategy of development. India's shift on the high growth path has potential for all of South Asia to be in the same bandwagon. For Nepal, land-lockedness should no longer be viewed as a constraint. In fact, Nepal is not a landlocked nation, but a link nation a country that has direct land link with two of the most dynamic economies of the world. There is no way that this can be a disadvantage. It may have been in the past but certainly not in the future given the fact that both our countries are moving towards a more liberal trade regime. The point to emphasize is that our economic interests are not in conflict. A strong and prosperous Nepal is in India's interest and vice versa.

[The writer is Nepal's Finance Minister]

-courtesy Kathmandu Post

About three years after my mother's death my father married again. His work did not leave him time to cook and wash and do the housework. He therefore took a second wife, a Tibetan woman from Lhasa. Her name was Tshering Dolma. He thought that this would give him comfort and that she would look after me like a mother.

For four or five weeks she was kind to me. My father had opened a bakery. During his absence my stepmother would sit waiting for buyers of biscuits or cakes or sweets. The whole day long she was busy knitting socks and sweaters both for sale and for our own use.

In school I had begun reading the first book of Nepali and of Tibetan, though I ran away as often as I could. My real education was by the games I played on the road with other boys. However, I attended school more or less, for a year and a half. When I was twelve years old, I began to see how foolish I had been in always running away from school and in wasting my time. My former schoolmates had become fluent readers of Nepali and had also learned to write with ease. I could do none of these things. But I did not even think of that when I was six or seven.

As my stepmother knew that I was not going to school regularly she threw all the small housework on me, such as cleaning pots and pans, bringing water and going to the market. Except cooking, all the other work was

Kalimpong's Chinese Duck and His Duckling

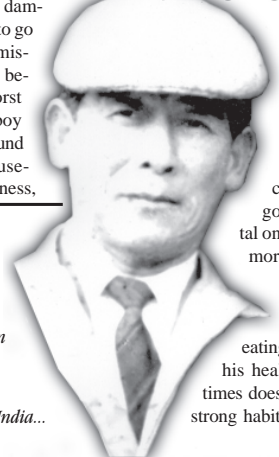
given to me as if I was a servant. My father did not know about this and I was afraid to tell him or she would have told father I was staying away from school and it would have been worse for me.

My dear father was not to work much longer. He had an accident, which damaged his leg so that he had to go to the hospital. From that miserable day my stepmother began to treat me in the worst manner that ever man or boy had to endure. When she found herself free from her housework and the biscuit business,

Artist, filmmaker, keen photographer, columnist with international magazines... It's hard to pin Tuang Yang down. Born to a Chinese father and Tibetan mother, he grew up in Kalimpong and worked in Sikkim. NOW! serializes Tuang Yang's autobiography, Houseboy in India...

Houseboy In India

by Tuang Yang



which had stopped entirely since my father was in hospital, she went out, day and night, to other houses to gossip with her woman friends and to drink chang with them. She drank chang with them.

She drank chang as freely as others drink the water given to man by nature, and she certainly did not look after me but left me to myself. When she came home altogether drunk she abused me till she became sober again. Sometimes, she beat me in a very cruel manner. She may have gone to see my father in hospital once or twice, but I went every morning to ask how he felt and to talk.

Now, I have not mentioned my father's habit of eating opium from time to time for his health. Certainly opium sometimes does a little good, but it forms a strong habit and this made him feel the

need of a daily dose to chew before his meals. So from time to time he told me to bring some for him. I did as he told me, and often I gave him some opium very secretly so that no one might discover it, as there were very strict rules in the hospital. After three weeks, by the mercy of God my father came home, with his leg healed but crippled. It was a most happy day for me to see him again in our home. However, he always remained lame in his left leg and limped. The boys in the street began to call him afterwards the "Chinese Duck" because he waggled like a duck when walking. Soon my father's nickname became known all over Kalimpong. Therefore my own name soon became "Chinese duckling". All the boys would jeer at us and say: "Look at the Chinese duck and his young."

My father could not do anything, for he was old and lame, but I was strong enough to fight them alone. One day about eight boys were playing marbles in the road near our house. My friend Bersi and I made a plan to bring some nettles and caterpillars to throw among these loafers, who had been mocking my father. We two went to the mission forest where on the trunks of the trees you could find many caterpillars. These we collected. We also bought back nettles, which we got with difficulty. We plucked them with tongs, which we use to pick up burning charcoal.

turn to pg 6

TRY TEMPTING SOMEONE WITH THIS



Wormy residents in a Temptations chocolate bought in Gangtok

a NOW REPORT

GANGTOK: There's nothing more repulsive and nastier than finding a creepy, crawly maggot unwinding itself as you take in the screaming crunchy bite of a chocolate bar. Well, how about half a creepy, crawly maggot?

We have no intention of playing spoilsports, but you'd agree it is better to be safe than sorry. A "Temptations" Cadbury bar a friend bought didn't turn out to be as tempting as he thought. Something moving here, something wagging there and he was ready for a life long austerity drive as far eating chocolates goes.

rajdhani

The bar in question was bought a couple of weeks ago from a shop in Gangtok. There were also a couple of similar complaints from some other consumers. Shop-owners say they can't be blamed for it since they are just retail outlets and have nothing to do with manufacturing or packaging or even storing for that matter. The man at Universal Provisions even went so far as to say - when this correspondent questioned him - that they had dumped the old stock of chocolates ever since the "fairies in chocolates" controversy broke out.

A visit to Krishna & Co. - the distributors of the tempting Temptations and other brands of similarly tempting material in Gangtok - re-

vealed just as much. One Mr. Kailash had just this to say: "The old stock of chocolates have all been disposed off. We are now distributing only the freshly packed chocolates."

Abhijit Banerjee of Nestle added: "The fruit and nuts variety is the most vulnerable. There is really nothing we can do about invading pests. They can easily slink into the bars through the corners of the wrappings. Even the double foiled wrappings which the manufacturers have resorted to won't be of much help."

He does, however, go on to say that the ones with the pillow wrappings are totally immune to unwanted guests. Even so, I wouldn't go to sleep with it.

Touring for National Integration

a NOW REPORT

NAMCHI: The Students Experience in Inter Living [SEIL] is a voluntary effort sponsored by Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad [ABVP] and has been active for the past 35 years with a goal to strengthen national integration among the young stars through cultural exchange tours. SEIL is a mission which aims at emotional integration by making the youth familiar

with the threads of cultural bonds which make us one people and one nation in spite of the apparent diversity in language and life styles.

Surat Negi, coordinator of SEIL Tour reveals that this year, the tour was organised as the "Bharat Darshan Anubhav - 2004."

In this tour, 80 students from Sikkim, Darjeeling and the seven sister states of the North East participated. Of the 80 students, seventeen were from Sikkim and

Darjeeling. This emotional national tour was one month long.

Mr. Negi said that during the tour, they met several governors, chief ministers, union ministers and also the President APJ Abul Kalam at the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

According to Mr. Negi, during the meeting with the President, the Sikkim delegation had raised the demand for a university in Sikkim. The students also invited the people of other states of the country to see the natural beauty of Sikkim



Students on the Bharat Darshan Anubhav tour sponsored by ABVP with the Union Minister for Parliamentary Affairs, Sushma Swaraj in New Delhi

and Darjeeling.

Durga Prasad Kharel, a first year student at the Sikkim Law College, said that the tour brought home the unity of India to him and helped him understand what it means to be an Indian.

Another member of the Sikkim

delegation, Tika Thapa, a BA 2nd year student of Government College, Namchi, said that they were treated by the host families like their own children.

"I never felt that I was away from my parents," she said.

ABGL's primary concerns

Contd from pgl

whereas now, students get barely one and a half kilos and that too on a "very irregular" basis.

"We have come to know that a few headmasters, who have even signed blank vouchers, are involved in this scam," contend ABGL leaders.

Regarding text books, ABGL alleges that free text books, instead of being distributed in the beginning of an academic session, were being distributed at the end, thus forcing students to buy text books.

"Girls are being provided free dresses whereas boys are not getting anything," adds Sharma.

ABGL has started a widespread poster campaign in all the three hill subdivisions of Darjeeling, Kurseong and Kalimpong and also at tea gardens and block levels. Posters with messages "Nobody has the right to sabotage the facilities meant for poor primary students," "Heads of Institutions should take necessary initiatives to see to it that students get the maximum benefit of facilities entitled to them," are splashed all over town and ABGL members assure that

they intend to continue with the campaign.

Yesterday, a joint delegation comprising of ABGL subdivisional committee members and Tarun Gorkha [Youth wing of ABGL] met the Chairman, District Primary Board, Secretary [DGHC], Primary Education and the DI of Schools to discuss these issues and find out "in detail" about the facilities that primary students and specially the physically challenged students are entitled to.

"We will also be embarking on

an awareness campaign shortly to educate the parents of the rights that their wards are entitled to," added Sharma.

Meanwhile LT Rinden, Secretary, Primary Education, DGHC, while confirming that he had briefed the ABGL members on the facilities that students were entitled to, commented that the complaints raised by ABGL were "too generalized."

"I have told them that I could look into any specific complaint made by them," he told NOW!

SSI presents EDUCATION IMPACT
It's where your future is

- Level 1 : Diploma in IT foundation
- Level 2 : Hon's Diploma in Web programming
- Level 3 : Advanced Diploma in Solutions Architect
- Level 4 : Master's Diploma in Software Expertise

Near Krishi Bhavan, Tadong, Gangtok. ph: 270876
Below Power Dept., Kazi Road, Gangtok. ph: 227917
Nayuma Building, Main Bazar, Namchi. ph: 263919
Pandey Colony, Geyzing. ph: 251187

email: ssi_gtk@yahoo.com website: www.ssi-education.com

JOB PLACEMENT ON SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION

DIRECT TO HOME DTH

48 Channels in DVD Quality

Ideal for Military and Busy installations. No cable required. Receive DVD quality 48 channels directly from Satellite through just a 2ft. small dish antenna. DTH set, decoder, set-top box, dish, LNB & viewing card at nominal charges. Instant Installation

CALL: **Nayuma INFOSYS**

THE SOLE DISTRIBUTOR FOR ENTIRE SIKKIM

SSI Computers, Opp. Krishi Bhavan, Tadong
ph: 231776 [o], 98320-33595, 94340-33595

In Kalimpong, call 260221. Namchi, Jorethang, Geyzing: 263320.
Pakyong: 94341-27079. Mangan - 23457

SPORTS. NEWS. ENTERTAINMENT. FASHION. MUSIC. MOVIES

BUSY SCHEDULE FORCES BUDDHADEB TO SHIFT HILL MEETING FROM DARJ TO KURSEONG

from OUR CORRESPONDENT

DARJEELING, March 11, 2004:

Though it was West Bengal Chief Minister, Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee's wish to attend a party meeting at Darjeeling after a party meeting was slated for 20 March in Siliguri, this will not be possible due to his busy schedule. Instead, the venue for the meeting has been shifted to Kurseong.

"The CM has a flight back to Kolkata at 12:30 pm on 21 March and therefore it will be too hectic for him to attend a meeting in Darjeeling and then board the flight. It will also be very difficult for party members from all over the Hills to attend the meeting at Darjeeling in the early hours. Taking all these aspects into consideration the venue has been changed to Kurseong and the CM is expected to address party cadres at 10:30 am," said Narayan Pradhan, a CPM leader from the Hills.

ALLEGATIONS ABOUND ON GNLF-CPM DEAL

Immediately after the meeting, the CM will proceed to Bagdogra Airport. Party cadres are expected to attend in large numbers from all over the hills including Darjeeling, Kurseong, Kalimpong and Mirik.

Ashok Bhattacharjee, State Minister in Charge of Municipal and Urban Affairs and Mani Thapa, CPM candidate from the Darjeeling constituency will be accompanying the CM to Kurseong.

"It will mainly be a meeting where election strategies will be discussed in detail," informed Pradhan. Party members are also eyeing this meeting as a major morale booster.

Incidentally, after the announcement of Mani Thapa's candidature, a near feud broke out among certain ranks of the CPM in the hills, dubbing her as an "unknown face" and a candidate not from the Hills.

The uprising was however

quelled deftly by senior party leaders. Anil Biswas, secretary of the CPM State Committee in Siliguri, stated that no disciplinary action will be taken against these leaders as CPM functioned "on democratic lines and party members had every right to express their opinion."

He added that the problem had been sorted out. After this, the CPM embarked on largescale political campaigning in the Hills and the plains, with rallies and public meetings.

To further apply the healing touch, Ashok Bhattacharjee accompanied Mani Thapa to a DYFI meeting in Darjeeling on 5 March where she was introduced by Bhattacharjee as a "bridge between the plains and hills." He also claimed that the entire party was happy with her candidature and that each and everyone would back her. "CPM is a disciplined party which

has always taught its cadres that the interest of the party comes before self" he preached.

Though all this managed to quell the internal strife, it could not stop the crossfire from other political camps. Akhil Bharatiya Gorkha League [ABGL] openly criticized Mani Thapa as a GNLF backed candidate.

"Everybody knows of the tacit understanding between the CPM and the GNLF. GNLF agreed to boycott votes to block anti-CPM votes to ensure the CPM victory giving preconditions for Mani Thapa to be made the CPM candidate and that the present DGHC Board be given an extension," said Madan Tamang, President, ABGL.

As the CPM kept both the conditions it was the turn of the GNLF to keep their part of the deal and ensure the CPM victory, he added.

Ashok Bhattacharjee however

shrugged off all this as mere "propaganda mechanisms."

"Mani Thapa was chosen as the candidate because she is a capable leader. About the extension to DGHC's term, since we can't hold all three elections [Lok Sabha, Municipal and DGHC] one after the other and since the DGHC Act has the provision to extend the tenure of the board for 1 year, we used this to extend it for 8 months. There is no hidden agenda or anything illegal behind this," clarified Bhattacharjee.

Meanwhile the GNLF has gone into silence mode regarding election and continues to abstain from clarifying their stand on the forthcoming MP elections. They even abstained from the all party meeting with the Darjeeling District Magistrate to discuss the moral code of conduct yesterday, further raising

KALIMPONG-BOUND GROUP ASSAULTED

NAYA BAZAAR: At around 5 pm on 10 March, three passengers of a vehicle were assaulted by some miscreants. Somnath Chettri, JP Gupta and Suresh Pradhan were on their way to Kalimpong after attending a marriage ceremony at Chungbong when the vehicle they were travelling in stopped to refuel at the Naya Bazaar petrol pump. There, they were reportedly accosted by one Sonam Bhutia, Bharat Gupta and two others. Apparently a heated exchange of words took place between the two groups and subsequently the passengers were set upon by Sonam Bhutia and his friends. The driver, Tshering Dorjee Bhutia, was the only one who got away unhurt. The miscreants have been arrested.

GOVT. SPARES PINCHED!

GANGTOK: On 9 March, three spare tyres belonging to three different vehicles were reported stolen. Interestingly two of the three vehicles belonged to the Joint Secretary, Home Department, and Joint Secretary, Pay & Accounts. The third belonged to one TR Rai. The said vehicles were parked at Indra bye-pass near the Motor Vehicles office. An investigation is underway and sources have been deployed in and around Indra bye-pass area to trace the culprit.

SIMPLE THEFT AT TECHNOLOGY DEPTT.

GANGTOK: Kalpana Chettri, accountant with the Information & Technology Department was in for an unpleasant shock when she reported for work on 4 March, last Thursday. According to her, at around noon that day she had left her office on the first floor of the annexe building to collect a cheque. When she returned, a bag containing Rs. 20,000, two LIC cheques worth Rs. 8,000 each and another Rs. 282 along with her mobile phone were missing. Her personal accessories were missing, too, from her drawer. She maintains that she had properly locked her drawer and kept the keys in another drawer of the table. A written complaint was made on 9 March and the case is under investigation.

Sikkim House
 (The Ethnic Cuisine Restaurant)
 at Hotel New Castle, Deorali
 Phone : 281707 / 281742

State BJP reserves comment on SDF snub

a NOW REPORT

GANGTOK, March 11: The State Unit of the Bharatiya Janata Party has refused to comment on the decision of the ruling Sikkim Democratic Front to turn down its offer for an alliance at the state level for the upcoming Lok Sabha and Assembly polls in the State.

The Sikkim BJP president, HR Pradhan, while talking to NOW!,

said it was "too early" to comment on the breakdown in the talks on a possible alliance and seat-sharing arrangement between the BJP and the SDF in Sikkim.

"We have intimated the BJP in-charge for Sikkim, Sunil Shastri, and vice-president Pyarelal Khandelwal on the outcome of our talks with the SDF party. We are now awaiting their instructions," he said.

Yesterday, the SDF Political Affairs Committee, while debating

the BJP proposal, had "unanimously" decided against forging any alliances at the state level while clarifying that its support for the BJP-led NDA would continue at the national level.

This came in the wake of optimistic remarks made by Mr. Khandelwal and Mr. Shastri at a press conference a day earlier where they expressed confidence on forging an alliance with the ruling party in Sikkim.

STA thanks govt, deptt. for "positive measures"

a NOW REPORT

GANGTOK, 11 March: The Sikkim Teachers Association [STA] has expressed its gratitude to the State Government and the Department of Education for fulfilling a number of its demands which could have far-reaching consequences towards the betterment of the teaching community in the State.

"The measures taken by the State Government to improve the standard of education and streamline it are commendable. The various incentives provided by the State Government for both the teachers and the students to make education more attractive have all contributed to the overall development of education in the State," ML Koirala, publicity secretary, SLA, says in a press statement.

Schemes launched by the State Government, such as free text-

books, free uniforms, midday meals, scholarships, etc have all brought significant changes in the education sector in the State, Mr. Koirala maintains.

"Construction of new school buildings, recruitment of more teachers, introduction of vocational education and training, computer education, sports facilities have all helped improve the standard of education in the State," he said.

The STA has also expressed its gratitude towards the Government for fulfilling a number of its demands raised for the "general welfare" of the teaching community in the State.

"Persistent meetings and appeals placed before the government and the Education Department in particular, have resulted in fulfilment of a number of our demands, which are significant achievements for us," Mr. Koirala said.

Some of these include the fixing of service years limit for ad-

vancement grade for primary teachers and school mothers to ten years from the earlier 15 years; Graduate and Post Graduate teachers who have B. Ed degrees and Primary teachers with CPE [TTI] degrees are now eligible for two advance increments. Similarly, the State Government has already given the green signal for reviving Advance Winter Salary facility and all teachers who have 450 days credit on their leave account are now entitled for leave encashment if the credit days exceed 450 days.

The State Government has also made it possible for in-service teachers to pursue higher studies while still in service. Teachers can now also go for professional education course such as B.Ed and CPE from IGNOU free of cost. The Education Department has also made provisions for transfer adjustments of teachers keeping in mind their welfare, Mr. Koirala reveals.

Culture establishes a French Connection for ten from Kpg

from OUR CORRESPONDENT

KALIMPONG: A group of underprivileged children from Kalimpong belonging to ITBCI-Indo-Tibet Buddhist Cultural Institute are all set to live the dream many of us once had - visiting the fashion capital of the world - France. The ten children are all under the age of 13.

The French connection was established so that the pre-teens could participate in an international children's meet there. The Carrefour International du Theatre d'Enfants is an international children's meet involving countries such as Germany and Spain and will be hosted at Valenciennes in France. It is slated to be held from the 15 to 31 of May, later this year and is organized by Jeune Theatre International and will be presided over by Mrs. Chislane

INDO-TIBET BUDDHIST INSTITUTE TROUPE TO PERFORM AT INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S MEET IN FRANCE

Gwizdek. JTI is a professional theatre Company in France directed by Nathalie le Corre et Philippe Asselin.

According to JK Bhutia, principal, ITBCI, this is a totally non-commercial Meet. The children, he adds, are being sent to the festival "basically to represent Tibetan culture" through various cultural dances such as the Lion dance, the Yak-dance, Dopa Dodrung [literally meaning "dance with drum beat"] etc.

Mr. Bhutia further reveals that this opportunity for the underprivileged children to visit foreign shores was made possible through an ex-student of the Institute who is himself an artist. This benevo-



lent ex-student is married to a French lady and is settled in France.

He further stated that though this will be the first time the students of ITBCI will be taking an international trip, various venues such as Kolkata and New Delhi have already been visited by them while on the trail of similar performances.

"The excursion is being totally funded by the group from France", he adds.

Accommodation for all the children has also been fixed with five French families having agreed to accommodate two children each in their homes.

"This is a good development for the Tibetan society here and also for

the students of our school who will now have an opportunity to meet and interact with people belonging to a different world. They will directly interact with the people there and therefore get to know more about Western society first-hand," said Principal Mr. Bhutia.

Kesang Lepcha, a student at ITBCI from Sadhu Dhara, when approached said she considered herself "very lucky" and admitted she was excited about the trip to France. She will be performing the Relpa dance, a devotional dance introduced in 17th century to popularize Buddhist Religion and culture in Tibet.

What can we say but *bon voyage*.

read tomorrow...



WHO WAS CK?

MOBILE PHONES



Ramola CELLULAR SALES & SERVICES

Tharo Line, Lal Market Road. Ph: 221004, Mobile: 9832062684

India-Tibet Friendship Society seeks release of Tenzin Rinpoche

from our CORRESPONDENT

KALIMPONG: On the occasion of the 45th Tibetan National Uprising Day, the India-Tibet Friendship Society based in Kalimpong has urged the Government of India and "all peace loving people of the world" to seek the release of political prisoners held in Tibet and to restore human rights in Tibet.

They spoke for the freedom of Tenzin Delek Rinpoche, an influential Buddhist teacher who is also known for his social and religious developmental efforts.

In the year 2000 Chinese authorities ordered him to close a school he had established in Lithang. Over 20,000 Tibetans and

Chinese people signed a petition in his support, but could not stop either the closure of the school or his arrest by Chinese officials.

He was arrested on 7 April, 2002 by Kangding Police Detention Centre on charges that he had engaged in separatist activities and bombing. Denied visitors and legal counsel, reports emerged that he was beaten and tortured.

On December 2, 2002, a trial was held in Kardze Intermediate People's Court. Tenzin Delek was gagged when he tried to defend himself. He was later sentenced to death and became the first Tibetan to be handed the death sentence in 20 years.

Rinpoche himself asserted his innocence in a tape recording that

was smuggled out of Tibet wherein he said: "Since I'm a Tibetan I have always been sincere and devoted to the interest and well-being of Tibetan people. That is the real reason why the Chinese don't like me and framed me. That is why they are going to take my life even though I'm innocent."

On 26 January, 2003, two Chinese lawyers were denied permission to represent Tenzin Delek.

PT Bhutia, General Secretary, ITFC also appealed to Yashwant Sinha, Union Minister for Foreign Affairs and to Hu Juntao, President, People Republic of China for the immediate release of Tulku Tenzin Delek.

Cong loses East VP to SDF

a NOW REPORT

GANGTOK, March 11: Sikkim Pradesh Congress Committee-East District vice-president, Manoj Rai has resigned from the party and joined the ruling Sikkim Democratic Front party.

Mr. Rai submitted his resignation to the SPCC president Nar Bahadur Bhandari here on 9 March.

Speaking at a press conference here today, Mr. Rai blamed the "flawed leadership" of Mr. Bhandari and his obsession with promoting himself and not the party as the reasons for leaving the Congress.

Software Technology Group International Ltd.
(One of the fastest growing in IT Education Company)

presents Advanced Diploma in Software Technology with **S.R.E.X. [Software Project Experience]**
Get Ready For The Real World

Our other course: **Advanced Diploma in Hardware & Networking. Certificate/ Diploma in Hardware & Networking**
For details contact: Citi Computers, Tibet Road, Gangtok. ph: 220866/ 98320-36692

Sikkim Manipal University of Health, Medical & Technological Sciences
5th Mile, Tadong, Gangtok - 737 101
ph: 03592-270294, 231937. fax: 231147. email: smu31147@hotmail.com

WANTED

A part-time Nepali teacher to teach Nepali language to Medical students and faculties at Sikkim Manipal Institute of Medical Sciences.
Interested graduates may apply. Teaching time 6.00 p.m. to 7.00 p.m. Three days a week.
An experienced teacher capable of coaching faculties/ students not conversant in Nepali is preferred.

Registrar, SMU

Strawberry Grand Clearance Sale
FOR THE FIRST TIME 30-50% OFF ON ALL GARMENTS, SHOES & HOUSEHOLD ITEMS
FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY
SALE TILL STOCKS LAST
Nam Nang. ph: 226982

ADMISSION ANNOUNCEMENT
C.B.S.E./I.C.S.E. - FROM CLASS V TO XII
PARALLEL COACHING AI-EEE, PMT, AFMC, DCE, CET, AIIMS
ALL SUBJECTS. LIBRARY FACILITY. COMPUTER REVISION AT WEB CENTRE.
DIRECT ADMISSION FOR HIGHER STUDIES IN BANGALORE, DELHI, W.B.
at: **CAREER'S COUNSELLING INST.**
TIBET ROAD, D.B. GHALEY BLDG., GANGTOK. PH: 226510, 227562. MOB: 94341-53355
Special coaching for Admission test:
RIMC, Dehradun (Starting March 1st Week)
AIEEE, AFMC, AIIMS (Starting 1st April)

REGISTRATION OPEN

Peer educators briefed on AIDS

PURAN TAMANG

NAMCHI: A training programme on HIV/AIDS was held for nodal teachers and peer educators at Library Hall, Namchi General Hospital, from 8-11 March. The programme was a part of the School AIDS Education Scheme under south district.

Organized by Dhirshti, a Namchi based NGO, the programme was supported by Sikkim State AIDS Control Society.

This is the second time that this

training of educators is being held. Nineteen schools had participated in the first programme while the remaining six schools took part this time around.

The main aim of the training was to spread awareness and increase knowledge among educators for subsequent education of students about HIV/AIDS and STDs. The trainees will now spread the message that they have imbibed in various schools. Funds for this have been allocated under School Level Activity by the Sikkim State AIDS Control Society.

NINE CRORE VAJRA GURU RECITATIONS DONE, ENCHEY PREPARES FOR KHA WANG

a NOW REPORT

GANGTOK: Almost nine crore Vajra Guru recitations have been completed at Enchey Sanga Rapdenling Gumba in the last month.

The recitations, which started on 6 February, are now on the verge of completion. It is hoped that the proceedings will be completed within the next few days. The Vajra Guru Mantra recitation is to seek the blessings of Guru Rimpoche to overcome evil forces that may confront humanity. It will safeguard

humanity against diseases, human sufferings, natural calamities, communal disturbances, war and other evils, claim the organisers.

The Duchi of Enchey Gonpa and the Enchey Tsechu Tsogpa has expressed gratitude to all the devotees who have contributed and participated in the proceedings. It has also requested all devotees to continue extending their support till the conclusion of the recitation. The organisers propose to conduct a "Kha Wang" as done last year on the concluding day. The date will be announced later.

A Foreign Publication Division wants 40 Brilliant Boys/ Girls for different positions of Administration/ Management.

Walk-in-Interview

LAND-MARK INTERNATIONAL

Sarda Building, 6th Floor,
MG Marg, Gangtok-737 101
ph: 98320 9007

Why not Jelepla?

Contd from pg1

of Understanding between the government and the traders of this region, or is it that all influential personalities of this region are too laid-back and relaxed?" they ask.

However, according to Lawrence D. Siting, former Political Agent, Government of Bhutan and an expert in Indo-Bhutan and Indo-Tibet relations: "Climatically, historically, as well as strategically, Kalimpong has always been an important trading town because of its proximity to Nepal, Bhutan, Tibet and Siliguri. But, I would like to announce to the citizens of Kalimpong that if Jelepla does not reopen, it does not mean that the original historical value of Kalimpong will decline."

But business, point out former

Tibet traders here, has to be much more immediate and there is need for some collective action on seeking a role for Kalimpong in the new trade route.

Monila De, a columnist and senior resident of the town believes that the Centre has shown more sympathy to Sikkim than Kalimpong.

"Maybe the West Bengal government did not play its cards at the right time. It should be more positive in its attitude towards Kalimpong in the future," she contends.

Even while the older residents like her hope that the central government will see the sense of it all at some point, the younger generation knows that Kalimpong's day in the sun as far as trading with Tibet go has gone down for all times.

Sikkim history returns to school books

SAGAR CHETTRI

GANGTOK: Sikkim's history, or at least a part of it will now be taught in schools in the State. Beginning with class III from this year, it will progressively march to higher classes from the next session onwards.

The decision to introduce students to a study of their own land was taken at the Educational Conference of heads of schools held in September last year. A resolution was passed on the inclusion of chapters on history of Sikkim in Social Studies textbooks with effect from this session. This is the first time after almost 29 years of following the Indian educational system that students here will study the history of their land.

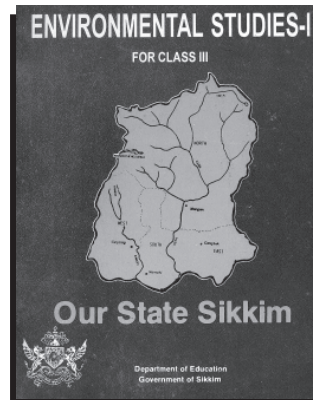
Dr. MP Kharel, Head of His-

tory Department, Sikkim Government College, who helped prepare the relevant chapters, says that he had always rued the absence of Sikkim's history from the school syllabus here and always wanted to get it included.

Five chapters in the book, Environmental Studies-I for class III, have been devoted to Sikkim. Climate, plants and animals, people and the culture of the state, occupation of the people, transport and communication and districts and towns of Sikkim make for the first introduction to school kids of their own land.

"This textbook is dedicated to the children of Sikkim with the hope that it would serve its purpose. It is the first attempt of its kind in our state," reads the foreword by Secretary, Education Department.

Even though it has begun only at the class III level, it is hoped that the initiative will trigger a greater interest in Sikkimese history among the students and is followed up with progressive books with more details in higher classes.



Sikkim footballers to dribble at Dr. Ao tournament

SPORTS/SOCCER

a NOW REPORT

GANGTOK, 11 March: Sikkim Football Association [SFA] is sending a 20-member football team under chief coach Thupden Rappyal to represent Sikkim in the 2nd Dr. T. Ao - Doner Football Tournament for North Eastern Region to be held at Imphal, Manipur.

The tourney is slated to be held from 15 March and will continue till 28 March, 2004. The team will leave Gangtok on 13 March.

Sikkim has been slated in Group A along with states like Assam, Mizoram, Nagaland and SAI

[Blue]. In Group B are the states of Manipur, Meghalaya, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh and SAI [Red].

The tournament will be played on a league cum knock-out basis. Sikkim XI play their first match on 16 March, next Tuesday.

Both the semi-finals will be played on 26 March and the final is scheduled for 28 March.

While releasing the names of the State team to the media, SFA secretary, Menla Ethenpa, said that

out of 40 probables, 20 players have been shortlisted to participate in the tournament. These probables were undergoing coaching camp for the last one month under the Chief Coach at TNA Ground as well as in Old Guards Ground.

Mr. Ethenpa further said that the upcoming tourney is being viewed as a warm-up for the Sikkim team as it prepares for the Santosh Trophy likely to be held sometime in April 2004.

Con-Cops Strike...

Contd from pg1

of justice, locked them all up inside one room.

With no prying eyes to disturb them, they went around "searching" the entire house and left only after they had found something that satisfied them - Rs. 42,000 in cash and 11 tolas of gold. The group decamped and it was only much later that Devi Prasad could escape the locked room and discover the dacoity.

Upon checking with security personnel in the area, he learnt that there was no raid in progress and understood that he had been conned. Interestingly, this is not the first time that this modus operandi has been carried out with success in the region. In June last year, a family was similarly looted by youth posing as cops on a raid at Mannzang Jogi Dara about 6 kms from Lingmoo bazaar across the river from Gerathang. There could have been other attempts, but none

have been reported thus far. What makes the case even more intriguing is that the gang-members seem to work hard on their act. When they claimed to be on the search for stolen explosives, they knew Devi Prasad would buy the story because the area has been abuzz for the past two months with rumours of such a theft. This is also perhaps a lead to the location of gang members since not too many people outside the Singtam-Dikchu axis are aware of the rumoured theft.

As things stand, a case has been registered under sections 170, 392 and 32 of Indian Penal Code against "unknown persons." Although senior police officials maintain that the case is being investigated, they admit no breakthroughs have been made as yet. Although the gang is not expected to target urban localities, those living in remote rural blocks are advised to be wary of heavy footfalls and loud knocks by men in uniform - they could be from the other side of the law.

Kpg's Chinese Duck...

Contd from pg2

The caterpillars we put in a handkerchief and took secretly near the boys. Among them was one who was the worst and was always jeering at my father by calling him "duck". I quietly dropped the caterpillar from the handkerchief into his neck. It began to sting him, and he began to cry for help from his mother. We two friends, Bersi and myself, then gripped the nettles firmly with handkerchiefs round the stems and went for the boys. We said: "If you boys say that again, then we will do this again to you; so remember, do not call duck anymore."

To be continued

ACTORS SAY PARTIES OFFERED THEM MONEY

As the general election nears, the Congress, Bharatiya Janata Party and many other political outfits have paraded a galaxy of stars that they say subscribe to their ideologies and would campaign for them. So on the one hand you have an Asrani, Celina Jaitley, Namrata Shirodkar, Zeenat Aman and Sharad Kapoor professing their admiration for the Congress, and on the other, Yukta Mookhey, Hema Malini, Sudha Chandran, Suresh Oberoi,

Jeetendra, Poonam Dhillion, etc rooting for the 'Lotus' party

But what really is it that makes them hit the election trail?

According to *Mid Day*, it is mammon. The Mumbai tabloid spoke to a cross-section of movie stars and TV personalities who said political parties approached them with big bucks.

Muscleman Sunil Shetty told the tabloid he had been offered Rs 10 lakh per day through his secre-

MONEY FOR STARS

tary. "Parties who pay you money think they can make you jump to their tune," he said.

Actor Ashutosh Rana said he had been approached more than once. "I have been offered astronomical sums from several national and regional parties to canvass for them," he said.

"There is an ongoing storm and politicians have suddenly discovered newfound love for celebrities. Actors are getting more offers from political parties than films," he added.

Also in demand are TV stars. Shweta Kwatra, star of soap *Kahani Ghar Ghar Kii* and *Kkusum*, told the paper that her rate card was more than one lakh a day. "The parties have approached me directly to campaign."

Often the payment is made in cash. "This is to siphon off the

black money and can come from either parties directly or from industrialists; also this is one way to evade EC scrutiny," a star wishing anonymity told the tabloid.

Manoj Bajpai said, "I have been approached but I have always refused in the first stage of negotiation itself.

"It is unfortunate that sundry stars with no knowledge of ground realities have chosen to enter the political fray."

Mysterious Naga sadhus congregate in Junagadh

They are feared due to their matted hair and their unusual appearance. And their role in the spiritual world is always shrouded in mystery.

The Naga baba [naked warrior mendicant] belongs to a sect that has no material bonding, lives a rigorous life and performs rituals to appease Lord Shiva - the divine destroyer.

They are mostly smeared with ash, carry traditional weapons like the trident, smoke cannabis or hashish and can perform incredible feats and yoga *asanas*.

These sadhus every year flock from various parts of the country to the foot of the Girnar mountain at Junagadh district in Gujarat to celebrate Mahashivratri and take the much awaited dip at the famous *Mrigi Kund* [pond] at the Lord Shiva temple.

Many perform *yagnas* [offerings] like the *Mrityunjay Yagna*, which is believed to have powers to bring back the dead.

Legend has it that three sadhus out of many who take a dip at the *Mrigi Kund* vanish into the waters.

Unfazed by the changing times, however, the Naga sadhus believe in the spiritual powers of the *kund*. According to a legend Lord Shiva himself had taken bath here and the water, which has sulphur, is a sign of his divine presence.

Gopalgiri, a Naga sadhu from Himachal who has been visiting Junagadh for past 20 years, says the mystery surrounding the *kund* is one of the most known ones. "Legend also has it that there is a secret tunnel under water from where they go to another place," Gopalgiri said.

"No ordinary man can try to unearth this secret route by trying to take a dip. Only a true sadhu can detect it and go past it if his calling has arrived," he added with caution.

Unperturbed by changing times the Naga sadhus maintain that it is due to their extreme penance under harsh conditions that they are able to ward off many evils in the world.

Nagas like Acharya Lalchadi Giri from Uttaranchal say they are drawn to the Mahashivratri celebrations by the mystical power of Lord Shiva.

TEN SPORTS DEMANDS U\$25 MILLION FROM DD TO SHARE INDO-PAK SERIES TELECAST RIGHTS

K S Sharma, chief executive officer of Prasar Bharati, has accused Ten Sports, which has the exclusive overseas telecast rights for the India-Pakistan cricket series, of making "unreasonable demands" and trying to make a killing by forcing Doordarshan into paying three times the money invested by Ten Sports to bag the telecast rights.

According to reports, the sports channel procured the telecasting rights from the Pakistan Cricket Board for US\$8 million but are asking Doordarshan to pay up US\$25 million to share these rights with them. K S Sharma, as the report goes, initially offered \$4 million which was later revised to \$6 million.

In a bid to sort out the matter so that viewers all over the country get to watch the matches, Sharma had a meeting with Chris McDonald, the Ten Sports chief in

India, on Sunday in Mumbai and offered to carry the same advertisements which are carried by them provided they [Ten Sports] agreed to part with some of the money from the advertisement revenue.

Chris McDonald has now flown to New Delhi to make a last ditch effort to reach some understanding with the Prasar Bharati after the Madras High court had indicated during the hearing in a public interest litigation that the Government of India should consider bringing an ordinance in case there is no understanding reached between the two television Houses

If the High Court directs the government to come up with an ordinance and force Ten Sports to share telecast signals with Prasar Bharati, then DD would not be pay-

ing anything to Ten Sports.

Information and Broadcasting Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad on Wednesday met Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee to update him on the developments. Prasar Bharati chief executive K S Sharma also met senior PMO officials.

Officials admitted that if the telecast of the series was blocked out, it could damage the image of the ruling National Democratic Alliance government ahead of the general elections starting next month. Such a situation could force the government to bring in an Ordinance making it mandatory for the channel to share its feed with Doordarshan.

In order to avoid such crises in future, the government is considering an ordinance [depending

upon the Madras High Court ruling] that will make it mandatory for any channel operating in the country to share feed of events of national interest with the state broadcaster.

The government will list the events or type of events for which private broadcasters will have to share feed. This condition will be brought in either as an ordinance or as part of the registration agreement for channels operating in India.

OFF-FIELD SLEDGING

WANTED

Computer Engineer, Software Programmer Knowledge in Visual Basic and Oracle a must. Please send in detail resume with passport size photographs and quote expected salary to NOW!, Gairi Gaon, Tadong, East Sikkim.

130 killed in Madrid train blasts

A string of explosions took place on Madrid's railway network at the height of morning rush hour on Thursday killing, according to latest reports, at least 130 people and wounding more than 400.

Three explosions hit separate trains along the southern part of the train network at Santa Eugenia, El Pozo and Atocha stations.

The most deadly blast happened on a train entering Madrid's main Atocha station, killing 29 people there, the broadcaster quoted Interior Minister Angel Acebes as saying.

Three bombs, planted in plastic bags in the front, middle and rear cars, hit the train, arriving from the eastern Madrid suburb of Alcalá de Henares, Spanish radio SER reported.

Spain's government blamed Basque separatist group ETA. Government spokesman Eduardo Zaplana dubbed it a "criminal gang of killers".

The attacks came barely three days ahead of the Spanish general election.



Save Rs. 23200 ON PURCHASE OF EVERY ALTO VXi



OFFER VALID TILL 25TH MARCH ONLY!!!

Alto VXi	- Free 1 yr Insurance + Rs. 10,000 Discount
WagonR	- Free 1 yr Insurance
M800	- Free 1 yr Insurance*
Esteem [Petrol]	- Rs. 30,000 Discount
**Versa	- Free 1 yr Insurance
***Omni	- 50% Free 1 yr Insurance
Zen [Petrol]	- 50% Free 1 yr Insurance

*conditions apply **select models **except ambulance.



Dr. Supriya Bhatnagar

REIKI, TO GET THE RHYTHM BACK

tune with the Higher Being, it is truly a blessing. That alternative healing method could be Reiki.

So, what really is Reiki?
 "Reiki is a natural system of healing. It means the universal spiritual wisdom or consciousness and life force energy which is used to heal the body, mind and soul," says Dr. Supriya Bhatnagar, a Reiki Master and a Naturopath.

"The wisdom that comes directly from the Higher Self which is all-knowing. It understands each person completely, his problems and difficulties and knows how to heal them. Reiki heals one physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually, offering solutions to most known diseases and maintains one's connection with God," she explains.

This ancient form of healing deals with the life force, known to Indians as Prana and to the Chinese as Chi. When this life force is high and free-flowing, it animates the body, the emotions and thoughts. When disrupted, it can cause a host

of illnesses and negative karma. This energy force is present in all beings and can be accumulated and guided by the mind.

Dr. Bhatnagar, an Army wife based here at Libing, has been practising Reiki for the last seven years. Over the years, she has been healing people, especially orphans and has been successfully releasing the healing powers of this ancient technique to many with chronic problems. She has also been diligently spreading awareness on Reiki all along.

Based here for the last one and half years, this low-profile lady has been healing the locals with chronic disease and has also been involved in charitable work with various orphanages here. Belonging to the Usui lineage of Reiki practice, Dr. Bharatnagar is also a qualified naturopath who has successfully combined the technique of Reiki with naturopathy.

Her initiation into Reiki was led by her own physical problems she was suffering seven years ago.

"At that time, I was chronically

SARIKAH ATREYA speaks to a Reiki Master and tries to understand this ancient art of healing

ill, was fighting obesity and was suffering from a slipped disc. The doctors suggested surgery which could have been fatal. Just then, my father suggested that I try out the Reiki therapy. I went to a Reiki Master in Pune. Frankly, I was a bit skeptical in the beginning but within three days of Reiki healing, my slipped vertebra moved back to its original place and I was cured," she says.

This convinced her enough to learn more about Reiki and its healing powers. Soon, she found a Master who initiated her. Since then, there has been no looking back.

While the benefits of Reiki are manifold, one cannot learn Reiki healing by merely reading books.

"One needs to be initiated by a Reiki Master to be able to heal self and others," she says, while adding that the attunement process is a sacred and secret one, passed only

from Master to pupil.

Her Reiki Master also introduced her to naturopathy. Through naturopathy, she was able to successfully fight the battle of the bulge and is now herself a qualified naturopath and is a consultant for weight management programmes as well.

Dr. Bhatnagar is actively involved in spreading awareness on Reiki here through seminars and will soon start initiation classes as well.

"Reiki helps in neutralizing the negative karmic fields, which are the cause of many illnesses. Reiki brings the body and mind back in harmony," she says, adding, "The world at present needs love and harmony more than ever before."

[Those interested in Reiki, Naturopath, Herbalife and Weight Management Programme can contact Dr. Supriya Bhatnagar at 98320-55121]



New look & tastes at Anola

GANGTOK: Hotel Anola at New Market here re-launched its restaurant with a new look and an all-new management. And it's all in the family. According to Deki Wangdak, who will be running the restaurant with Penjor, her youngest brother-in-law, the main USP of the restaurant will be the food cooked by speciality chef Tshering Machen, who also happens to be her father-in-law. Marchenla is a well-known chef specializing in Chinese and Tibetan cuisine.

Much in demand for catering at marriages and official functions, he now brings to Anola his experience and talent. Penjor, who has inherited his father's cooking skills, will contribute with inputs especially in kitchen items catering to the younger generation.

The restaurant, which reopened on 1 March, is already seeing customers return for more. Mandarin fish, Roast pork and other Chinese dishes vie for attention with ever-popular momos, gyathuk and shya phaleys.

"We want to introduce more Tibetan dishes in the future and with such an experienced chef with us, we are confident that all those who come here will enjoy their meals thoroughly," says a confident Deki.

TNA STUDENT GUESSES THE NUMBER OF CHURPIS RIGHT

GANGTOK: Shreya Kiran, a class VI student of Tashi Namgyal Academy has won this month's Baker's Café Talk of the Town Contest by guessing correctly the number of 'churpis' kept in a jar. Shreya, guessed the exact number of 335 churpis! A 5 pound chocolate cake was presented to her by Subhas Chettri, Manager, Baker's Café. Very happy about winning the cake, she said, "What can be a better gift for my mother on her birthday than this cake, the whole family can enjoy this together."



IF YOU HAVE

STEAM

TO LET OFF THIS WEEKEND

We have the Space for it



X'cape

Vajra Complex, Baluakhani, Gangtok.
PHONE: 228636

OPEN: 6PM - 11PM (WEEKDAYS), 6PM - MIDNIGHT (WEEKENDS)

**ENTRY: COUPLES Rs. 300
STAG Rs. 300 & LADIES FREE
INCLUDING COUPON WORTH Rs. 100**

GO AHEAD, UNLEASH YOURSELF

