NEWS IN BRIEF

Famous five's million reasons to be happy

IRELAND has five new millionaires and they will be celebrating Christmas in style.

It's the first time that the National Lottery has produced five millionaires in one roll-over draw.

The winning numbers were 1, 7, 8, 11, 12, 19 and bonus of 22.

Three of the tickets were sold in Dublin. The shops were: Cahill's Centra Food Market on the Ballinteer Road; The Korner Shop, Donaghmede Shopping Centre and News Spot on Talbot Street in the city centre.

Another ticket was sold in Cameron Newsagents, Bohermore, Galway city and a fifth in In Touch, Main Street, Carrigaline, Co Cork.

Warning on drugs stolen from car

DANGEROUS drugs were stolen from a car on Greenore Terrace in Dublin between 8pm last night and 12.30am today.

Stolen were 10 boxes each with five ampoules of Tramadol Hydrochloride pain killers and two boxes containing five ampoules of Diclofenac Sodium anti-depressants.

The drugs listed are dangerous if taken without medical advice.

Anyone with any information should contact Pearse Street Garda station on 01 666900 or any Garda station.

UTV buys Dublin's Lite FM for €14m

ULSTER Television has bought Dublin radio station, Lite FM for €14m, it announced today.

UTV will also assume liability for the net debt in Lite FM of around €1.3m.

The acquisition has got the green light in principle from regulatory body, the Broadcasting Commission of Ireland.

Missing Granny and baby found safe

A GRANDMOTHER from Ballyfermot who was reported missing by the Gardai on Friday with her 14-month-old grand-daughter has been located safe and well.

Carol Kenny (45) and baby Courtney from Drumfinn Avenue turned up on Saturday evening.

SHOCK DEATH: Fans mourn the loss of punk legend Joe Strummer

Clash City rocker dies at 50

BY SANDY GREENE

PUNK legend Joe Strummer of "The Clash" has died, his record company said today. He was just 50.

Strummer, who was the band's guitarist, vocalist and songwriter alongside Mick Jones, died on Sunday. The cause of his death was not announced.

Hein van der Rey, managing director of Epitaph Records, which had produced two albums for Strummer's latest band The Mescaleros said he learned of the death this morning.

"We do not know the circumstances. It is pretty devastating news," he said.

He said Strummer had been working on a third album with The Mescaleros.

"The Clash" were known for injecting left wing politics into punk. Their album "London Calling" was named the best album of the 1980s by Rolling Stone magazine, despite being released in 1979.

Strummer's death was announced on his official Web site. "Joe Strummer died yesterday," said the simple statement. "Our condolences to Luce and the kids, family and friends."

No further details were immediately available.

Public school-educated Strummer is thought to have died at home.

Strummer, whose real name was Mellor, was married with a family and lived in Somerset.

The rock icon was born in Ankara, Turkey, and was the son of a British diplomat.

As well as his music, Strummer also made a number of film appearances, mainly for his film director friend Alex Cox.

His movies included Straight To Hell and Walker for the maverick Cox, but he also put in a cameo in Martin Scorsese's The King Of Comedy.

STRUMMER: Sudden death announced on singer's official website

TD phone records row set for courts

SENATOR Jim Higgins said today that the attempt by gardai to get access to his phone records may have to be tested by the courts.

The former Mayo Fine Gael TD said that the garda efforts to find the source of his information about allegations against the gardai in Co Donegal were an attack on all members of the Oireachtas.

"I think we all assumed that the right was secure and this matter may have to be tested in the courts because any attempt by the gardai or anybody else to get access to our fax or telephone records is an attack on the rights not and myself but of all members of the Oireachtas", said Jim Higgins.

"Certainly from the point of view of the matter being tested , I am sure it will be tested in due course possibly first of all in the tribunal. I would be anxious to co-operate with the tribunal as far as possible.

"I am sure this will be tested first of all in the tribunal so that it could be tested subsequently in the courts," said Mr Higgins. Gardai have sought the telephone and fax records of Senator Higgins and of Labour's Brendan Howlin to find the source of their information on allegations of Garda corruption in Co Donegal.

The *Sunday Independent* newspaper revealed yesterday that in May 2001, the Director of Public Prosecutions was asked for advice relating to accessing the two politicians' records.

JIM HIGGINS: Court test

BRENDAN HOWLIN: Records sought

BY ALISON O'CONNOR

It is understood that the DPP advised the Garda not to take such a step.

However later that year, the Assistant Commissioner, Mr Fachtna Murphy was still of the view that his request to examine the telecommunications records was "worthy of consideration".

"It depends on the attitude of the tribunal and then we may have to look at the possibility of having the matter further tested in the courts.

Senator Higgins said: "I am today writing to the Minister for Justice, I am writing to the Garda Commissioner, and I'm writing to Eircom to establish whether or not in fact any access has been granted to my telephone records in relation to this or any other matter.

"There is a fundamental principle involved here and I am very anxious to know that the advice that was given by the DPP and the advice given by the Minister for Justice, that advice was not in any way transgressed.

Senator Higgins said that he was not surprised that the gardai had sought the sources of his information.

"We were pressed very hard to divulge the source of our information. Time and time again the gardai came back to us seeking information in relation to our source.

INFORMATION

"We came into possession of information. The allegations were very serious. We at all stages stressed that we were not in a position to stand over the veracity or otherwise of the information. We never named the gardai in question either inside the Dail or outside.

"We never abused the privilege of the Dail, he added.

"We put it into the possession of the Minister for Justice and it was a matter for the Minister to have checked out.

"What's involved here is the fundamental issue of the privilege of members of the Oireachtas, the right of an elected member of the Dail to receive confidential information and to bring it to the the appropriate authorities."

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