







# Young brigade takes Ri Bhoi by storm

## Honours even for Congress, NPP while PDF triumphs in Umsning



(Left) M ayralbom Syiem during his victory lap in Nongpoh on Saturday. (Centre) Congress's George B. Lyngdoh defeated heavy weight Ngaiklang Dhar of the NPP to win Umsning seat. (Right) Jason S M aw long makes his way out of the counting hall after he was announced winner. (ST)

From Sawar Bora

**NONGPOH:** It was all about transformation with a young brigade taking over Ri Bhoi by storm as Congress and NPP shared honours while PDF took the "cake".

While M ayralbom Syiem and George B. Lyngdoh of Congress won Nongpoh and Umsning respectively, Sothenes Sohtun, and the youngest of the lot, Dasakhiat Lam are of NPP triumphed in Jirang and M awhati respectively.

But the "giant-killing act" came from PDF's Jason S. M aw long who fought neck and neck from most part of the day to eventually defeat Congress' Celestine

Lyngdoh.

Entered by none other than former chief minister D D Lapang, M ayralbom's victory was the most convincing as he bagged 11,119 votes to defeat UDP's Ronak Hymdeit who secured 7,795 votes.

The other margins were relatively slender. Jason won by just 70 votes to take Umsning, Dasakhiat defeated Julius Dophang (Independent) by 204 votes for M awhati, Sothenes defeated Congress' Winess Day Sanclley by 220 votes to clinch Jirang while George defeated NPP's Ngaiklang Dhar by 1018 votes for Umsning.

The cheers, which came periodically at the end of

each round, grew shriller by 3pm when the results of four constituencies were declared. By 4pm, all the results were out as the winners, in their traditional headgear, walked out one by one to be in the midst of their supporters who waited patiently since counting began here at 8 am.

Earlier in the day, the entire stretch from Pahanrioh through Umsning and Nongpoh was chock-a-block with all kinds of vehicles and several thousands of people who took every vantage point available on the ground and atop restaurants and residences for the "final countdown". The ambience was carnival-like from morning till late afternoon.

The music, slogans and victory cries flowed from all corners as vehicles with flags forking out from their windows moving to and fro on the "crammed" highway.

Security men comprising CISF, CRPF and Meghalaya police along with traffic personnel had to be at their best to manage moving vehicles and an army of enthusiastic supporters.

The State Sports Council building, where the counting of votes took place from 8am to about 4pm, was the cynosure of all eyes, for a change. The green structure, heavily guarded for obvious reasons, has been neglected much too often in the past.

The Nongpoh outcome was in a way a fitting tribute to Lapang by an electorate who was so used to the "Father of Ri Bhoi" for four decades now.

Lapang had held M ayralbom in high regard after casting his vote here on Tuesday and how right he was. "He will win as he is capable, talented and educated," the veteran had told The Shillong Times.

An elated Sohtun, paid a whirlwind visit to his Byrnihat house after the triumph before moving to the party headquarters in Shillong in the evening. "I thank the people for entrusting their faith in me. I have no words to express my happiness today," he told this correspondent.

Jason, who too was in cloud nine as he raised his thumb fist after the win acknowledged his supporters, some of whom even hugged and kissed him. Earlier, M ayralbom, George and Dasakhiat too were greeted by similar emotions.

As evening approached, the winners were seen waving at their supporters, from the road and atop vehicles. For the former MLAs, be it Ngaiklang, Celestine, Lam-boklang M yllien gap (Jirang) and Julius, who had scripted history of sorts to contest the polls from prison but lost only marginally, it was an evening to reflect and analyse as to what went wrong.

## Winners thank voters, losers welcome mandate

By Our Reporter

SHILLONG: After the verdict it was time to thank supporters or welcome their mandate for a change.

Amparen Lyngdoh, who retained her East Shillong seat for the third consecutive time, said after the results were declared on Saturday that she would not let the people of the constituency down.

"I am going to fight tooth and nail to see that every resident in my constituency gets a better place in the next five years," she told reporters.

Lyngdoh did not miss the opportunity to lambast BJP for stoking hatred.

"BJP came here and taught us hatred but we are above them and we should teach them love," she said, adding that it was sad that certain pockets in the city got carried away and "BJP brought in the communal factor".

The Congress leader feared that there would be horse-trading in the state following the fractured mandate.

Former Congress leader from Pynursla Prestone Tynsong, who won the election as an NPP candidate, said the picture as far as the formation of the government would be clearer by Sunday.

Asked if he is considering himself as the chief ministerial candidate, he refused to comment on the matter while adding that the matter has to be discussed among the elected MLAs.

When asked about majority of sitting MLAs who joined NPP and lost, Tynsong said you cannot do anything when there is no mandate for them.

BJP MLA from Pynthorum Khrah constituency AL

Hek said NPP and BJP will form the new government in Meghalaya. "Where the chief minister will be from the big brother and the deputy chief minister will be from the smaller brother".

The biggest surprise came when Congress MLA and Home Minister HDR Lyngdoh lost from Sohiong constituency.

"I respect the mandate of the people and people are the best judge," he said while admitting that it was an unexpected verdict.

He said he was representing the people for as many as 30 years and probably people wanted a change in the constituency.

KHNA candidate Adelbert Nongrum who won the polls for the first time after defeating JA Lyngdoh of BJP in North Shillong said the boundary dispute with Assam will be his priority. But he refused to comment on which party he would support.

Independent MLA Lam-bor M alngiang, who defeated Amdent Basaiwmit from Nongkren constituency, said it was a team work. M alngiang and other MLAs will urge the Election Commission to revert back to the old system of ballot voting, the winners said.

David Nongrum said he was an independent candidate and he joined the Congress to make sure that the Congress comes back to power in Meghalaya because of its secular nature.

His father, Charles Pyn-grope, who is making a re-entry into the state politics after winning from Nongthymmai, said if the party requires, he would give his inputs for the strategy to form the new government.

# NPP victory due to people's support and anti-incumbency of Congress: Agatha

From Our Correspondent

**TURA:** Brimming with confidence over her victory in South Tura, Agatha Sangma has said that the mandate given for the NPP in Garo Hills was thanks to the support of the people and the hard work of her brother NPP president Conrad K Sangma while the anti-incumbency factor of the ruling Congress helped her party to consolidate further in the state.

"This victory has come about thanks to the team work of the party and its candidates, the hard work of Conrad Sangma and people's love for our late leader and my father P A Sangma," said Agatha while speaking to The Shillong Times outside her home in Walbakre locality of Tura town.

Jubilant supporters in their hundreds marched alongside their victorious



NPP candidate Agatha Sangma celebrates with her supporters after winning the South Tura seat. (ST)

candidate from the counting hall at SM ELC building in Dakopgre to late P A Sangma's house, a distance of approximately 1 km, and

the roads were chock-a-block with dozens of vehicles carrying NPP supporters who waved the yellow, white and green flag of the

party inscribed with the book symbol all along the route.

"There has been a strong anti-incumbency factor

against the Congress government in Meghalaya and today's result is an opportunity for the NPP to do some really good work for

the people of the state," said Agatha.

Having been elected from the prestigious South Tura seat she said that there are many challenges to the most important town in the Garo Hills. According to the young legislator, basic facilities such as proper roads, adequate supply of drinking water, education and sustainable development of the town would be her first priority.

"I want that Tura to become a smart model town and people should get good quality of life," said Agatha Sangma while at the same time appreciating the large turnout of women voters in this election.

"It was wonderful to see women voters particularly so many young college students who came out and exercise their franchise to make their voice heard. It will not let them down," said Agatha Sangma.



Chief Minister Mukul Sangma waves to the crowd after registering wins in Ampati and Songsak constituencies. Sangma becomes the first chief minister in the state to contest and win simultaneously from two seats. (ST)

## Strangers on home turf

By Our Reporter

SHILLONG: The 2018 Assam by-elections were packed with surprises, some pleasant and some unexpected defeats.



A dejected Ronnie V. Lyngdoh after losing the poll battle from M yllien constituency on Saturday. (UB)

Many veteran leaders found themselves without support in their own bastion.

In Shillong, the biggest names which lost the election are Home Minister HDR Lyngdoh from Sohiong who lost to Samlin M alngiang from the Hill State People's Democratic Party. Lyngdoh secured 11,338 votes while M alngiang won with 11,960 votes.

A major surprise came in West Shillong where UDP MLA Paul Lyngdoh lost to M ahendro Rapsang of the Congress.

Rapsang, who was contesting against Lyngdoh for the second time in a row after the 2013 polls, defeated his rival by a margin of 1,984 votes.

Two-time SHSPD MLA from Nongkren Amdent Basaiwmit had a surprise defeat by a narrow margin of 76 votes.

Another setback came in Nongthymmai constituency where sitting UDP MLA Jamino M awthoh lost.

Veteran leader Rowell Lyngdoh, who deserted the Congress to join NPP, was not re-elected from M awkyzwat.

Veteran Congress leader Salsang M arak also lost the elections to NPP's Thimothy Shira by a margin of over 1,500 votes.

Even two-time MLA Ronnie Lyngdoh lost to Hanletson Dohling of the PDF in M yllien.



Congress candidate from M awkai P. T. Saw kmie (left) and SHSPD candidate from Sohiong Samlin M alngiang after winning the election battle on Saturday. (ST)

## Bernard demands counting of VVPAT slips in South Tura

By Our Reporter

SHILLONG: The AIPC candidate from South Tura, Bernard M arak has alleged that the result of the constituency needs to be reviewed as the votes declared through EVMs do not tally with the number of his supporters.

In a letter addressed to the returning officer, South Tura Constituency, Bernard said on Saturday that the votes polled for him got swapped to other candidates during the malfunctioning of EVMs on the day of voting.

He urged the returning officer to count again the VVPAT slips to confirm that the votes polled in EVMs and the VVPAT slips were not manipulated.











“ People respond in accordance to how you relate to them. If you approach them on the basis of violence, that's how they'll react. But if you say, 'We want peace, we want stability,' we can then do a lot of things that will contribute towards the progress of our society. ”

--- Nelson Mandela

## The Shillong Times

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### MDA - Need for CMP

THE newly formed Meghalaya Democratic Alliance (MDA) government is likely to run into rough weather with so many alliance partners all straining at the leash. The immediate need is for the new government to come up with a Common Minimum Programme (CMP) so that the key concerns of the alliance partners are addressed democratically and the sparring match in the media ends. It is too early in the day to hear the PDF with four members raising its dissenting voice against another coalition partner. This government has been formed to fulfill the aspirations of the people and not the specific ideology of any single political party. If the coalition partners cannot converge and come out with a consensus then they do not deserve to be in the driving seat. It is better that Meghalaya goes to the polls again and that political parties and their cantankerous members are taught a lesson. Too often the elected focus on their personal agenda and forget the people who elected them. Many of the first time MLAs have started demanding personal security officers (PSOs) from the time they learnt of their victory. This tells us how self serving these so-called public representatives are.

Some of those leading the political parties in the present coalition have themselves lost the election but they are trying to do backseat driving through their MLAs. If the prime focus of the elected is to serve the public as they have all sworn on oath then there should not be any place for personal and political muscle flexing. Many are skeptical about whether this Government will last its full term. It is incumbent upon the regional parties to prove the skeptics wrong unless they want a repeat rule by the Congress party which is the only other option. A CMP is a sine-qua-non of any coalition government. The earlier the MDA comes up with this the better for the Government. This should be made public since it is also a commitment to the people of Meghalaya.

### LOOKING BACK

May 15, 1989

### Navigational aids in NE airports

That navigational and fire-fighting aids at northeastern airports, particularly at Dimapur and Guwahati, are inadequate and far from safe is a complaint given to in the Press quite often. What is surprising is that there is scarcely any response from the authorities concerned to these complaints either by way of clearing up the position or redressing the deficiencies complained of. Particularly serious is the one such that even

though equipment in the instrument landing system (ILS) fail often many occasions the officials of air traffic control do not always feel it necessary to inform the airlines about these failures. For instance, as recently as on Feb. 15 last an Indian Airlines' Air-bus flight from Calcutta reached Guwahati but the pilot did not get the 'guide path' of the ILS, so that he was holding over Guwahati for over 15 minutes.

### TO THE EDITOR

### Will we see Change?

Editor,

The elections are over and a new government has been sworn in with a new Chief Minister in Mr. Conrad Sangma. Come to think of it, for common people, which group comes to power is not as important as long as the government is stable and delivers. As is the case, during the election campaigns, candidates make promises galore, many of which are not fulfilled. History records the inaction of every government that comes to power. While governments have come and gone, all that we have seen is failure of successive governments to deliver. This time too there are many career politicians whose objective is to do business. It is no longer a service to the people but service to the self and their families.

As an anxious citizen one hopes that this newly formed government will have a different song to sing and will be different in letter and spirit in its work ethics and implementation of government policies. One hopes that this new government will usher in the much awaited change for the peo-

ple and the state in total-ity through sincere and honest work. Above all one hopes that this new government will be less corrupt in mind, thought, spirit and action; that it will be God fearing and more humanitarian in its dealings. But one wonders if our hopes are in vain. After all the players are pretty much the same with an addition of a few names in the political list. How different are these new representatives from the old gamesters is a big question. Looking at how much money power has been used during the elections our future is bleak as everyone will work even harder to get back a hundredfold of what they have spent. However prayers and hopes are intact. One never knows; divine intervention may just be the answer!

Yours etc.,  
Jenniefer Dkhar,  
Via email

### Will MBOSE be held accountable?

Editor,

The Education Department of Meghalaya is in the

# New dispensation: What's in store for the hoi polloi?

By Banshan Marwein

Meghalaya finally has a new government with a couple of new faces in the Cabinet. The newly elected legislators have numerous errands before them. The unprecedented defeat of some outspoken ex-MLAs (Paul Lyngdoh, P.N. Syiem, Jemino Mawthoh etc) has shocked many in the state because these are the same legislators who have always voiced their apprehensions on various issues hindering the development of the state. Their loss can also be attributed to the twist of electoral politics in Meghalaya. However let us be optimistic that the new legislators will not compromise on various key issues concerning the state. No doubt issues were raised and addressed publicly in various platforms during the election campaigns but the luckiest candidates finally won. After all, election is like a game of chess which is so unpredictable especially in Meghalaya. Someone has rightly pointed out that an earthquake can be predicted but election result is difficult if not impossible to predict.

The national media, political analysts and national political leaders have tried to explain the politics in Meghalaya from a very mainstream perspective by seeing it as the fight between the Congress and BJP. Ultimately their presumptions have been proved wrong when BJP was relegated to only two MLAs in a House of sixty. If we analyse this election then we will see several factors at play. There is the influence of party ideologies, personalities, money power, et al which make it difficult to understand what ticks. Be that as it may the important point is whether the new legislators will fulfill the aspirations of the people. While some promises were unrealistic at least the basic needs of people should be fulfilled.

Interestingly the Congress party will be in the opposition and expectedly it will be more vocal in its approach in the August House.

My question to all the candidates who contested the elections is whether they will continue to fight as they did during elections and address those issues that they raised. Will they join hands with the common people to demand from the new government to bring forth development and people centric policies? If we keep pressurizing and talk politics every

day I believe genuine change might happen. However, we know very well that the welfare of the people has always been camouflaged by a short term schema. But let us not jump the gun since many are new to the game. One of the reasons why our society is going backwards is because we are too scared to talk and ask certain questions from our representatives. Is it because we are forced not to talk or question the government or representatives? Aren't we the ones who elected them?

Elections without agenda would be a futile exercise. During elections every political party has had a long list of agenda but without highlighting the roadmap. Political parties have stressed on the need to legislate various policies that are in tandem with the ambitions of the people, especially for creating job opportunities. There is also other burning issues like the boundary problem with Assam, the railway project, the Village Administration Bill, Inner Line Permit (Influx issue) etc. mentioned in their manifestoes. Development has always been the top agenda of all political parties but it has evaded us for decades. In a coalition government with many political parties' some of the party ideologies will be compromised as the new Chief Minister himself has acknowledged.

Though Meghalaya has voted for a fractured mandate but let us repose our faith in the new members and hope that they will not be busy fighting among themselves. Instead they will bring change and make good the promises made during elections. I think one of the most talked about issue during elections is to ensure job security by bringing job opportunities through various means and without playing a nepotistic politics. But one doubts if nepotism will be rooted out. Hence it is people who should be vigilant and fight nepotism. Ask any educated unemployed youth and they would appreciate the new government if they could solve the unemployment issue and the issue of contractual/temporary workers that has been there since forever.

nation should cause so much nervousness is just criminal. Students are already nervous with the pressure of studies. This error has also affected their performance. Proper care should have been taken before printing and distributing the admit cards. If the admit cards have already been issued then someone in the authority should have taken the responsibility to intimate the students in time. Such carelessness deserves punishment! Where is the accountability of MBOSE?

Yours etc.,  
Anil Singh Roka,  
Via email

### Should banks be denationalized?

Editor,

Sometimes, we jokingly say that one needs to cut off one's head to get rid of a nagging headache! Ironically, the same sort of logic is now doing the rounds in favour of the privatisation of nationalised banks. We cannot deny the fact that it is only the public sector banks that can cater to the needs

We anticipate a different approach towards the above issues from the coalition partners comprising NPP, UDP, HSPDP, PDF, Independents, BJP and lately the NCP which has also joined them. Though the regional parties have accused each other during elections campaign particularly that NPP is a team B of BJP but that accusation has died down overnight. The propaganda of saffron politics was made clear since day one by the regional parties but the post poll alliance between regional parties and BJP along with NPP has disappointed many even to the extent that the President of HSPDP resigned because the Party MLAs did not turn down their support to the idea of Non-BJP government. The future looks very grim but it all depends on the wisdom of the new legislators to counter the saffron party if it tries to outsmart the whole political system in Meghalaya.

Though the political parties are almost the same in their approach and dynastic-politico-business class are holding the key decision making but if they could prioritize governance over power and government, this would be an interesting development. It goes without saying that the political parties who are in the ruling dispensation will be more cautious now for the upcoming controversies which they have learnt from the previous governments. The fact of the matter is that the aspirations of the people should not be sidelined.

The new members will be dealing with diverse issues and also continue with the projects that the previous government has initiated. Unfortunately the State treasury itself is in deficit and funds infusion will be required from all sources but it all depends on the intelligence of the new dispensation to go ahead with the visions that they have for the people. As Union Minister, Kiren Rijiju said during the recent interview in Shillong, the Central Government will give full support to the State government for its developmental activities. Lets us see if this becomes a reality.

Though it is still unlikely that Meghalaya basic problems will be solved any time soon, the new legislators have to work hard to ensure that some of the persistent problems are tackled. To

mention a few, we have footpaths that cannot be used; unruly parking spaces in the city; repeated power cuts especially in villages; we have public toilets that are equivalent to sewage dumps; roads that are equivalent to swimming pools; we have very few government colleges, forget about a state university. We have hospitals without proper facilities and water scarcity in most of the towns and villages etc. These are only few examples that cause a lot of inconveniences. They stem from the corrupt and reckless practices of past governments. Will the new government take urgent initiative to solve these issues? While anticipating for decent infrastructural and other developmental activities in the state, the new legislators alongside the administrators should be smart enough to give up their selfish interests and first understand the problems of the people?

The future will be dismal if the new dispensation does not take the above into account because if they cannot solve these basic problems, how can we expect them to be able to solve other hot and crucial issues? In any case we need more voices in critiquing all aspects of questionable practices and loopholes in the government so that we can be effective whistle-blowers. Pretentiousness and the VIP culture are cancers in the system so the newly elected MLAs should give up their comfort and wastage of public money.

Though it is still a utopian dream that a vibrant change will happen in the coming days but HOPE is the only thing that matters. In the near future one hopes that people will be sensitized enough to demand their rights. It's about time that Meghalaya changes otherwise the malignant game of abusing power is going to disappoint us as it has been happening. At the end of the day we want principled politics and pro-people policies from our representatives.

long as it can last. But my reply is it will last if it get its acts together. After all, let us hope for the best. My only hope is not to see a series of President's Rule or four - five governments in just five years. What the new government ought to concentrate on is the replenishment of the state treasury as it is now almost empty. Salaries should be paid on time to government employees and clear as much as possible whatever liabilities there are: proceed with the development agenda as promised during elections, especially by raising the standard of education, health, agriculture, power, road and communication, skill development, youth employment etc., and bring in education policy, youth policy, mining policy and immediately address the environmental issues.

Yours etc.,  
Phillip Marwein  
Shillong - 2

Letters to the Editor must have the full name, address and contact number of the writer, even if they are sent by email. Only letters with the requisite details will be published.

# Npp + Congress = Stable Government

By Barnes Mawrie

The present alliance of the new Meghalaya Government, namely, NPP + UDP + PDF + BJP + HSPDP + Independent, is definitely an unstable alliance. There are too many stakeholders in this governments and the smaller parties have become king makers. Experience has shown that such a concoction is bound to turn sour in due time. As they say "you can please all people for some time but not all the time." So we can be sure that sooner or later this alliance is going to crumble as it would be difficult for the NPP to meet all the demands of the allies. The problem

bacl. Why do I propose this idea? It is simply because the people of Meghalaya deserve a stable government. We do believe that our leaders have the development of the State uppermost in their mind. To this end they should be able to resolve all differences between them and work out a lasting formula for the State. NPP is an independent party and it does not owe any allegiance to the BJP and so it should make its own policies and formulate its own strategies and not be dictated by others. The old practice of sharing the

“ A lot of energy, time and resources of the NPP (the major party) will be wasted on the task of appeasement.

We all know how much of public money has already been squandered during these few days of political negotiations. Meghalaya has already suffered enough from many unstable governments in the past and I think such things should not happen again today.”

with an alliance of this sort is that it is founded on a shaky ground. A lot of energy, time and resources of the NPP (the major party) will be wasted on the task of appeasement. We all know how much of public money has already been squandered during these few days of political negotiations. Meghalaya has already suffered enough from many unstable governments in the past and I think such things should not happen again today. The people of the State have voted for stability and progress and not for another sham-

CM post for a half term each, could be revoked. Perhaps the only requirement for the Congress would be to put up another person as CM candidate other than Mukul Sangma for we all know that voices like that of P. Tynsong in the NPP would resent the alliance otherwise. Let us wait and see what political development would result in the coming days.

However, what every citizen of Meghalaya expects from our leaders is that they put away all selfish interests and party agenda and transcend personal animosity

“ The alliance between NPP and the Congress would provide a comfortable number of 40 which is an absolute majority. This would ensure stability and there would be no need of dancing to the tune of small parties. I do not see any impossibility to this alliance since there are no major issues of difference between these two parties. ”

ble government.

They say that in politics there are no permanent friends and no permanent enemies. Basing myself on this political philosophy, I would say that NPP and the Congress should bury their hatchets and extend hands of friendship in order to provide the people a stable government. The alliance between NPP and the Congress would provide a comfortable number of 40 which is an absolute majority. This would ensure stability and there would be no need of dancing to the tune of small parties. I do not see any impossibility to this alliance since there are no major issues of difference between these two parties. Although the NPP has allied itself with the BJP in Manipur to form the government, it could work out a different formula altogether here in Meghalaya. Political parties and political strategies keep evolving with the need of the hour and so the NPP could easily adopt a different strategy here. I hope Mr. Conrad and Mr. Mukul would be able to put their past behind and come together to the negotiating table to sort out a better solution to this political de-

and work together for the well-being of the State. Our State is already way behind others in development. Unemployment among our youth is becoming unmanageable, basic infrastructures are still lacking, rural and border-area development is almost nil, health care and education are in shambles. Today the State needs not just politicians but statesmen who have a wider vision, a more inclusive plan, a firm political will and a great sense of justice and patriotism as well as regionalism. So far our people have been misled, misgoverned and shabbily treated in many ways. Meghalaya has journeyed almost half a century since her inception but looking around we witness lack of progress and development. We have elected our leaders and we hope that they will not fail us again. This present regime of leaders will be responsible for the golden jubilee celebration of our statehood in 2022. Will it be just a fanfare or will it be a celebration of development? They still have four years to do something tangible, something worth celebrating.

# ‘NE can produce best story-tellers’

**C**an “The Seven Sisters” of India, appearing like seven magnificent pieces of painting done by the hands of mother-nature, spark imagination of the teens, youths living there to be writers, poets and filmmakers?

If it is the writer, poet and filmmaker **Dr Nikhil Chandwani**, the answer is an emphatic Yes.

Yes! Nikhil, receiving the “Artist of the Year Title” of The American Society in the presence of former US President Barak Obama, believes the ethereal beauty of “The Seven Sisters” is such that the teens, youth living here get inspiration to write and indulge in creative pursuits naturally. Nikhil was the first Asian to receive this award.

Interesting it may sound, this writer of Coded Conspiracy receiving the award from the American Literary Forum Society, is running Nikhil Chandwani Foundation to create young poets, writers and filmmakers from across the world. He feels hundreds of young talents in The Seven Sister zone or seven states of North East India are lying untapped. If their spirit is kindled, they can turn very successful in their creative careers. Nikhil is of the opinion writing can also wean them away from a host of problems including drug addiction, suicidal tendencies, low self-esteem and allied problems including schizophrenia.

In a lively conversation with **Amlan Home Chowdhury of The Shillong Times**, Nikhil who is the CEO of Walnut Discoveries Private Limited said he is going to organize workshops in Shillong, Guwahati, Aizwal, Imphal, Itanagar, Agartala and Kohima to help the young writers living in these cities to give finest expression to their creativity.

Excerpts:

## How do you rate Meghalaya as a poetic zone?

Whenever I think of Meghalaya, its cloud-kissing mountains and idyllic-sylvan surroundings, I think of *Meghdoot* by poet laureate Kalidasa. In *Meghdoot*, the poet says Yaksha asks Megh, the clouds, to carry his message to his wife Alaka. The poetic brains also can compose their lines and send it all across the world through the modern day Megh: internet.

This *Alay* or abode of Megh holds the key to successful creation of writers, poets and documentary filmmakers. The natural beauty acts as a source of inspiration. We all know that. Did not Rabindranath

Tagore come here to pen his poetries and novels? If he got inspired by the green foliage of mountains of this *Alay* of Megh, it is quite natural the others living here too can draw inspirations, conceive ideas and express themselves through wordy marvels to get acclaim as poets, writers worldwide. Walnut Discoveries would not only groom young writers to write but also publish their creations.

## How about promoting budding documentary makers of the North Eastern India like your *Escape to Kenya*?

*Escape to Kenya* is slated to be shortlisted for the Academy Awards (next year). Regarding your question, Walnut Discoveries would be too proud to help such budding directors to come forward to direct short films and documentaries on jungle safari, wildlife, life of a peasant in Meghalaya and Non Resident Indians coming to the other six states of North Eastern India in search of their roots.

The history of The Seven Sisters can also be serialised for news channels and foreign television companies. In fact, it will not only promote them to turn film directors but also bring the North Eastern India in the global focus. Take the tea gardening in Assam, Meghalaya and other parts of North Eastern India. A history on the origin and growth of tea plantation since the days of the British East India Company can be a global hit.

## You run writers rescue centre. What does it mean?

Writers rescue centre... it sounds quite uncommon, unique, surprising. Is not it? Nikhil Chandwani Foundation is the world’s only writers rescue centre (on record). This will rescue those writers from the North Eastern India who are not getting published. Once their books get published by us, they will be extremely encouraged thereby making more writing ventures.

See, I mentor those writers who lost all hopes in their creative pursuit and getting their works published. I mentored them, instilled courage and propelled them to write further. I helped them to publish their books and many of such books turned out to be super success. Naturally, the element of frustration evaporated in them and they further wrote with total confidence only to gain further recognitions. I provided them a platform to rescue them of their hopelessness. Take Siddhartha Roy,

*Award-winning artiste Nikhil Chandwani says everyone is a born writer*



## TALKING POINT

NIKHIL CHANDWANI

now a globally known author. Take Ritesh Verma. Take Md. Zabi Khan. Take Siddharth Zuko Sabari and Dr. Shakila.

## Does Walnut Discoveries have a plan to develop North Eastern India as a writing zone?

Yes! The Walnut Discoveries together with Nikhil Chandwani Foundation have a special plan for The Seven Sister zone. Both these organisations have presence in almost all parts of the world. In India,

we are active from Kashmir to Kanyakumari. I now want to develop the North East India as a special “Creative Zone” for film documentaries, historical profiling and writing. I will meet the Chief Ministers of all the Seven States. Inspire the youth to conduct researches on the history of these states.

The history of this region is extremely rich. You perhaps know the army of Azad Hind Fauz of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose had come right up to the North Eastern India.

Can it not be a theme of documentaries having a global audience? Can we not focus on the history of Japanese invasions in North Eastern India? If the local people are encouraged to write on that particular historical era, we certainly would have a large number of writers.

## How do you rate N.E. India as English reading zone?

The Seven Sisters are among the most literate states of India. The presence of English as a language

had been in this region, particularly Meghalaya, at least for the last 159 years or so. The rate of literacy in Meghalaya is one among the highest in Indian states.

In 2011, it was an impressive 75.5 percent. You see, many cities in the Seven Sister Zone were made hill stations by the British. Naturally, the wave of English had been sweeping in those cities for a very long time. Due to the colonial influence, a large number of very good schools and colleges came up in such cities including Shillong. Naturally, the taste for English language literature also grew in this part over 150 years ago. What more should I say to rate this region as an English reading zone?

## What about helping creative writers in vernacular languages?

On turning over the pages of history, you find that the literary tradition of such sweet languages like Assamese, Khasi, Garo and Manipuri had long oral traditions. They have their own folk tales, folk dance, folk songs, cultural traditions and vivid literary heritage. So is the case with Khasi language.

The history of modern Khasi oral literature can be traced back to 1841. They have their own myths, legends and folk tales. The history of Assamese literature is extremely old and can be traced back to 7th century A.D. So is Manipuri or Meitei literature. It can be traced back to at least 1000 years. Come evening, the people in the cold-hilly regions squat on the ground around bonfires to listen the traditional folk tales from their village elders. A large number of such ancient tales now have been lost. It is time we retrieve them, we re-weave them, write them in English and other languages and present them before the world.

## Can we know a little bit about you?

Well! I am a crusader for creative works. A Bohemian! I am a published author of six New York Times best-selling books and recently awarded the Global Indian of the year for scriptwriting. I produced the Hindi feature film titled “She – The Movie.” I have been the Asia Winner of American Literary Honour and the UK Writers’ Forum Award. Mind you, I am an engineering dropout. I have to confess I had many failures but those failures turned out to be the pillars of success. I am now working for the upcoming Hollywood movie titled “Saffron Skies.”

# Eat healthy, sleep well

By Ranjan K Baruah

Recently I have been invited to a junior college to address students on motivation, guidance and techniques to face board exams along with other speaker. After interacting with the students, I could see that confidence is little low among students who are going to appear for board examinations.

There might be many reasons for the same but it’s time that students must be confident and face the exams so that they could do well. As many are appearing for board exams, so some tips might be useful or helpful for them. Here are some quick tips for last planning and preparation before the board examination.

The most important is to have a positive attitude. The following tips will help students focus well and stay healthy.

## Sleep and eat well

Start the day in a positive way. Late night studies may not help so sleep well and utilise time well. Take out time and relax and rejuvenate yourself. Do not get anxious a day prior to the exam.

## Revise well, relax and just be comfortable

There should be a fixed timetable to study in a regular manner; one should make a timetable for each day. This can help a student manage time for all the subjects in a proper way. Make a regular routine or fix a particular portion to be studied each day. Make sure to complete the fixed portion the same day. It’s time to understand basic concepts behind the subjects.



One can try to make brief notes as one cannot study everything at the last moment. Aspirants may have variety in your daily study and try to study different subjects in a day and do not just stick to one for hours. Variety in your study will keep one interested in it. As we cannot start again from the beginning so we can also focus on weaker subjects; one must spend extra time on weaker subjects. One of the most important things is not to lose your concentration. One must keep all required things ready with all the necessities before sitting at study table as it save time.

One may try to solve sample papers and previous years question

papers with proper time. This will give a student more confidence. Appearing or arranging mock test enhances your confidence.

## Inside the exam hall

Read the question paper well and carefully so that things can be organized. Manage time to finish them on time.

Plan in advance how much time you will dedicate to each question and category and stick to it.

Draw diagrams and others neatly, neat handwriting, proper question numbers (this might be a mistake due to tension), among other things are important.

These are not only the tips as there

are many others. One should follow or plan according to their convenience. Different students have different abilities and a proper planning helps them get good marks.

## Updates:

**CLAT: Common Law Admission Test** is conducted as per a Memorandum of Understanding for the convenience of the students seeking admission to various National Law Universities in the country. An entrance test is conducted to provide a list of candidates on the basis of ‘merit-cum-preference’ to each university for admission to their Under-Graduate (UG)/Post-Graduate (PG) programmes, as per the eligibility, reservation and other criteria laid down under the respective statutes of the participating Universities. Last date for sending application is March 31.

**Aga Khan Foundation International Scholarships 2018:** The Aga Khan Scholarship or International Scholarship Programme is provided by Aga Khan Development Network and provides a limited number of scholarships per year to outstanding students who cannot found their own education for pursuing full time postgraduate studies. The scholarship is also offered for PhD programmes if the student is exceptionally talented and requires a PhD for fulfilling his/her career objectives (academic or research oriented). Aspirants may apply before March 31.

*(Ranjan K Baruah is a career mentor and can be reached at bkranjana@gmail.com or 8473943734 for any career related queries)*

# How to eat something larger than yourself

An alligator can eat a quarter of its bodyweight in a single meal, equivalent to a human eating 89 bowls of rice,” a reader told me in an electronic conversation.

I was not impressed. Ever seen teenagers eat? Eighty-nine bowls is just the appetiser.

This exchange was triggered by a March 3 news report that a snake had been seen in Florida eating a deer larger than itself. The snake became a new Dining Hero for my son and myself, replacing TV’s Miss Piggy, whose sensible eating plan is: “Never eat anything you cannot lift.”

How did you eat something larger than you are?

Snakes temporarily dislocate their upper and lower jaws so that they can eat big things, including cows and buffaloes, said a herpetologist friend via email. (Humans have to do the same when eating those extra-tall burgers.)

A bird-lover in our office commented that some songbirds eat a meal of insects roughly every two seconds during their waking hours. That’s 30 meals a minute! Definitely worth adding them to our Dining Heroes list.

Listening to this conversation was a colleague who was on a diet where you have six small meals a day. (I told her I totally loved the sound of that, except for the word “small”).

The discussion became a competition. “Forget alligators. A growing hummingbird consumes TWICE its weight in food every single day,” the bird-lover said.

Impressive. In human terms, that would be equivalent to a teenage boy eating a couple of sheep a day. Could teens really do that? I texted one to ask. “If you put them on a pizza, or cooked them as rogan josh,

sure,” was his reply (after translation from teenspeak).

But would it be dangerous? I phoned a doctor friend who said that physicians used to think it was impossible to eat yourself to death. But in 1985, top medical journal *The Lancet* reported a case in which a 23-year-old woman consumed one pound (450 grams) of liver, two pounds of kidneys, an eight ounce steak, two eggs, a pound of cheese, two slices of bread, a pound of mushrooms, two pounds of carrots, a cauliflower, 10 peaches, four pears, two apples, four bananas, two pounds of grapes, and two glasses of milk. She was rushed to hospital where surgeons cut her open — but she died before they could remove her lunch.

It reminded me of a true story from this column in 2014. A woman ate so much to celebrate Lunar New Year that she exploded. A nutritionist at Beijing Friendship Hospital said the 58-year-old patient felt ill from overeating and demanded a lunchectomy. The electric knife used by a surgeon provided a spark which met combustible gases from alcohol, causing a messy explosion in the operating theatre.

I don’t wish to be morbid or anything, but you have to admit, if you have to die, this is pretty cool way to go. You eat all your favourite foods, and before even your weighing scale can reproach you, BOOM. You’re done.

And someone else has to clean up the mess. Now please excuse me while I go dislocate my jaw.

*(Nury Vittachi is an Asia-based frequent traveller. Send ideas and comments via his Facebook page)*













"My advice to other disabled people would be, concentrate on things your disability doesn't prevent you doing well, and don't regret the things it interferes with. Don't be disabled in spirit as well as physically."

--- Stephen Hawking

The Shillong Times

Vol No: LX No.213 SHILLONG, FRIDAY, MARCH 16, 2018

A super scientist passes on

THE death of Stephen Hawking is a great loss to the world of Science. At the age of 21, he was paralyzed and doctors gave him only 2 years to live. Cosmology gained because he lived over half a century longer.

Hawking explored the universe. He may not have been the greatest physicist of all time and did not get the Nobel Prize. But nobody denies that he was a giant in cosmology.

LOOKING BACK

May 15, 1989

Shun Khalistan supporters, PM tells opposition

Prime Minister Mr Rajiv Gandhi today appealed to all the "National" opposition parties to "distance themselves publicly and clearly" from elements consorting with the Punjab terrorists and overtly supporting the cause of "Khalistan."

Anandpur Sahib resolution and said that his party, the Janata Dal appeared confused and did not even find out what he was up to. "Those forming part of the National Front and the Janata Dal have not even demanded his ouster."

Bottom-up economic planning for Meghalaya

By Fabian Lyngdoh

The tribal societies are generally characterised as backward, particularly with regards to education and economic standing. The above conditions, together with the tribals' consciousness of their territorial and cultural identities on the one hand, and their dependence upon the Indian political economy on the other hand, need to be taken into consideration as the socio-economic base-lines for economic planning concerning the tribal areas.

With due respect to the economists for their expertise on the subject, I would like to present some important issues for a bottom-up economic planning from a sociological point of view, which might be of importance in planning for the socio-economic development of the people of Meghalaya.

Government agencies and NGOs had for so many years fed the people with the idea of improving their livelihoods by discarding their age-old farming practices and to adopt modern agricultural systems based on imported corporate seeds that have been genetically engineered, animal hybrids, chemical fertilizers and pesticides to increase productivity.

The cry today is, 'back to organic farming', and the corporate world is again trying to patent and sell that idea to the farmers through the local governments as if indigenous peoples had never known natural resources management and organic farming!

tired bureaucrats, while it fails miserably to deliver the normal and routine services and development initiatives through its normal departments.

The Khasis in the past had understood the concept of what is today called 'micro finance', and the profitability of cooperative economic activities. These traditional cooperatives were called 'Bara-khynraw' in Ri Bhoi region.

As long as lucrative funding was available to the facilitating NGOs from the Government and International Agencies, it seemed that these modern Self Help Groups (SHGs) were really flourishing, and there was hope that these development models would naturally replicate themselves.

We have seen that a few selected SHGs from each region which somehow managed to remain intact as show-pieces are being called upon again and again to be represented as models of success in Government and NGOs' to satisfy the requirement of funding agencies.

It is true that lots of change had taken place, and with the present level of population and the standard of living, there is a need for improved economic infra-structures.

Some of the first-timer MLAs have been able to garner the support of the educated unemployed youth on the promise of instant employment to every

one when they are elected by employing the oft quoted phrase, 'ban pynioh kam ioh jam'. But what most of the educated youth expect are salaried jobs, especially in the Government establishments.

Economically speaking, unemployment arises when the population far exceeds the capacity of natural resources to sustain, or when the number of job seekers far exceeds the opportunity for employment within an economy or a sub-economy.

Today, an increasing number of educated persons are left unemployed. This reflects on the irrelevance of the present type of education prevalent in the society. The economic production system cannot be expected to adapt to the type of education imparted.

While it is true that all possible efforts should be made to improve production of every commodity, it is impossible for the State to be self sufficient in anything. No society in the world today is self sufficient in anything.

this region. A good number of such indigenous fishes may have ornamental value and hence, could be made into valuable export items that may attract hobbyists around the world.

In the field of modern tourism, North East India is said to be a goldmine, as it lies in the South East Asia region where tourism activity is predicted to grow more than 6.5 per cent per year. Tourism could be the largest foreign exchange earning source for the people of Meghalaya too.

It is time for the Government to stop playing agent for infiltrating the local production system with the Western World's corporate ideas that interfere with the local biodiversity and indigenous seeds. What the Government can do is to financially assist the farmers in land development and reclamation, watershed management, capital investment and market linkages.

Study should be made on the types of economic activities that people at the grassroots are engaging in and they should be assisted to strengthen their natural occupations, and not to unnecessarily convince them to plant roses in Israeli poly houses or any other strange things which had generally failed due to lack of commercial and cultural adaptabilities.

Are medical colleges the answer for good health?

By Sandra Albert

If there was a correlation between medical colleges and good health of a state, Karnataka and Maharashtra should lead the league table of good health indices in the country, sadly they do not. It is almost a knee jerk response in the northeast region to attribute poor health indices to the absence of sufficient medical colleges.

Where we do have a gross deficit is of specialist doctors like obstetricians, surgeons, anaesthetists and paediatricians (over 50% of the sanctioned posts are lying unfilled). Setting up one or two medical colleges will not address the deficit of specialists even in the next two decades in this State.

Considering the paucity of good tertiary care hospitals in many of our districts it makes sense to locate a medical college in the Garo hills. But do we need another one in Shillong? The city already has a good centrally funded, well equipped medical college and several tertiary care hospitals in addition.

Of the two medical colleges being proposed one is to be set up by the state and the other on a PPP model. Setting up a medical college is an enormously expensive venture - it requires initial capital expenditure (infrastructure, equipment etc) which can vary anywhere between 250-500 crores, including the teaching hospital.

ture, equipment etc) which can vary anywhere between 250-500 crores, including the teaching hospital. This amount may not be too difficult to raise as there are banks willing to extend soft loans for such ventures. What we need to be more concerned about is the annual recurring or operational expenditure - the cost of sustaining the enterprise on a day to day basis.

As for the PPP model - there are two examples in the Northeast that this government can do well to examine closely as many lessons can be learnt from them. The first PPP model medical colleges was the one in Sikkim established by the Manipal group. Reliable sources inform that it is not a sustainable entity and the Manipal group is able to carry it forwards only because of their institutions elsewhere subsidizing the Sikkim-Manipal institution.

The decision to invest in expensive medical institutions should ideally be based on good quality evidence rather than well-meaning intentions and opinions. It is not as if the state does not have a yearly pool of new graduates available to replace those who are retiring from the workforce. Currently Meghalaya gets about 69 MBBS seats every year at almost no cost to the state.

(The author is Director, Indian Institute of Public Health Shillong)

TO THE EDITOR

Exorbitant fees for walking!

Editor, Through your esteemed daily, we would like to bring to the notice of the Authorities that we have been using the J.N.Sports Complex for morning walks with necessary Entry Pass issued by the authorities by paying a bare minimum fee. But recently by an order from the authorities, the Entry Fee has become very very high @ Rs.600 per month just for 1(one) hour or so in the morning. Earlier it used to be Rs.250 for six months. As it is well known that in most of the Cities in India for the morning walk purposes, these sports complexes are kept open so that the citizens can live a healthy life.

Yours etc., S.Dey, J. Lyngdoh, & others, Via email

Manage the traffic please!

Editor, Everyone was shocked on the early morning of March 14 when everything came to a grinding halt, which is unusual. The culprit, a giant twelve wheeler truck broke down that morning in the narrow roads of Nongthymmai, with the driver absconding. Children were late to school which is no fault of theirs. The big question is - how on earth did this truck get into our streets when clearly they shouldn't. Shillong traffic is heading towards disaster if no action is taken.

Yours etc., D. Wanshngoh, Via email

The age of iconoclasts

Editor, This is with reference to

the article, "Past fixation at present cost" by Poonam I Kaushish (ST, Mar 12, 2018). Past fixation is no doubt costly but past modification is indeed deadly. We have just seen the efforts of such modifications from Sylhet to Belonia. The distance between Sylhet in Bangladesh and Belonia in Tripura is only 248 kilometres.

We cannot modify or ignore Lenin's contributions to our freedom struggle. We cannot forget the contributions of Bhagat Singh and others who were greatly influenced by Lenin and the October Revolution.

by the great Lenin, we in India began a new phase in our struggle for freedom. Our people for many years were engaged in this struggle with courage and patience. And although under the leadership of Gandhi we followed another path, we were influenced by the example of Lenin."

Are the Taliban breaking the statues of great men at some places in our country? As a matter of fact, there is no difference between the Taliban who had dynamited the Buddha statue at Bamiyan, Afghanistan and the mob that had broken the statue of Lenin at Belonia in Tripura instigating other Taliban to do the same injustice to the statues of some other great men as well.

Now, let us go from Belonia, Tripura to Sylhet, Bangladesh where some fringe elements having a slavish adherence to the mythical past had stabbed Muhammad Zafar Iqbal, a science fiction author, physicist, professor and activist. In Bangladesh, fanat-

ics had earlier taken the lives of Niloy Chatterjee, Washiqur Rahman Babu, Avijit Roy, Nazimuddin Samad, Rezaul Karim Siddiquee and others. We know that persons who carry in them some progressive elements had always suffered at the hands of the blind forces of falsehood. Thus, Mahatma Gandhi, Malala Yousufzai, Malleshappa Kalburgi and Gouri Lankesh had always been the targets of regressive fringe groups.

Should not we protest in one voice? Or keep going on in the way what Paul Simon wrote in the song, "The Sound of Silence", ~

Disturb the sounds of silence....

Yours etc., Sujit De, Via email













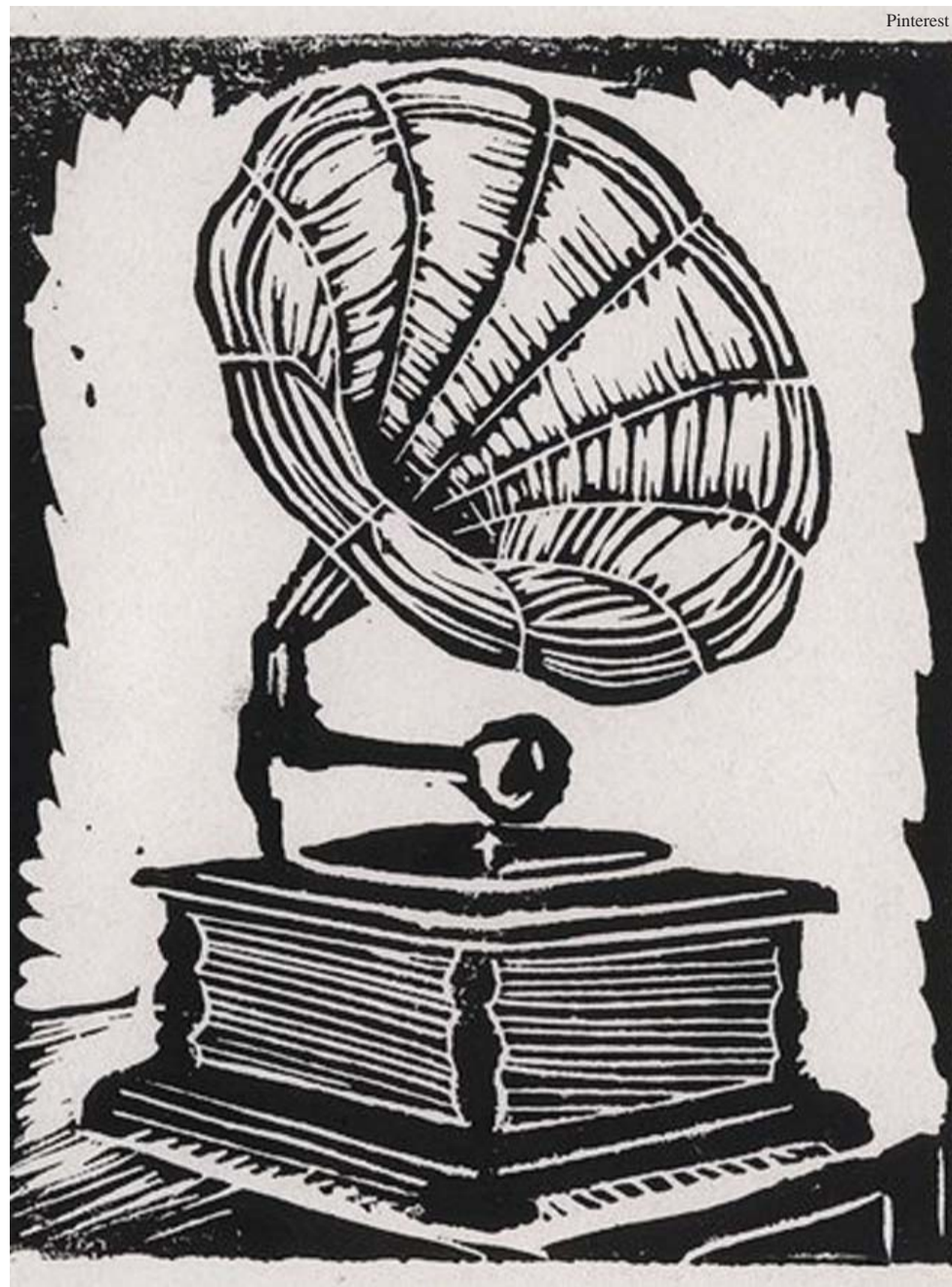






# VINYL ONCE MORE

Who would have thought that the vinyl record would make a comeback in this digital age? Sudipto Maity explores the Indian vinyl market



Almost 30 years after ditching the vinyl record, Japanese conglomerate Sony announced in mid-2017 that its Japanese arm would start manufacturing records once again to meet the growing demand. If things go as planned, the company's unit in Tokyo will start producing them as early as this year.

Is the adage 'Old is gold' proving itself once again? The resurrection of the old style record in the West can be attributed to more stores selling them. What about the Indian market? Even though the scenario is more subdued, things are moving here too.

"Record sales were always there, but the vibrations were absent," says Prem Kumar Gupta of Symphony Kolkata, the familiar shop in the city's downtown. "After all these years we feel the excitement again."

The shop sells around 90 vinyl records a month since 2017.

"Perhaps music started sounding flat, and that's why people have gone back to records. It has a different feel," he adds.

Md Ilyas, proprietor of M/s Gramophonic, a specialist in dealing with records on Lenin Sarani in central Kolkata, however, has a different take. "Record has always enticed customers, but it never reached the heights it was supposed to," he rues.

The market is wretched, he feels, adding, "How many shops sell records today? It used to be 500 at one time. Today, maybe there are five recognised shops in the entire city of Kolkata."

Mohammed Iqbal, a fellow record seller, has been in the business for over five decades. He started with vinyls, moved to cassettes and later sold CDs.

Pondering on the future of people like him vis-à-vis the music industry, he is pretty upbeat. "Say whatever you want to but the record mar-

ket has a life of its own."

## Decoding the new popularity

### The sound quality

Moloy Ghosh, a Delhi-based music restorer, says the basic sound quality of vinyl is unmatched. "The depth of sound of a vinyl record can beat the likes of a cassette or a CD player any day."

Add to that the longevity of a record, one has the perfect combination. The only thing that comes close to records in terms of longevity is a cassette. While a cassette with proper handling can last nearly 40 years, a vinyl record on an average lasts about 60 years, if not more.

Experts believe that the vinyl has roared back to popularity as more and more people want to possess a piece of music that they can feel and touch. Having your own records also gives a feeling of ownership.

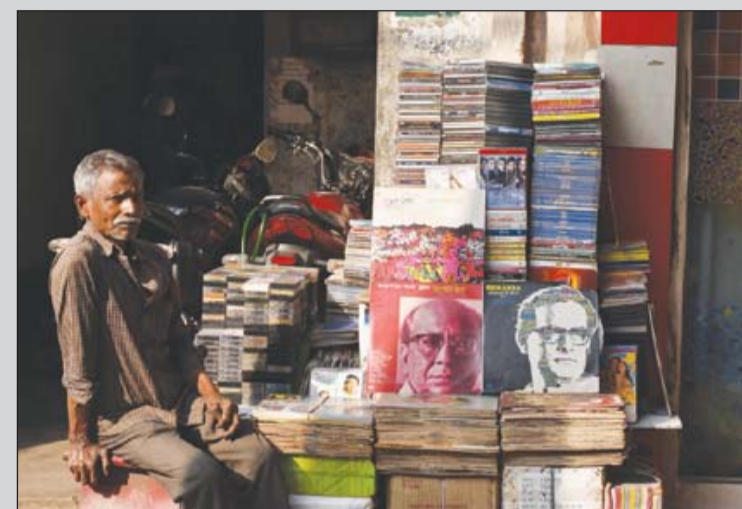
### Teenage connection

Teenagers are the most impulsive among the age groups. With little or moderate experience, teenagers are more susceptible to falling for a particular trend. For vinyl, it has done wonders. "More teenagers frequent my shop these days," admits Ilyas. "Maybe it has something to do with the money too," he says referring to the low cost of second-hand vinyl.

Second-hand vinyl records in places like Lenin Sarani are sold for as low as Rs 50 each. However, some can go up to as high as Rs 3,000, depending on the rarity.

### Records: One for the future?

While vinyl sales in the West have not dropped since 2006 and culminated as the big-



**Golden tunes:** (Clockwise from top left) Stalls in central Kolkata sell vinyl records, which are cheap and come at Rs 50 leading to their popularity among the youth. However, rare records may be a pocket pincher at Rs 3,000; Moloy Ghosh plays a vinyl record on his gramophone. Images: Subhdeep Sardar

gest winner a decade later, the growth in India has not been that noteworthy. However, better returns in 2017 have prompted experts to think positively.

"Today we have the largest catalogue selection for vinyl in India," says Jojie Mammen, vice president and business head, Sony DADC, India.

Looking ahead, he says, "In the Indian context it's catching up as a lifestyle product and collectors' delight. In the coming days we will see even new releases on vinyl paving way to introduce larger vinyl selection of Indian repertoire with vinyl-shopping going main stream."

The growth of vinyl in India, as compared to the West, is still lagging, admits Mammen. "Artists in the West have encouraged a physical touch-and-feel experience as an important aspect in scaling the artist's shelf life and recall value, which is yet to catch up in India," he says.

However, of late there have been a lot of interests from independent artists to launch album on vinyl format, he notices.

Another factor which hinders the growth is the cost of a turntable. "Records have always been a rich man's game in India. It was never for the middle class," says Rantideb Maitra, a connoisseur of music and a scholar. He explains that a top range turntable costs around Rs 25,000 and above, while a starter level device is no cheaper than Rs 7,000. That's how costly it was," he says, laughing. To further

strengthen his point, he says, "Think about this, when records were first introduced in India in 1902, it used to cost over Rs 3 apiece. A bhori of gold (11.664 grams) would cost Rs 2."

## Digital download and streaming

It is somewhat like a rare case of the predecessor taking on a successor. In fields like sports and politics, perhaps it's seen but not in case of technology. Yet, the unthinkable has happened. Digital streaming and download have been humbled by record sales in 2016, inviting ominous comments from experts, who have opined that the former medium is inching toward the end. Does it mean a farewell to the YouTube, if at all?

People like Ghosh 'very rarely' tunes in to YouTube to listen to songs, preferring quality over other metrics. However, Maitra opines that YouTube must remain in order for certain records to stay 'alive.'

Maitra is the proud owner of over 20,000 records (both gala and vinyl). Some in his collection are the only specimen left in the world. Maitra has a simple theory about sharing them: YouTube.

"Most people don't know how to look for a song on YouTube. Tell me, if not for that medium, how can people like you and I listen to songs that have no physical evidence anymore?" he reiterates.

Maitra says that while the Western world has

been diligent about digitalising their records, the Indian ecosystem has not been up to the mark in terms of professionalism.

"I have been to Europe. I have been to the flea markets there. Most of the records are jazz and rock. They aren't interested about classical music. Perhaps because their classical music is very well digitalised, unlike ours," he says.

## Still a second-hand sales market

The Indian vinyl market is still driven by second-hand sales. As a result, it is directly dependent on supply of old records. How do the sellers obtain the records?

"We get them from people who are willing to sell their collection. Maybe it belonged to their grandfather or someone in the family and now these antiques are taking up more space than usual and so the seller wants to get rid of them. So they contact us," informs Gupta.

Promising a change in the scenario, Mammen adds, "Vinyl is an important part of our business and has been gaining momentum in last one year. The vinyl selection available in India was limited to a few International titles for quite some time but Sony DADC has pioneered the effort in making available a large range of International selection with Indian e-commerce portals. At the same time, it has released a wide selection of Hindi film in vinyl too." (TWF)

# 'Dil Junglee is pure entertainment'



Taapsee Pannu's film Dil Juunglee was released on March 8. IBNS/TWF correspondent Souvik Ghosh tracked her during promotion.

## How was the relationship between teacher (played by Taapsee) and student (played by Saqib) in the film?

I am an English counsellor and want to teach him the language. He also wants to learn English but how much does he learns will be unfolded in the course of the film.

## Was the music video (done before the film) between you two an audition kind of thing?

Yes, it was an unsaid audition. We didn't ask questions like why, how the offer came. The offer came so we just grabbed it (smiles).

## How is this film different from the other love stories?

See I will not sell my film saying that this is a kind of story which the audience has not seen ever. I won't sell my film in a wrong way. I will say the quotient of comedy, romance and entertainment will be very high in this film. The audience will get to enjoy some songs and some comedy which are relatable. The film portrays two brackets of ages-one when we (the lead characters) are around 21-22 and the other seven years later-so the viewers can see the transience of emotions with the advancement of age. It is a very relatable story as if one will feel it has happened with someone or the other. These things I can guarantee. The film is a pure entertainment.

## What are the expectations from the film?

Everyone expects his or her film to be successful. I still



want this picture to be a hit otherwise wouldn't have signed. I just hope people do get entertainment through the film, they get a feeling of their money being paid back and become a huge hit. It is an entertaining film. People will leave the theatre house smiling and laughing (in light mood).

## How would you react to Swara Bhasker trolled for her open letter to Sanjay Leela Bhansali over Padmaavat?

I think if she has the strength to write an open letter, I am sure she is a smart girl to know that there will be lot of backlash as reactions come to anything we actors say. As she is a smart girl, I think she is also prepared for the backlash. She is handling it in her own way.











