

**FIGHTING
FIRE IS
NOT
EASY IN
SIKKIM**

**FOR DETAILS TURN
TO pg 4**

NOTICE

All BSNL subscribers are hereby informed that all telephone numbers in Gangtok beginning 222, 223, 224 and 225 are being changed in a phased manner to now begin 20, ie is the second number of these phones will henceforth be "0."

NOW!

DAILY
FIRST WITH THE NEWS

Hutch acquires licence for West Bengal & Sikkim

GANGTOK, 16 April: Telecom company Hutchison Essar has acquired the West Bengal and Sikkim telecom service licences. This was announced today by Hutchison Essar executive director Sandip Das at Mumbai today.

With this development, Hutch's 'beautiful world' now spreads to 13 cities in the country including Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Haryana, Rajasthan, Punjab, UP East, UP West and West Bengal and Sikkim.

Hutchison Essar doubled its national subscriber base from two million in 2002 to four million in 2003. The company is currently investing Rs. 18 billion to strengthen its national cellular infrastructure, IT backbone, customer service network and provide innovative value added services, that will help maintain its ARPU [average revenue per subscriber] leadership.

Commenting on the acquisition of the West Bengal and Sikkim license Das said, "The wireless teledensity in West Bengal at 0.48 per cent, represents a significant opportunity for growth. This acquisition is an important part of our expansion into Eastern India. We are currently building up the cellular network and will launch the Hutch service in these two states shortly."

He added, "We will also be investing aggressively to strengthen our national network and customer service capabilities. We doubled our subscriber base last year. We expect significant growth again."

**MORE THAN 50%
POLLING STATIONS
"HIGHLY SENSITIVE"
IN DARJ**

TURN TO pg 4 FOR DETAILS

SDF'S FINAL PUSH STARTS WITH SORENG Vote for a party that does not change colours, urges Chamling

SARIKAH ATREYA

SORENG [WEST SIKKIM], 16 April: Chief Minister and Sikkim Democratic Front president Pawan Chamling slipped his party's election campaign into top gear with a massive public meeting here today. More than 5,000 people gathered at the Soreng ground to attend the SDF meeting for three key constituencies in the West - Soreng, Daramdin and Chakung.

An upbeat Mr. Chamling, while thanking the *janata* of West District for the "overwhelming mandate and support" in the last two terms of his Government, appealed to them to "once again" give his party the mandate to "continue with the development work initiated" by his government in the last nine and a half years.

"Allow me to once again form your government, the government of your choice. Allow my party to continue to take further the vision



and the dreams we have for you, the vision to make Sikkim the most developed State in the nation," he said, setting the tone for the party's bid to make a hat-trick.

While the focus of Mr. Chamling was primarily on highlighting his Government's achievements

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SDF supporters at Soreng gather to hear their president speak

He claimsto be the BJP candidate, will file nominations as an Independent too!

BIRENDRA S.

DARJEELING, 16 April: The self-proclaimed BJP candidate from Darjeeling parliamentary committee, Sanjay Thakuri, backed by numerous vehicles sporting the BJP party flags arrived at the District Collectorate to file his nomination. However this could not happen due to some administrative hitches. He is expected to file his nominations on Monday.

Monday will be something to look forward to. Mr. Thakuri plans to cover all loose ends in a very ingenious way. "I will be filing 4 nominations, two as a BJP candidate and

two as independent," said Thakuri.

The crack in the saffron-shield in the Hills came out in the open with banners seeking votes for a Sanjay Thakuri as the BJP candidate even though Dr. G.S Yonzon has been declared the official candidate by BJP State Committee.

Dr. Yonzon stated that whoever had put up the banners was doing it on his own will and it had nothing to do with the party.

"It is a step deliberately taken to create confusion and I will lodge a complaint with the State Committee," retorted Yonzon.

Incidentally the declaration of

Yonzon's candidature had sparked a near revolt in the BJP camp, with discontent running high amongst a section of the Hill BJP leaders. It also resulted in Geeta Chatterjee resigning from the State BJP Secretariat on

grounds that the State leadership had contacted neither her nor any of the District Committees before deciding on Yonzon as the candidate.

Yonzon had earlier claimed that

turn to pg 7

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**FIRST
TIME IN
SIKKIM**

HOTEL BAYUL, MG MARG, GANGTOK

**WILL SIKKIM PICK THE
PAN ON NATHULA?** on pg 5

NOW!

FIRST WITH THE NEWS

Do we have to continue like this?

The election manifestos of the two main contenders to the next five-year rule are out in the public domain. In an ideal situation, the electorate should have been busy studying and debating the two documents, but then, this is Sikkim. Perusal of the manifestos remain an academic exercise, for the convincing, people need sops and hand outs. An afternoon at Tashiling exposes one to debates whether LTC and leave encashment facilities promised by the Congress are more beneficial or the SDF promise to merge 50% of DA to the basic salary. Most don't even try and figure out the policy decisions proposed on administration or the ideology that will guide the next five years of governance. Such a casual approach to the future is sad, specially when it comes from those in the administration not only because they are so many in number but also because they influence so many votes. One would expect a more mature approach to politics from people so close to the power centres.

Part of the fault also lies perhaps with the politicians themselves. It is true for India and perhaps even more so for Sikkim that people harbour serious reservations about politicians and what they say. Decades of double-speak by the political bosses have contributed to this feeling. Now, the first reaction to a politician's statement is to look for the "hidden agenda" behind it. People who are expected to decide on policy matters, drawing their decisions from years spent honing statecraft, are rarely taken at face value any more. Every decision, move and promise is slotted to fit an ulterior political motive. Politics has degenerated to such an extent that the word politician has come to mean "nothing serious." Of course, this is not a recent notion, but, and specially in our country, a notion that has gained ground with the workings, or rather 'mis-working', of certain stalwarts of the political arena: the love-hate relationship of two widely differing parties, or for that matter, the coming together of opposing forces, who forget not only their differences but also their ideals to forge alliances - of course, for joint benefits. So, we say, "bad politics, worse politicians."

Not just the politicians can be blamed though. The onus to exact accountability lies with the public. If a political party, after spending months fine-tuning its manifesto, has to still resort to sops, bribes and muscle to come to power, they will never bother with performance in the future. They will continue doing what they do for five years and return with sacks full of cash to buy their way into the next elections. Why should they try and work when the public does not reward it. If votes will be cast on caste and community or sops and bribe considerations, then why even try and campaign with promises of development. As a people, the Sikkimese wait and see; see and criticise; criticise and do little else. We ignore issues, we get carried away with communal posturings and are interested in political debates only when there is mudslinging involved. In Sikkim, the public has seldom taken the initiative to solve contentious issues. We wait for the politicians to do it for us and politicians prefer to keep such issues on slow-burn to be whipped out whenever they run out of slogans.

Do we have to continue like this?

-31-

Now, I had been staying in this house of the police sahib for over five months without any regular payment. I was given clothing and food and a few annas to spend, yet I did not feel happy, for I was afraid that this condition would always remain the same as long as I was willing to continue working. I was, however, a little afraid of asking permission to go away, for I felt sure that if I ran away the sahib would put me in jail and I might be accused of something. On the other hand, I was now growing up into a big boy and did not like slave service.

There were really two reasons that I wanted to go away. The first was that I wished to become independent and my own master. Second, I felt that there was great danger in this house. The police inspector had a daughter thirteen years old. I had now begun to speak some pidgin English, and I often told her fairy tales, and I played with all the children together, and we were always jolly and laughing and amusing ourselves. Now, the other servants in the house told me that I should not play so much with the inspectors's children, especially not with the daughter,

A new job at the Palace Cinema soda bar

because if the inspector should see us he would surely put me in jail. Hearing this, I became very much afraid and no longer had any pleasure in playing with the children. It did not occur to me to doubt the truth of what these people told me.

So one day I made myself very brave and spoke about leaving to the police sahib. I told him I did not like to go on working in this house because the work was too hard for me as I did not get any wages. "Master, I will only continue working here if you give me regular wages," I said. "Up to now I have worked well for you, but now I am a big boy, so I do not like to go on working without wages."

My master then said: "All right, John. If you do not want to work with me any longer, I have no objection to your going. You are perfectly free."

I had no idea where to go, but I said to myself, "God is always great: so it is better not to worry." I gave my salaams to all the family, and all the chil-

Environmental pollution is a major crisis of our times and almost everyone is aware of it. This crisis basically erupted from the continued pollution of air, water and soil, which are vital ingredients of nature, that support and nurture lives of all living organisms on the planet earth. As cardinal realities of nature, air, water and soil along with fire were once held sacred throughout the ancient world. With the advent of Industrial Revolution in the 18th and 19th centuries, this sacredness gradually vanished from mankind's cultural consciousness giving way to a rapid decline in the extent and quality of our environment.

Today's environmental crisis is directly linked to the post Renaissance man's desire for accumulating limitless wealth through senseless exploitation of natural resources. In its quest for unlimited wealth our growth oriented society produces unimaginable quantities of waste products on a daily basis. Along with the exploitation of natural resources, waste products ranging from deadly radioactive elements and chemical debris to city garbage are responsible for choking the breath of our environment in a big way. The idea of accumulating limitless wealth, often expressed, as a quantity of wealth that can feed seven generations, is not only weird but also extremely vulgar. In classical economy the extent of wealth is measured with the amount of natural resources, along with capital and labour, utilized to create that wealth. Now, how can anyone create unlimited wealth from our limited and ever depleting natural resources is anybody's guess. Something seems to be terribly wrong with our logic. Hence,

LOOKING BEYOND POLLUTION - 1

The Ego vs. Eco Dilemma of Environmental Activism



VIEWPOINT

MANDEEP LAMA

if we want to save our environment from the gruesome grip of human greed, some degree of sanity has to dawn upon our senses. A radical shift in our perspective is the need of our times. It would be better for today's man to shift the modern definition of wealth from material gains to the ancient wisdom of human enrichment. This shift in perspective would surely have a benign and lasting impact on our planet's ailing environment.

Although mankind became aware of the environmental pollution way back in the closing decades of the 19th century, there has been a general lack of cohesive understanding on how to approach and find a lasting solution to it. Since the very beginning of environmental activism two trends of ideological thinking have dominated the environmental debate. Instead of finding solutions, this debate has created deep confusions on the subject. Such confusions have effectively stalled formulation of a central ordinance that would tackle as well as govern issues pertaining to the planet's environment.

One trend of this thinking re-

volves around an idea that stresses the need for skilful management or 'stewardship' of nature and its resources. This has been called a human-centred or 'ego-centric' environmentalism. In opposition to such ego-centricism the other trend of thinking argues that since human knowledge, of nature in general and the planet earth in particular, is still very much rudimentary, it would be disastrous to try to manage nature with an incomplete set of knowledge. Votaries of such a view agree with the British economist E.F. Schumacher's terse remark, originally delivered in context to nuclear wastes, that "...greatest danger arises from ruthless application of partial knowledge on a vast scale." Consequently this other ideological thinking in environmentalism highlights the need for leaving nature alone for human encroachment emphasizing protection of her wilderness. This rationale has been termed as earth-centred or 'eco-centric' environmentalism.

Thus, the history of environmental activism has been swinging between 'ego-centric' and 'eco-centric' ideologies from the very beginning creating general uncertainty and chaos.

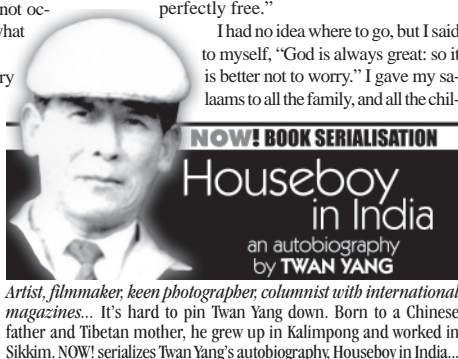
[The above essay is part of a series on environment]

dren were sorry that I was leaving. It was about eight o'clock in the morning when I left the house with very sad feelings. I took my possessions on my back and started out for the city, all the way on foot, to the cantonment where I had a friend, who worked at the Palace Cinema.

After I gave up my job with the Karachi police sahib because he refused to pay me regular wages, I walked all the way to the railway settlement with my bundles on my back. There I went to the house of my friend Mr. Charlie, a Roman Catholic Eurasian who was head barman at the Palace Cinema soda bar. His family gave me a friendly welcome, and Mr. Charlie himself said to me: "John, do not worry, I will try to find a place for you at the theatre where I am working."

When Mr. Charlie's master saw me, he recognized my face, and I, too, recognized him as the younger brother of my former Parsi master in Kiamari Island. I saw that he understood the way of his sister-in-law very well, for he accepted my story and said I might start working here in the lemon and soda bar for three rupees a month...

to be continued



Its Tourism Shining this season, but with pockets of darkness

ANAND OBEROI

GANGTOK, 16 April: The fear that elections may hamper the tourist trade this season seems to have somewhat diluted with the trickling in of tourists from the beginning of this month. Although the season peaks around mid May, with April considered the warm-up month, indications are that the tourists are arriving in full strength and will continue to do so.

Says D Tshering, a mainline taxi driver, "Tourists are definitely coming, and instead of going to Darjeeling they prefer to come to Sikkim as it is peaceful and nice here. I have myself ferried about 30 tourist families since March-end."

Be that as it may, it is difficult to get comparative figures. While some maintain the season has begun well, others crib that it is not as good as previous years.

"It is not possible to say if the tourist inflow into the state is booming or in the slumps, this statistic will be available only in mid-May and June because at the moment tourists are only beginning to come in," says Tourism Department officials.

Most of the tourists arriving at this time are the inveterate Bengali tourists along with some groups from Mumbai and Gujarat.

"There are a lot of foreigners who have also come in. They mostly travel to the districts and many are visiting Samdruptse to see the statue," informs Binod Mukhia of Blue Sky Tours & Travels.

Are we to infer that the Indian tourists are not interested in travel-



ling beyond Gangtok?

"They are, but see, Indian tourists may compromise on food but they require very good accommodation and good toilets unlike foreigners who can live anywhere," he says.

Offering good toilets and accommodation are many hotels in MG Marg which are not too happy these days. "We have been receiving tourists at a minimal level because of the 5pm to 8pm restriction on vehicles from entering town. This

has affected our business badly. The tourists basically arrive during the evenings and that is when vehicles are not allowed into town so groups prefer to check in elsewhere," complains S. Pradhan, a hotelier.

A spin off of this is that hotels around the private motor stand, Development Area and Baluwakhani are having more tourists check in this year.

"Yes, we are having good tourist presence. Few tourists want to walk through town after they arrive," states N. Agarwal, a lodge owner at Upper Arithang.

The water crisis in Darjeeling has also contributed to the increasing number of tourists who prefer to come to Sikkim instead. Most complain about having to pay for even a bucket of water.

"We stayed there [Darjeeling] for a day and immediately decided to come over to Sikkim even though it was not part of our itinerary earlier," says Kusum Singh, who has come with her entire family for a holiday.

With the people in the trade quite happy about the number of tourists who are coming in, one hopes the "feel good" factor lasts. Although the days immediately before and after the elections may see a slump, for now hopes are on that the summer season will not be a disappointment after all.

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ATTENTION

The East District Police has set-up a District Control Room at the District Police Headquarters, Sichey, Gangtok. The telephone numbers of the Control Room are: **284632, 284633**. The District Control Room will be operational round the clock with effect from 10 April, 2004.

SP [East]

FOUND A demand draft in the name of Nandini Thapa at Private Bus Stand. The Demand draft is for a LIC to be drawn at Dharamsala, Himachal Pradesh and issued by the SBS at Zero Point. Contact PIB [Press Information Bureau.]

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SDF promises to make Sikkim a producer State

SDF Manifesto Salient Assurances

POLITICAL & IDEOLOGICAL ISSUES

- Pursue demand for restoration of reserved seats for Sikkimese Nepalese
- Increase Assembly strength to 40 and Parliamentary representation to 2 in LS, 2 in RS.
- Tribal recognition for Gurung, Rai, Mangar, Sunuwar, Thami, Jogi, Dewan and Yakha communities.
- National level OBC status for Chhetri, Bahun, Newar and Sanayasi communities
- Protect local interests and rights during Delimitation
- Complete safeguard of Revenue Order No. 1
- Complete safeguard of dignity and political rights of Sikkimese Bhutia, Lepcha, Nepali and the businessmen and traders

DECENTRALISATION OF POWER

- Skill development of panchayats to ensure effective governance
- Rural development on the recommendation of local public and undertaken by panchayats.
- Skill development of panchayats to ensure effective governance

AGRICULTURE

- Hold agricultural fairs for wider exposure of farmers
- Assist and promote tea plantations
- Set up 4 more co-op banks
- One co-op society in each gram panchayat unit

INFRASTRUCTURE

- Alternative state and national highways
- Put Sikkim on the railway map
- Helicopter service to seven destinations within Sikkim
- Roads to every village
- More ropeways

PRO-POOR SCHEMES

- Establish Rural Contingency Fund
- LPG cylinder for every villager
- Toilet & bathroom in every household
- Human resource development centres at village level
- Contractual work in villages to villagers

EDUCATION

- Sikkim to have its own University and Board
- Colleges in all four districts, Sr. Sec. school in every constituency
- Regularise adhoc teachers
- Vocational courses in 40 schools to begin from next session

SPORTS & YOUTH

- Establish a holistic 'Khel Gaon'
- Stadium and gymnasium in all four districts
- Establish youth information and counselling centres
- Establish Skill and Career Development funds [Rs. 5 crore each]

OTHER ASSURANCES: □ Declare Barahi-Mizon-g festival of the Tamangs a government gazetted holiday □ Appoint state administrators on 1:1 ratio for the next fifty years □ 50% of the DA to be merged with the pay scale □ Die-in-harness grant for personnel to be hiked to Rs. 2 lakhs □ Pension benefit of Rs. 1,000 to labourers who sustain permanent disability during working hours.

a NOW REPORT

GANGTOK, 16 April: The Sikkim Democratic Front is leaving nothing to chance as it makes a bid to return to power for the third consecutive time - which would be a record for Sikkim which has not seen the same party return to power thrice. Not only has the party opted for eleven new faces in its list of candidates [an obvious attempt at providing change from within and to make the party more appealing to the youth], but also released a 92-page election manifesto which records the party's "mission and ambition" for the next term. The lessons learnt in the past two terms collaborate with the party's realisation of Sikkim's strengths to document what and how SDF will do for Sikkim should it return to power.

For long ridiculed as a State that survived on sops from the Centre, SDF, perhaps emboldened by its success with raising the internal revenue from Rs. 44 crores in 1994 to Rs. 300 crores today, has promised to transform Sikkim into a producer state. In the next term, it is targeting to generate an internal revenue of Rs. 600 crores.

The party is convinced that judi-

cious utilisation of the various studies conducted by experts on the State government's behest could give a new direction to the local economy in the very near future. Providing the people with the required know-how and facilities to move beyond many traditional practices in priority areas like tourism, horticulture, animal husbandry and agriculture could realise the dream of making every Sikkimese a lakhpati by 2015 and even a crorepati by 2050, the document states.

Identifying corruption as one of the reasons slowing down overall progress, the SDF manifesto, under the heading "Our Mission: Corruption Free Sikkim," records that corruption mainly stems from "weak governance manifesting itself in poor service delivery, excessive regulation, red-tapism and uncoordinated and centralised power." Identifying corruption as an "impulse against the poor," the party has promised to replace the traditional system of governance with an "effective, efficient, transparent and simple system," which prioritises accountability. "We shall totally mechanise the file disposal system and revamp the entire system of office management," the manifesto assures.

SDF's mission statement on ridding Sikkim of poverty reveals that it has carried out in-depth studies on the establishment of feasible industries in Sikkim. This information, the party wants to share with the people and encourage them to take up such ventures.

While on bigger infrastructural plans, the manifesto identifies increased power generation as a must not only to power industries, but also as a revenue earner for the State. A series of mini and micro hydel projects in the next term will generate some 3,000 MW of electricity in Sikkim, the manifesto claims.

In a bid to develop Sikkim as a "Tourism State," the government has already prepared a blueprint to develop one tourist spot in every village and will pursue its implementation in the next term. Training of the youth in "professional management" to cater to the needs of the tourism industry is also promised.

The manifesto also commits the party to promote Agriculture as an industry in Sikkim. Sikkim's recent recognition as an Agriculture Export Zone and the government's success in finding international markets for local produce, will now be comple-

mented by encouragement of cooperative farming at the grass-root level. The government will also be more actively involved in marketing management to help local producers secure competitive prices.

Early resumption of trade with China via Nathula is also promised. The manifesto states that the initial focus will be on strengthening the facets of border trade, the long-term idea is to move to transit trade regime. "Emphasis will be on integrating trade and service sector activities like tourism."

The manifesto commits the SDF to draw maximum benefit from this trade for Sikkim through "appropriate legislation from time to time."

While on the economy, a series of fiscal reforms have also been promised. The government's unproductive consumption expenditure is slated for a compression along with attempts at containing the debt/GSDP ratio. The taxation system is headed for computerisation along with stronger tax administration and adoption of integrated VAT regime. Budget-based subsidies will be slashed and balanced by raising user charges of departmental services and cutting administrative and establishment costs.

Darjeeling Ready to Get Set and Poll; More than 50% polling stations "highly sensitive"

BIRENDRA S.

DARJEELING, 15 April: The mandatory rule that 50 per cent of polling and presiding officers be brought from other districts has been relaxed for Darjeeling on the request made to the Election Commissioner by the Chief Electoral Officer of the district. However segments of this constituency lying in the plains will be following the mandatory rule.

"We had been sending repeated requests to the Election Commission that people from the plains would have difficulty in the hills owing to the language [Nepali] and the topography. The Election Commissioner has finally agreed," informed Dr. Aazir Aftab, the Darjeeling DM.

He, however, assured that there would be a 100 per cent transfer of electoral personnel within the three hill subdivisions of Darjeeling, Kurseong and Kalimpong.

The DM was not exaggerating when he informed the ECI that polling officers from the plains would

have difficulty in Darjeeling. This parliamentary constituency after all boasts the second-highest polling station of the country, Shreekhola at an altitude of 12,000 ft with an electoral strength of 693 voters. The remotest polling station is Todaye-Tangta which can be reached from Kalimpong after a drive of 145 kms and 1 km on foot.

Dr. Aftab also assured that the election machinery was in perfect condition. The special observer for the State, Afzal Amanullah will be visiting Darjeeling tomorrow, while the General Observers Thomas Prabhakar and Mrs. D. Sabita along with the Expenditure Observer Viswas Ratan will be available in the district from 20 April.

Meanwhile Security in the bordering areas have been beefed up with the recent Maoist attack on the border town of Pashupati Nagar in Nepal. Out of the 1,137 polling stations in the constituency, 591 have been declared as 'most sensitive' and 176 as 'partially sensitive'. Of the 591 most sensitive polling sta-

tions, 341 are in the Hills.

Five companies of paramilitary forces will be deployed to man these booths along with the armed unit of the State police. An addition of 3,000 Home Guards will also be deployed and some Home Guards will also be brought in from neighbouring Bihar to be deployed in Hindi-speaking areas.

"To maintain law and order as a pre-poll measure we have already begun a crackdown with 343 warrants having been served, 327 prosecutions. Also 8 pipeguns, ten 3.3 cartridges along with 5 bombs have been seized," revealed Mishra.

The Darjeeling Parliamentary Constituency consists of 7 segments namely Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Kurseong, Siliguri, Phansidewa, Islampur and Chopra with 1,47,370 electors in Kalimpong; 1,69,612 electors in Darjeeling; 1,64,403 in Kurseong; 2,59,192 in Siliguri; 2,15,943 electors in Phansidewa; 1,51,838 in Islampur and 1,36,703 voters in Chopra.



KAILASH-MANSAROVAR

Pujya Morari Bapu is reading the Ram Katha at Rakshastal from 5th to 13th June, 2004. For details on attending this historic recitation, contact:

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Will Sikkim pick the PAN on Nathula?

a NOW REPORT

GANGTOK, 16 April: Sikkim traders will probably have to wait until after the elections for a verdict on their eligibility to engage in border trade with China on the reopening of the Nathula Pass. Border trade with China is to be resumed from July this year "...and possibly as soon as June itself," as Director, Industries, informs.

The issue in contention is the issuance of PAN [Permanent Account Number] which is not applicable to Sikkim residents as it comes under the purview of the Central Direct Taxes. The IT Act of 1961 is exempt in Sikkim as provided under Article 371F of the In-

dian Constitution.

As informed by the Special Secretary of the IT&ST Department, KN Bhutia, "At present, the central government has ensured status quo on this sensitive issue of PAN. The ground situation remains what it has been for the last few years."

According to him a committee is slated to be formed shortly to look into the matter.

"This committee will comprise of both central and state government officials under the chairmanship of the Central Board of Direct Taxes. So whatever decision is to be taken on the matter of PAN will be decided by this committee," he revealed.

The issuance of PAN has become a political issue and with the

heat of the upcoming elections has become too sensitive for government officials to come near it. Department officials remain tight-lipped not wanting to reveal anything that might spark a controversy. It has also become burdened with emotional and sentimental shades as it concerns a perceived dilution of Article 371F.

According to KB Chettri, Secretary, Industries, those interested to conduct trade will be issued travel passes which will allow them passage to the designated point of trade on the Indian side which is tentatively being signalled as Tsomgo. The trading point on the other side is to be Renqinggang.

According to the "Memoran-

dum on the Resumption of Border Trade between China and India," check points are to be set up on both sides of the border for the "monitoring and management, entry and exit" of goods and commodities through the Nathula Pass.

As mentioned by the Director, Industries, it should be noted here that border trade, which the memorandum refers to, is distinct from international trade. The former is limited to items for local consumption such as handicrafts, agricultural implements and food articles such as butter, ghee etc. As such the agreement signed by the two countries permits trade in 29 items. Full blown trade of the character of international exchanges "might take

some time".

The SDF manifesto admits to as much as it records that trade over Nathula will be operational soon. "though initially we shall strengthen the facets of border trade, the long-term idea would be to move to transit trade regime."

The ground modalities concerning the trade along with allied details are yet to be chalked out. The Industries Secretary also revealed that prior to the commencement of the trade, a sensitisation programme will be launched for the people of Sikkim. And as for PAN it remains to be seen whether the central government is willing to open up a Pandora's box or play safe by substituting it with an alternative.

Czech citizen found dead in Darj hotel room

a NOW REPORT

DARJEELING, 15 April: Forty three year old Martin Horn Sedloclova, of the Czech Republic who had been trekking in Sandakphu died in his room at the Shanti Hotel in Gorkhey near Sandakphu yesterday.

His companion Silvie Topinova has filed a complaint in the Lodhama Police Station. According to sources, she had stated that Martin was suffering from fits of cough and breathing problems on the fatal morning. He had also had similar bouts on the way up to Sandakphu.

Martin's dead body was brought to Darjeeling today.

FORTNIGHT NOT ENOUGH FOR EFFECTIVE CAMPAIGNING, PDF COMPLAINS AGAINST HC STIPULATION

KARAN SHAH

KALIMPONG, 16 April: Full scale campaigning in Darjeeling district will only begin after the Higher Secondary exams are over, that is from 26 April onwards, leaving political parties less than a fortnight to effectively campaign for elections scheduled for 10 May. This stipulation laid down by the Kolkata High Court was the cause of complaint brought to the EC's notice by Col. DK Pradhan, convenor, PDF.

Their contention is that Darjeeling constituency being a very large area constituting the three sub divisional towns of Kalimpong, Darjeeling Kurseong and also the Dooars, the short span of time till

10 May when elections are due might not be enough to carry out an effective campaign.

As Col. DK Pradhan related "The delay in campaigning has certainly hampered our plans, besides there are areas under the Darjeeling constituency the covering of which requires a lot of effort."

He gave the example of the route from Toodey to Tangta under Kalimpong sub-division which can only be covered by horse.

"Then Lower Saddam takes almost two days to reach," he added. He is of the opinion that the government both at the Centre and State should not take the general elections lightly as they are the biggest exercise in democracy. Inci-

dentally, the PDF is supporting the Congress candidate Dawa Norbula in the Darjeeling constituency.

To further his argument, the convenor of PDF adds that Kalimpong has a voting population of nearly 12 lakhs, which is a big enough number to make a difference. He also opined that the EC stipulation concerning campaigning only after 26 April could be a Leftist ploy to maintain their supremacy in the state of West Bengal. The PDF has also made a petition to the SDO and the DM but to no avail.

It would certainly take more than mere petitioning to make the EC or the HC change its mind on this one as Kalimpong is mainly known as a student town with its many schools.



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98320 42096
98320 80838

If the land-lines let you down, NOW! can also be reached at

AGSU to strike roots in Kalimpong

a NOW REPORT

KALIMPONG, 16 April: The All Gorkha Students Union [AGSU], a non political organisation for students of the Hills is now trying to strengthen its roots in the hill town of Kalimpong. It has scheduled a meeting for 01 May at its Kalimpong branch office. Its central committee members from Darjeeling are also to be present for the meeting.

The aim of the meeting as per Roshan Giri, president, Central Committee, AGSU, is to muster as much support of the masses as possible. He also said that drug abuse

and alcoholism were a major social issue they would have to tackle.

The objective of AGSU as related by its newly elected Kalimpong branch president, Ajay Dahal, is to delink politics from the life of students.

"Politics has taken up too much space in the lives of our hill students and has to be checked. We are also for the development of social unity among communities," he says.

Though AGSU has a big support base in the town of Darjeeling, Kalimpong has not witnessed much AGSU activity, hence the effort at building up a support base here.

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FIGHTING FIRE IS NOT EASY IN SIKKIM

RANJIT SINGH

April 14, 1944. The Second World War is into its fifth year and India has joined the war courtesy the United Kingdom. The Bombay docks, a major site for the off-loading of ammunition-laden ships, is ripped apart by a massive explosion on one of the ships. The ship caught fire due to the carelessness of its mates and the fire naturally proceeded to its bowels where the ammunition stock was kept. The tremendous blast could be felt for miles around with windowpanes of houses well within the city shattered. The explosion left many dead.

The fire that raged subsequently took the combined efforts of 200-300 fire personnel to quash. And ever since, 14-20 April is observed all over India as Fire Safety Week.

In Sikkim the observance of the week commenced with its merger with the Indian Union in 1975.

IGP [Fire Services], Janga Basnett of the 1978 IPS batch, says "We want to do something different this year to make the general public more conscious of the needs to take precautionary measures against the possibility of fire outbreaks. On 14 April we took out a rally with a demonstration on how a fire serviceman extinguishes a fire. Besides, we are also selling stickers to the people along with car stickers."

The money raised, called the benevolent fund, is to be used for the benefit of fire personnel and also in case of emergencies.

"Prior to the merger Sikkim had no separate fire department. The responsibility of extinguishing fires was with the police," informs the IGP. Then, in 1976 with the selection of fire personnel from the members of the Home Guards, Sikkim got its own Fire Services under Raj Bahadur.

"Today, the state has eight fire stations, one each in the four districts and one each at Rangpo, Singtam, Jorethang and Ravangla," Mr. Basnett reveals. He also adds that plans are on for the construction of two more fire stations "one at Pakyong, where an airport is scheduled to be constructed and another at Melli," he informs.

He says that it is important for each fire station to have at least two fire tenders. This will be possible with the Rs. 1 crore sanctioned by the central government. He reveals



Sikkim firemen display their fire-fighting skills at an exhibition held at MG Marg as part of the Fire Safety Week observation on 14 April.

the modernisation of the fire services is in the offing as part of a central government scheme.

The windfall should also come as a great relief for the fire department which as Mr. Basnett says is "poorly equipped."

"If a major disaster occurs today, we will not be able to handle it. You see, we are also responsible for disaster management besides dousing flames," adds Mr. Basnett.

He says that the department is in need of "rescue equipment, concrete cutters, sensors and other such stuff required to cope with building collapses and other emergencies." He says that hi-tech equipment is available in the market today like "portable pumps which are handy in extinguishing forest fires. Our fire extinguishers are of inferior quality to handle the challenge of forest fires," he says.

For proper functioning, a fire station needed are a good supply of water, mobility and communication. "Gangtok has ample water sources but they are not tapped properly; also the water tanks and hydrants are not properly maintained," he admits.

On the frequency of fire outbreaks in Sikkim he says: "A fire report is filed every month during which we receive 14-15 fire calls. Forest fires occur more during the

winter months." This he reveals is due to the practice of Jhum cultivation indulged in by the villagers. Forest fires also occur at other times and this he attributes to the carelessness of the villagers.

"As for Gangtok, the Nam-Nang area is fire prone. There is a fire there every year."

He recalls a major fire in the month of February which completely gutted the photo studio Panorama at Naya Bazaar.

"Then, a month ago there was one at Syari Gumpa and recently a fire broke out at the PWD in March," he says.

He stresses here that his department faces many problems while dousing flames in the central business district of the capital town.

"If a fire occurs somewhere around Star Cinema it will take about half an hour to just get through MG Marg. This is because of the way the vehicles are parked there. I wish the police would do something about it," he appeals.

So there you have it, the Fire Department will be going in for a Rs. 1 crore upgradation, but until that happens, be careful where you throw that cigarette stub, the fire fighters might not be prepared for the kind of conflagration it sparks off.

LOST

Passport No. H-188449
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Place of issue: Calcutta
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Anthyesti Kriya

Late Narendra Khatiwada, 37, Headmaster, Ramitey Primary School passed away on 13 April 2004. The Anthyesti Kriya falls on 25 April, 2004. All relatives and well-wishers are requested to attend the Anthyesti Kriya.

Budbilal Khatiwada [Father], Pabitra Khatiwada [Mother], Durga Khatiwada [Wife], Abinash Khatiwada [Son]
Lower Onglep, P.O. Sakyong, Gyalshing, West Sikkim.
pb: 03595 250127, 250137

Kutse Shegu

The 49th Day "Shegu" of late Dhondup Tshering Bhutia who expired on 4th March 2004 falls on 21st April 2004. All relatives, friends and well-wishers are requested to join us in offering prayers for the departed soul at Tshoka Tshum, Nam Nang, Gangtok. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank all those who extended their help in our hour of bereavement.

Pempha Bhutia (wife), Namgyal Dorjee Bhutia, son, Nedup Doma Bhutia, Daughter, Passang Bhutia, Brother, Chung Chung Bhutia Sister-in-law, Lhakpa Bhutia, Brother, Tsbewang Bhutia, Brother. Ph. 98320-71692, 227970 Enchey Compound, Tibet Raod.

Kutse Shegu

The 49th Day Shegu of Late Dorjee Wangdi Bhutia, VLW (Rumtek) falls on 18th April 2004. Dorjee Wangdi left for heavenly abode on 1st March 2004. The family would also like to take this opportunity to thank all those who stood by us during our time bereavement. All relatives, friends and well-wishers are requested to kindly join the family for offering of prayers to the departed soul at their residence at Rumtek, East Sikkim.

Gapo Lama (father), Chewang Lhamu (wife), Puchung Bhutia, Nim Dorjee, Omzey Karma Chezung, Chumbu Bhutia (brothers), Ongchen Bhutia, Chungti Bhutia (sisters), Adu Lepcha (brother in law).
Phone numbers: 252288(Rumtek), 226705(Kazi Road), 229773(Arithang).

Kutse Shegu

The 49th day Kutse Shegu of the late Jiwan Kumar Lama who left for his heavenly abode on 01 March falls on 18 April.

All friends, well-wishers and relatives are requested to join us in offering prayers for the departed soul at our residence at Soreng Bazaar [West Sikkim].

We also take this opportunity to thank all those who stood by us during the time of bereavement and regret our inability to do so individually.

Pavitra Mala Yonzon (Mother), Mumma & Champa (Wife), Asis Lama (Son), Rosni & Prabina (Daughters), Binod Yonzon (Brother), Bijoy Yonzon (Brother), Sabnam & Ranjana (Sister-in-law), Chandra Kn. Lama (Sister).
Phone: 284349(R), 9832034713 (M)

WEEKEND LARGE CARDAMOM MARKET PRICE COLLECTED BY THE SPICES BOARD, GOVT.OF INDIA,GANGTOK FOR THE WEEK ENDED ON 15.04.2004

Large cardamom price prevailed	Gangtok	Singtam	Mangan	Jorethang	Geyzing	Siliguri
Rs.per kilogram	104.37	105.62	101.87	98.75	93.75	113.40
Rs. Per mound (Per 40 kilograms)	4,174.80	4,224.80	4,074.80	3,950.00	3,750	4,536.00

Environmental Education Workshop in Namchi

PURAN TAMANG

NAMCHI, 16 April: A workshop on the implementation of environmental education was held here today, 16 April at the Library Hall of the Senior Secondary School, Namchi. The chief guest of the occasion was AB Gurung, Jt. Dir. Education, South. The resource persons for the programme were Satyadip Chettri, lecturer at the Tadong Govt. College and GB Niraula, Jt. Dir. TTI, Gangtok. The programme was assisted by BC Rai, chief tutor, Namchi, TTI.

The aim of the programme was to strengthen the system of environmental education in the schools through various activities.

The programme began with the welcome speech delivered by the AD Education, Ravangla sub division.

The workshop is a part of a larger initiative called GLOBE which means Global Learning and Observation to Benefit the Environment. Twenty four schools have been selected from the south district under this programme. The schools partaking in this programme are called project schools

under GLOBE. They will have five teachers who are trained in the teaching of environmental science.

Among the environmental related activities that these schools are to perform are the measuring of the altitude, longitude and latitude of their respective schools for which they will be provided with related equipment. They are also to collect natural data and pass it on to GLOBE headquarters in the USA.

The programme was attended by all the school heads, local guardians, NGO workers, departmental officers and media persons.

Tree Falls on Cutter

KALUK: According to reports, one Hangsha Kumar Subba of Hee Gaon was killed when the tree he was cutting fell on him. From the reports of a local resident, Bom Bahadur Subba, on 14 April at about 6:30 AM Hangsha had gone to the Kamidra cardamom fields below Hee Gaon. He was cutting an Ootish tree when the tree suddenly split and fell on him. Hansha died on the spot. His body was forwarded to the district hospital at Geyzing for autopsy.

LETTERS

MY PHONE'S DEAD

Dear Mr. MK Seth,
GM BSNL

My telephone - 225559 & 228535 has been dead for the past couple of months. After so many visits to the Telephone Exchange people have started to think that I work at the telephone exchange but there has been no resumption of my phone services.

Through this column in NOW! I would like to request all the officers and staff of BSNL to attend the Arthyesh Kriya / Shegu of my dead phone and pray for its departed soul.

Moina

NO SDF YOUTH FROM ARITHANG HAS JOINED CONGRESS

This is to inform you that in your previous paper dated 13 April, there was written that members of Arithang youth have joined the Sikkim Congress Party. In fact this sort of news was not true or it was a kind of fake news which will hamper to us and our reputation.

And this type of wrong or illegal news will also hamper to your paper and create a bad reputation.

Therefore, I and all members of Arithang youth would like to request you that kindly take a necessary action and flash out the correct news in your coming edition. We shall remain grateful towards you.

Khedup Bhutia & Nim Tshering Sherpa

HE CLAIMS TO BE BJP..

Contd from pg 1

the BJP District Committee led by Kishore Chandra Rai and its portfolio holders was a mere farce and did not have any credentials. However, putting matters to rest, Tathagata Roy, the BJP State President issued a letter that the District BJP Committee led by Kishore was the only recognized committee by the State leadership.

Kishore Chandra Rai, President of the Darjeeling District BJP Committee [Hills] admitted that there was a confusion and he had got in touch with the State committee.

BL Mundra, BJP Observer was to arrive shortly to sort out matters. He however abstained from commenting on who was behind the banner confusion but hinted at Sanjay Thakuri, who

claimed to be the other candidate. Amalendu Chakroborty, State Secretary [Organisations] from Kolkata said that this matter had not been brought to his notice and based on future complaints actions would be taken.

"How can anyone pose as the BJP candidate? Dr. Yonzon is the BJP candidate and the party is behind him," added Chakroborty. However Balaram Chettri, General Secretary of the District BJP Committee [Hills], who was present along with Thakuri said, "If the Central and State Committee do not go along with Thakuri, we will field him as an Independent Candidate."

Meanwhile, Tika Pradhan, an independent candidate backed by Socialist Unity Centre of India [SUCI] filed his nomination in Darjeeling today.

VOTE FOR A PARTY THAT DOES NOT CHANGE COLOURS, URGES CHAMLING

Contd from pg 1

ments of the last two terms, he also took the opportunity to spell out the major future programmes the party had envisioned for the *Sikkimiley janata*. Significantly, besides the party's manifesto, the SDF has also prepared Constituency-level manifestos, which contain constituency-centric targets and programmes for the next five years. The SDF manifesto for Soreng was released by the party president here today

Appealing to the people to exercise their franchise, Mr. Chamling stressed that every vote mattered.

"This election is very important for the State as we will be electing the first government of the 21st century and stand at the threshold of becoming the most developed State in the nation. So, vote sensibly and intelligently," he said.

Asserting that the SDF party had remained true to its ideology and principles through the past decade unlike other political parties and politicians of the State, Mr. Chamling said in an obvious snide at the Opposition Congress party and its president, Nar Bahadur Bhandari. "I have not changed in the last 12 years, neither has the SDF party. And we will

remain like this even after 24 years and even after that," he said, while wondering aloud whether parties and leaders who adopted new identities so often should be handed over the future of the State.

In a direct jab at Mr. Bhandari's attempt to make a political comeback under the Congress banner, Mr. Chamling said: "The SDF is not like the other parties in the State. We have not taken shelter under so-called national parties. Neither are we a party of have-beens or tainted and desperate *netas* trying to make a come back. If you think that my Government has fulfilled your aspirations, made some difference in your lives, given Sikkim something to be proud of, then vote for the SDF. If you think we have failed you, vote us out."

"Netas like Mr. Bhandari are completely devoid of any ideology or vision. During his tenure, Sikkim was infamous for scams and rackets. Now, he accuses of me of cor-

FACE of the WEEK



Gita Mukhia works for Sikkim Motors.
Hobbies: listening to music, reading books and making friends.
Future Plans: To star in music videos and films

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ruption! Today, we have reached a stage where there are no more political issues to rake up. So, Mr. Bhandari is taking recourse to communal issues. He accuses my Gov-



Chamling at Soreng on 16 April

ernment of fuelling communal passions, while he keeps fanning them himself. If my Government has been unfair to any community, then, do not vote for the SDF," he said.

"In the last nine and a half years we have proved that we have the vision and the ability to dream big and translate them into reality. I appeal to you all to all join hands to continue with this path of development and progress," he told the

people.

Earlier, area MLA and Minister for Education and Law, Ram Bahadur Subba, in his welcome address, thanked the SDF high-command and the people of Soreng for their faith by giving him the ticket once again. Spelling out the various programmes of the SDF for the constituency, Mr. Subba promised the people that the construction work on the Science College would begin shortly after SDF returned to power. He also said that one big industrial unit would be set up in the constituency, and all remaining developmental work would continue in the earnest.

Area MLA, Chakung, and Minister for Animal Husbandry and Industries, PS Goley, along with Ran Bahadur Subba, MLA, Daramdin and minister, PWD, on their part, said that the SDF had fulfilled all its promises and proved true to its word and action. Criticizing the Congress for fuelling communal passions in the State and in the district in particular, Mr. Goley appealed to the people to stay away from communal politics and participate in the poll process in a peaceful and secular manner.

The public meeting also provided a formal introduction of SDF's Lok Sabha candidate, Nakul Rai, who also addressed the gathering.

today in History

17th April

- 1492:** Christopher Columbus signs contract with Spain to find the Indies
- 1521:** Martin Luther is excommunicated from the Roman Catholic Church
- 1524:** NY Harbor discovered by Giovanni Verrazano
- 1758:** Francis Williams, 1st US black college graduate, publishes poems
- 1790:** Benjamin Franklin dies at the age of 84.
- 1865:** Mary Surratt is arrested as a conspirator in Lincoln's assassination
- 1875:** "Snooker" (variation of pool) invented by Sir Neville Chamberlain
- 1924:** Metro Pictures, Goldwyn Pictures and the Louis B. Mayer Company merge to form Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, or MGM.
- 1960:** Eddie Cochran rocker, dies in an auto accident
- 1961:** 1,400 Cuban exiles land in Bay of Pigs attempt to overthrow Castro
- 1983:** India enters space age launching SLV-3 rocket



BUSH MAKES THREE MISTAKES WHILE TRYING TO CITE ONE

WASHINGTON: While struggling unsuccessfully this week to think of a single mistake he has made since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, US President Bush committed three factual errors about weapons finds in Libya, the White House said on Wednesday.

Bush, long known for his grammatical conundrums and confusing phraseology, told reporters twice during Tuesday's prime-time news conference that 50 tons of mustard gas were discovered at a turkey farm in Libya.

On the second occasion, he was responding to a reporter who asked

him to identify the biggest mistake he had made since the 2001 attacks on New York and Washington that killed nearly 3,000 people and prompted the invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan.

He could not. But as he searched for an answer, the Republican president reaffirmed his decision to invade Iraq and said weapons of mass destruction may still lie hidden there.

"They could still be there. They could be hidden, like the 50 tons of mustard gas in a turkey farm," said Bush, referring to Libya's voluntary

disclosure of weapons in March.

The next day, the White House said the accurate figure for the Libyan mustard gas was 23.6 metric tons, or 26 short tons, not 50 tons.

Moreover, the substance was found at different locations across Libya, not at a turkey farm. And observers did not find mustard gas on the farm at all, but rather unfilled chemical munitions, the White House acknowledged.

"The president misspoke and we just want to correct the record," explained White House spokesman Scott McClellan.

KIDMAN'S THE RICHEST AUSSIE STAR



According to the *Business Review Weekly*, Nicole Kidman is Australia's richest entertainer. In an annual survey of the top 50 celebrities, the magazine estimated that the Oscar-winner earned a whopping US\$18.6mil last year. For 2002, Kidman's income was reportedly US\$8.63mil.

Among the top-earning Aussies are rockers John Farnham and AC/DC, children's entertainers The Wiggles and Master & Commander director, Peter Weir.

ACTOR'S HIV INFECTION STRIKES CALIF. PORN INDUSTRY

LOS ANGELES: California's multi-billion-dollar adult porn industry ground to a virtual halt on Thursday after a popular actor tested positive for the virus that causes AIDS.

Industry advocates immediately called for a 60-day moratorium on filming so that others could be tested.

The actor tested positive for HIV on Wednesday in screening conducted

routinely on the industry's 1,200 regular actors by the Adult Industry Medical Healthcare [AIM] Foundation.

The Los Angeles-based industry, which normally films three to four films a day, must now wait 60 days to learn whether the deadly virus spread to 14 actresses who had onscreen sex with James, or to the 35 sex partners the women subsequently had.

THE FUTURE, NOW!

ARIES: You will find favourable changes in life. You may go on a long trip. You may suffer a setback in health. You will have a booming business. A new agency business may come up. You may face hostility. Uncommon expenditure is likely.

TAURUS: You will be very active. You may get an opportunity overseas. You will enjoy good health. Understanding with your life partner will be good. Position and prosperity are indicated.

GEMINI: You may take a new, major decision in family matters. Financial crisis is likely. Litigation will be postponed. Expenses due to children are indicated. Understanding with your spouse and business partner will be very good. Financial position will be good.

CANCER: Financial crisis will be brought under control. Traders will see an improvement. Understanding with your spouse and business partner will be very good. Those appearing for competitive examinations will see easy success. You will find favourable changes at home. Life will be very good.

LEO: Success is assured in all you take up. Litigation will be postponed. Export businesses will be very good. Cash flow will be very good. Expenses will be reduced. Tensions will be relieved. Hostile activities will continue throughout. You will enjoy a change in surroundings.

VIRGO: You may get a good opportunity to showcase your talents. You will do well

in competition. Students who concentrate will do well. Financial position will be very good. You may initiate new ventures. You will enjoy good health.

LIBRA: You may commence new business activities. Business will be brisk. You may purchase immovable property. Expansion in business is assured. You may receive a promotion.

SCORPIO: You will find an improvement in your status. You may get job opportunities abroad. An auspicious function is indicated at home. You may acquire immovable property or a vehicle.

SAGITTARIUS: You may take up additional business. Support from your superiors and subordinates will be good. You must keep your own counsel in order to avoid quarrels. You may incur medical expenses.

CAPRICORN: You may have a minor health problem. Understanding with your spouse and business partner will be very good. Traders will make a good profit. Happiness will prevail. Expenses will be reduced.

AQUARIUS: Peace and prosperity will be maintained. You will be invited to a party. Support from friends and family is indicated. Artists and musicians will see great improvement.

PISCES: This will be a good, easy period for you. The teaching profession will pay you well. Attentive students will do well. Meditation will give you peace of mind. Cash flow will be very good. Happiness will prevail.

ODDLY ENOUGH

A BANK, A BOMB THREAT AND AN OLD LADY

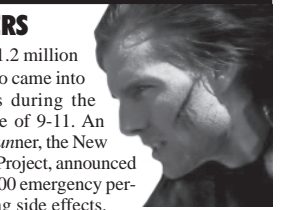
BERLIN: German police are searching for a little old lady whose only success in an attempted bank robbery was a clean get-away.

Berlin police said a woman, who appeared to be in her 70s, shuffled nervously into a Berlin bank on Wednesday morning and told tellers that crooks had foisted a bomb on her and threatened to blow her up if she didn't rob the bank.

Banking staff refused to meet her demands and took the bag from her, before evacuating the bank. By the time police arrived the white-haired woman had scarpereed without a trace and the bomb turned out to be a fake

CRUISE AIDS 9-11 WORKERS

Tom cruise has helped collect US\$1.2 million to treat ailing rescue workers who came into contact with hazardous pollutants during the cleanup at Ground Zero in the wake of 9-11. An organization cofounded by the *Top Gunner*, the New York Rescue Workers Detoxification Project, announced that the money has aided more than 200 emergency personnel in recovering from debilitating side effects.



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HAMLET FAILS TO SELL

NEW YORK: A rare copy of Shakespeare's Hamlet failed to sell because no one was willing to pay the minimum price set by the seller's estate. Christie's had estimated the 1611 edition of the classic tragedy - the last such copy in private hands - would fetch \$1.5 million to \$2 million, but the highest bid was only \$1.2 million.

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