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# SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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Pages 8 | ₹ 5

## CM lays foundation stone of Nishani Kali Devi statue complex in Pendam

### SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 6 JAN:

The Nishani Kali temple at Pendam Garhi in East Sikkim is deeply revered by people living in the area and also attracts visitors in strong numbers from elsewhere. With Chief Minister Pawan Chamling laying the foundation of a major project there today, the temple complex is set to receive a Rs 63.84 crore facelift with statues of Nishani Kali Devi and Lord Shiva.

Residents of the area revere Nishani Kali Devi as the guardian deity of the village and the temple complex also houses the local water source highly venerated by the residents of Pendam area.

"This is a huge milestone for the people of this area and State as well. Once the temple is completed, tourists will flood this place.



This place not only has immense potential of strengthening the economy of the people but also has great potential for generation of employment opportunities," the CM said, while adding that the State Government has made continuous effort and elaborate contributions towards



transforming Sikkim into one of the most exclusive pilgrimage tourist destinations and added that

this Kali Mandir would be different from other Kali temples of India. The technical report

70 feet when measured from the base.

The Kharga Nisani Kali Marg will lead the devotees to the main temple complex.

The temple complex will include an exhibition hall, a prayer hall, waiting lounge, offices, storage facilities, including water storage, electricity transformer sub stations and a parking area half a kilometre below the main temple complex.

The land belonged to the Ghimirey family and Punya Prasad Dahal and was acquired by the Ecclesiastical Affairs Department for more than Rs 3 cr. One acre of land was also donated free by the Ghimirey family.

An approach road, designed in keeping with Vaastu Shastra principles will lead to the temple, it is further informed.

Devotees thanked the State government for the grand project.

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## Next term will focus on human resource development: CM



### NITESH R PRADHAN

GANGTOK, 06 JAN:

"Human resource development will be the focus of our next government with attention paid to each individual," said Chief Minister Pawan Chamling today while addressing the gathering at Tikalal Niraula Government Senior Secondary School in Central Pendam.

The CM was attending the foundation stone laying program for the Nishani Kali statue at the historic Pendam Gar-

hi following which he attended the platinum jubilee celebrations of Tikalal Niraula Government Senior Secondary School.

The Chief Minister stated that he was contesting the next election to keep the developmental process going in Sikkim and to save the State from parties functioning as agents of outside forces.

He added that it was also necessary to save the peace and security established by the SDF Government in Sikkim.

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### GOLAY MEETS PARTY REPS FROM EAST SIKKIM

## SKM confident it is in stronger position than in 2014



### SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 06 JAN:

Sikkim Krantikari Morcha party president, PS Tamang [Golay], interacted with party workers of East district here at Deorali today.

The meeting was attended by CLC presidents of all constituencies of

East Sikkim and representatives from zonal levels along with working president, MP Subba, senior vice president, TN Dhakal, secretary general Arun Uprety, vice president Nakul Das Rai and other senior leaders of the party.

An SKM press re-

lease informs that representatives from the 12 constituencies of East District and Tumin Lingee constituency placed report from their respective constituencies along with suggestions and important issues.

The release mentions that the meeting agreed

that SKM's position in East District was stronger than in 2014 when the party had won eight seats here even without strong organizational base here.

The release informs that the party president stressed that party workers should take the truth to the people and make people aware about the false assurances and election-centric announcements of the SDF Government and party.

He appealed to the party workers to work together to generate wider awareness among the people to bring about change.

Mr Tamang further stated that the party has not chosen any candidates from any constituency and that the people would select their candidates.

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### Nepal PM remains tight-lipped on aircraft deal despite criticism from opposition

KATHMANDU, JAN 6 (PTI):

Nepal's Prime Minister KP Oli who on Sunday was expected to apprise the Parliament about issues relating to alleged misuse of funds to purchase two aircrafts for the national flag carrier, Nepal Airlines, remained tight-lipped despite criticism from the opposition.

A parliamentary sub-committee revealed last week that Rs 4.37 billion has been misappropriated while purchasing two aircrafts for Nepal Airlines. The committee also recommended

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## Newa language course begins in Singtam



### SUMMIT REPORT

SINGTAM, 06 JAN:

A month-long Basic Newa Language Learning and Speaking Course began here today.

46 members of the Newa community from in and around Singtam enrolled for the classes being held at the Singtam Senior Secondary School.

Organised by the Newa Bhay Bowneykuti, Singtam, classes are being held in two shifts - in the mornings for students and the self employed and late afternoon classes for those who are employed.

Deo Kumari Pradhan, a senior social worker, was present as the chief guest

today accompanied by Krishna Chettri, president, Shantinagar Gaon Sudhar Samiti, as guest of honour.

Bikash Pradhan, Coordinator, Newar Language Section, HRDD, has designed the course being taught Bibita Pradhan, Nirmala Pradhan, Tara Pradhan and Meena Pradhan.

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## Gangtok on Monday, 07 Jan

**Temp:** 14°C/06°C  
**Forecast:** Sunny to partly cloudy with a little rain in the evening, then a shower in spots

**Sunrise:** 07:01 AM  
**Sunset:** 03:49 PM

## Nepal PM remains...

action against Tourism Minister Ravindra Adhikary, Tourism Secretary and Managing Director of the airlines Sugat Ratna Kansakar and two former ministers. During his one hour address to the Parliament, Oli sidestepped queries on the aircraft deal posed by the opposition and instead briefed the House on his government's work in the first five months of the current fiscal and the present scenario of economic indicators.

He said revenue collection has gone up by 32 per cent, while capital expenditure grew by 25.3 per cent with inflation standing at 3.7 per cent in the first five months of the current fiscal. Oli further said the government received foreign assistance of Rs 162 billion, and the trade loss was down by 1.5 per cent during his 10-month rule.

Lawmakers from the main opposition, Nepali Congress, later obstruct the House proceedings after they were denied by Speaker Krishna Bahadur Mahara to pose questions to the prime minister about the aircraft deal and other controversial issues.

## CM lays foundation...

Tourism Minister Ugen T Gyasto, Agriculture Minister Somnath Poudyal, area MLA Gopal Barailly along with officials of Tourism and other line departments were present for the function.

## Next term will focus...

In this regard, he drew attention to a speech by a Sikkim Krantikari Morcha at an SKM function, the video of which has since gone viral, which announces that SKM will win the next elections by any means possible.

"They are announcing killings even before elections and even before they form the government," said the Chief Minister, reminding people that the violent intent of the said party should be obvious to all.

He also focused on forward strides made by education in Sikkim and highlighted the many milestones already crossed in this regard.

He informed that the government spends Rs One lakh on each student and about 20% percent of the budget is dedicated to the education sector in a focused move to end disparity from the Sikkimese society.

The CM also approved the area MLA's demand seeking 12 linesmen in the constituency for quicker resolution of power disruption complaints and announced Rs 35 Lakh aid for the Pranami Mandir, Karmithang, and Rs 1.28 cr for a Teej Community Hall.

The Chief Minister also shared an update on the 1000-bed multi specialty hospital coming up at Sokeythang where three people from each constituency will be given jobs in C and D categories.

He added that Sikkimese doctors working in Siliguri, Manipal, Kolkata and other parts of the country are being given the opportunity to work in the new facility.

With free treatment including Dialysis, operations and cancer treatment, the CM shared that he aims to make it the best hospital in India.

## SKM confident it is...

He informed that SKM will give party tickets to candidates selected by the people and not hand them out as favours like the SDF does.

He stressed the need to further strengthen the constituency-level and ward-level committees and reach out to the people with the policies and principles of the party.

He further announced that the SKM will release two election manifestos, one for individual constituency-level and another for general announcements. He added that SKM will celebrate its 6th foundation day in grand manner in East Sikkim.

Mr Tamang also scoffed that SDF has begun distributing blankets. On the same, he added that the people should accept these blankets as it was not from any individual but from public money. He stated that SKM had distributed blankets to 100 families of Karzee on the birth anniversary of former CM the late NB Bhandari in 2018 and now the ruling party has copying the gesture. He also announced that SKM will also distribute blankets to families in need.

# Roles of Festivals

RONGNYOO LEPCHA

Festivals are an important part of every culture. It is a time for merry-making and relaxation from the rigmarole of daily life. I have had the opportunity to visit some of the local festivals with my fellow researchers, and every festival made it clear that it was more than just the celebration of say a new year or a harvest but had many layers of functioning to them.

One of the festivals I attended was the Chasok Tangnam festival of the Limbus. Chasok Tangnam is among one of the most important Kirat Limbu festivals, Chasok, referring to the first harvest offered to the gods and deities, and Tangnam meaning festival. This festival falls in the month of December though no specific date if fixed on the Gregorain calendar since the Limbus follow the lunar calendar and allot a date within a full moon cycle.

In Sikkim, the festival is held at Saramsa Kheth (Saramsa, East Sikkim) where Limbus from all over Sikkim gather and celebrate together. Traditionally, Limbus celebrated Chasok Tangnam festival at an individual level with the first harvest being offered to Yuma Sammam (Limbu ancestor goddess). The festival was not celebrated in a social group until recently. Earlier, Chasok worshipping was done at home by individual families, especially by the woman of the house who has borne a child.

Limbus being an agrarian community, hold this festival in celebration of a good harvest and fertility of the land. Chasok Tangnam developed as a festival among Limbu people for harvest and their ancestors for handing down the teachings of agriculture. The ceremony starts with the Phedangma (Limbu priest) reciting the story of Limbu ancestors leading a life of hunting and gathering, then, they were taught to plant and harvest various crops by Yuma Sammam. The Limbus offer the harvest as offerings to their supreme god Tagera Ningwaphumang and the ancestor goddess Yuma Sammam for the knowledge of agriculture bestowed on them by them. It is strongly believed that any harvest consumed without first being offered to the gods would bring bad luck and misfortune.

The festival hosts traditional games like tug of war and juggling of stones which the people take part in enthusiastically. Stalls with various traditional foods and traditional items are

put up, a small replica of a Limbu traditional Khim (house) with various materials items of the community displayed for visitors to get in touch with the old but valuable traditional relics. It also includes the traditional Chyak Brung dances with the traditional drums matching the footsteps imitating various animal movements. The drums echoing the rebirth of Limbu identity and culture.

As I was working on a festival myself for my own fieldwork, I attended one of the more important festivals of the Lepchas, the birth anniversary of Pano Gaeboo Achyok. The festival is a community event, celebrated on the 20th of December every year at Kalimpong. Like any other festival, it started small at the village level initially but soon grew bigger and is today celebrated in a grand manner with Lepchas from all over gathering at one place to show solidarity and to pay homage to the last Lepcha king, Pano Gaeboo Achyok.

The festival starts with a visit to Damsang Gree by Bongthings who offer prayers there. The old ruins of the fort are lit up once a year with lamps made of banana and bamboo oil. The area is cleaned by the Pedong Lepcha youth a day before the festival and prayers and offerings made in the old ruined room of the fort.

After offering prayers and carrying out the rituals at the fort, the Bongthings join the mass rally towards Mela Ground in Kalimpong. When I was there, Lepchas from Kalimpong, Darjeeling, Bhutan of different religious background and different age groups had gathered for this big event. Food was prepared and served to all the people who came to the festival. Cultural events are the star of the event where people enjoy and relax themselves.

While continuing my own research, I also had the opportunity to attend the Bhujel festival of Pugal Parim with another fellow researcher. With the revivalism of the Bhujel traditions, they have been keenly accepting their traditional ways and enthusiastically celebrating their festivals, one of the more important one of which is Pugal Parim celebrated at 27th Mile, Sepkhola (Kalimpong).

One of the main reasons for the grand celebration of this festival is to preserve their culture, arts and traditions. Before the establishment of Bhujel Welfare Society, the Bhujels used to celebrate this festival at their own



homes. Pugal means Bhujel and Parim means meeting. So, the convention of Bhujels at a particular place and celebrating is known as Pugal Parim. Celebrated in a grand manner, it starts early as Pugal families from all over Kalimpong meet at Sepkhola, the Phoros (priests) perform rituals dedicated to nature deities. Sacrifices are made to the river deity, followed by cultural performances. Each family cooks its own food at the festival and there is ofcourse sharing of meals with one another. Another aspect that came to light was that festivals also served for match-making with the youth were given the opportunity to choose anyone that they desired at the festival. Anyone could select the girl/ boy of their choice for marriage, that is, only if the chosen party accepted the proposal, encouraging endogamy within the community.

In all of these festivals, people adorn their traditional attires and perform ceremonies recreating the traditional manners. In fact, festivals are events where one can trace back the whole history of material and non-material customs and cultures of a community. One can see varieties of cultural ornaments flaunted in the open which otherwise

are believed to have perished. Restoration of the old customs are the means by which communities make an attempt to get back in touch with their roots and ensuring the younger generation absorbs all of it so that they can carry it further. Identity becomes very important when it comes to a bigger platform like a community identity. Now that the world is expanding, it becomes all the more important to show one's identity to be recognized. For long, many have been in this unending race. There has been a great deal of effort put in to

stand out in the crowd and festivals provide the perfect platform for communities to show their identity, culture and rituals. Even communities living in close proximity are trying to show their own distinctiveness and how they are prominent.

The predicament of identity has caused communities to proclaim each of their unique ways to stand out from the rest. Currently there are many ethnic communities which are struggling for their identities to be recognized. Festivals reveal and explain current values and social situations which offer a vision of the future about a community. The celebration of festivals has important functions like preserving heritage, encouraging social solidity, releasing tensions accumulated from daily life and inculcating pride and loyalty towards the community. There is also exertion of the community identity to make it known to the world of the community's existence and their rich heritage.

[the writer is a Research Scholar with the Department of Anthropology, Sikkim University]

## AFFIDAVIT

I, Sumita Pradhan aged about 36 years daughter of Shri Dirgha Raj Pradhan, resident of Namchi Bazar, P.O. & P.S Namchi, South Sikkim do hereby solemnly affirm on Oath and declare as under :-

1. That I had lost my original Pass Certificate of Class - X bearing index no. T/263/024of Indian School Certificate Examination (ICSE).
2. That I had lodged FIR before the Station House Officer, Namchi Police Station on 4.01.2019 bearing GD No. 50 and also published in the local Newspaper "SummitTimes" date 5th January 2019 for the said lost.
3. That I have sworn this affidavit to declare that I had lost my Original Pass Certificate of Class X bearing Index No. T/263/024 of Indian School Certificate Examination. (ICSE).
4. Sworn and signed this affidavit on this the 5th Day of January 2019 at Namchi, South Sikkim at 12.10 pm

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## Namchi Smart City Limited

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## Corrigendum

This is to inform that the advertisement under project “Namchi Smart City Limited, UD HD Building, Kavi Agam Singh Road, Namchi-737126, South Sikkim’ under the caption ‘01. INVITATION FOR BIDS’ published in SummitTIMES Vol. 03 no. 315 dt. 10.12.2018 no 361 dt. 11. 12. 2018 has been changed as below:

1. SL.NO. 4 Pedestrian Walkway from Namchi Bazar to entry Gate (Job A) with bid value of 138.84 has been divided into two parts.
  - a. Pedestrian Walkway from Namchi Bazar Entry Gat (from near Mt. Carmel school) to starting point of Rock Garden road with bid value of 65.52 (lakhs) (Job A).
  - b. Pedestrian Walkway from Ghurpisey (from Kinzong Bhutia House) to Entry Gate (Job B) with bid value of 73.58 (Lakhs).
2. Likewise, Construction of new link road from Durga Mandir to Kamrang College is also been divided into two parts.
  - a. Construction of new link road from Durga Mandir to Kamrang college JOB A’ with bid value of 105.28 (lakhs)
  - b. Construction of link road from Durga Mandir (from near Lt. Dhan Bahadur Chettri house) ‘JOB B’ with bid value of 128.00 (lakhs).

Rest everything remains same as published. The department regrets for above errors and above stand as rectified and correct.

SD/-

**Chief Executive officer,**

**Namchi Smart City Limited (NSCL)**

**Namchi, South Sikkim**

**Dated: 5. 01.2019**



## ICFAI Univ officials call on Governor, discuss prospects

SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 06 JAN:

The Vice-Chancellor of the ICAFI University, Sikkim, Dr Jagannath Patnaik, paid a courtesy visit to Governor Ganga Prasad on 04 January. Dr. Patnaik was accompanied by the recently appointed Registrar of the university, Dr Rabindra Chettri.

During the meet which lasted for about 30 minutes at the Raj Bhawan here in the capital, several issues regarding future plans and programmes of the University were discussed, it is informed.

Dr Chettri is a retired botanist with a PhD in Genetics.

"Resources can be of great help to the university in transforming the vacant land of about 17 acres that we have in Tarku, South Sikkim, into a world class organic farming centre and skill development centre," Dr Patnaik said.

The Vice-Chancellor further stressed the potential of making Sikkim an educational hub and introducing a 'customised employable skill development programs' in close association with the corporate houses and banking sector in the State through their Corporate Social Responsibility grants.

He further appealed to the government in the State and the Center to extend all possible support to the university.

The ICAFI University Sikkim Administration Retreat was organised at Majhitar the next day. The idea behind this retreat was to have a relaxed brainstorming session with the team and come up with ideas to empower the youth in the state and developing Sikkim in the years to come, keeping the development of the youth and the coming generation as the primary concern.

The retreat was also attended by the Dean, Dr Sudha Kumari Jha, Asst. Registrar Rohit Rathi and rest of the staff.

## Nepal writes to RBI to declare banned new Indian currency notes legal

**KATHMANDU, JAN 6 (PTI):** Nepal has asked the RBI to declare newly circulated Indian currency notes of denominations higher than Rs 100 legal tender in the country, according to media report on Sunday.

The Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB), the country's central monetary authority, has written a letter on Friday to the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), asking it to make Indian bank bills Rs 200, Rs 500 and Rs 2,000 legal tender in Nepal, The Himalayan Times reported.

The NRB has asked the India's central bank to issue a notification under the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), which will make Indian bank notes of denomination more than Rs 100 legal tender in Nepal and to provide the exchange facilities to get bills of such denominations, it said. The RBI has only allowed the circulation of Indian currency notes of Rs 100 and less in Nepal and provides exchange facilities for bills of these denomination.

## Himalayan Bio Organic Soc organizes agri exhibition on foundation day



SUMMIT REPORT  
KALIMPONG, 06 JAN:

The Himalayan Bio Organic Society organized an Organic Agri. Exhibition/ Sale for its foundation day celebrations at Nokdara in Kalimpong today. Eight stalls by the SHGs of Nokdara, Pochok, Git Beyong and Geet Dabbling were put up and more than a thousand people from Nokdara Valley, Pochok, Geet Beyong and Geet Dabbling attended. Margerate Lepcha coordinated with the Self Help Groups of the area.

Block Development Officer, Block II, Algahra, Kalimpong District, was present as chief guest and Dr CM Sharma, Veterinary Officer, was special guest in.

Mahendra Chettri, president, Himalayan Bio Organic Society, Nokdara, Bishnu Chettri, president, Krishak Kalyan Sangathan, Kalimpong, Topden Lepcha, Head Master, Geet Dabbling Higher Secondary School, Bhim

dal, Greshi Lepcha and Kamal Kumar Rai were also present.

BDO, Block II, Algarha spoke about the integrated farming system and medium and small industry projects at Nokdara, Pochok, Geet Beyong and Geet Dabbling.

She also dived on the potential of Nokdara Valley and its surrounding areas.

The Himalayan Bio Organic Society president presented an introduction to the organization and detailed integrated schemes such as organic farming and the Organic Certification Process, Agriculture and Horticulture Training Centre in Nokdara and its surrounding villages.

He urged participants to start eco-tourism and dairy schemes and informed that under the guidance of Block Development Officer (Block II) Algara a Multipurpose Cooperative Society was going to be started in the valley soon.



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## Human Resource Development Department Government of Sikkim

Tashiling Secretariat  
Gangtok

Ref. No. GoS/HRDD/Adm/2018/678/02

Date: 03/01/19

## NOTICE INVITING RE-TENDER

For & on behalf of Governor of Sikkim, Deputy Director/IT, Human Resource Development Department, Government of Sikkim, seeks proposals from reputed and experienced registered Company /Proprietorship firm in India to participate in competitive bidding for implementation of "Smart Classrooms (including Supply and Installation of software solution, IT and non-IT equipment (Site preparation, electrical / UPS with required wiring etc), commissioning, integration and maintenance" for a period of 03 (three) years in the border areas of Sikkim.

The RFP document is available on the website [www.sikkimtender.gov.in](http://www.sikkimtender.gov.in). Interested Bidders, who qualify as per the criteria mentioned in the RFP document, may submit their bids online as per calendar of events. Bidders are required to submit tender document fee of Rs. 30,000.00 in form of Demand draft from a Nationalized/ Scheduled bank/ State Bank of Sikkim in favour of Additional Chief Secretary/HRDD, payable at Gangtok.

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**Dy. Director/IT**  
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Date: 04.01.19

Development Department  
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## OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ELECTORAL OFFICER BALUAKHANI, GANGTOK-SIKKIM

## PUBLIC NOTICE

(Change in Date of Final Publication of ELECTORAL ROLL)

This is for information of general public that final Publication of Electoral Roll in respect of Special Summary Revision of Photo Electoral Roll in respect of Special summary Revision of Photo Electoral Rolls of intensive nature with reference to 01.01.2019 as qualifying date in all Assembly Constituencies of Sikkim will be on 18.01.2019 (Friday) instead of 04.01.2019.

## No Voter to be left Behind

**Mere possession of EPIC card without name in electoral roll does not provide Right to vote. Please check your name in voter list online [www.ceosikkim.nic.in](http://www.ceosikkim.nic.in) or [www.nvsp.in](http://www.nvsp.in)**

**If your name is missing from electoral roll, please apply immediately. Process for additional of addition of names and correction of existing entries will continue even after final publication of electoral roll.**

Helpline No.  
1950

website  
[www.ceosikkim.nic.in](http://www.ceosikkim.nic.in)

**R.O. No: 576/IPR/PUB/Classi/18-19**  
Dated: 05/0/2019



## GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM TOURISM & CIVIL AVIATION DEPARTMENT PARYATAN BHAWAN NEAR METRO POINT, TADONG, EAST SIKKIM

EOI No: 347/TD

DATED: 05/01/2019

## EXPRESSION OF INTEREST NO. 347/TD

On behalf of Governor of Sikkim, the Tourism & Civil Aviation Department, Government of Sikkim invites the Expression of Interest (EOI) for "Construction of statues of four patron saints of Sikkim at Yuksom in West Sikkim" on a Design, Built at Transfer (DBT) basis from the Class-I AA registered Contractors enlisted with Sikkim Public Works Department (SPWD) and having experience and expertise in construction of Temples, Statues and religious complexes. The interested contractors shall submit their Expression of Interest to the Chief Engineer, Tourism & Civil Aviation Department, Metro Point, Lower Tadong, East Sikkim on or before 9th February, 2019 along with the requisite documents to fulfill the pre-qualification as per the Eligibility Criteria given below.

The details of the other mandatory requirements, general conditions, tender guidelines, bid system, selection process, project overview, project completion schedule, tender schedule etc will be uploaded in the departmental website [www.sikkimtourism.gov.in](http://www.sikkimtourism.gov.in) on 8th January, 2019.

Eligibility Criteria:

The Eligibility Criteria to be fulfilled by the intending bidders for pre-qualification are as under:

- i) The intending bidder shall be the holder of Class-AA enlistment certificate registered with the Sikkim Public Works Department (SPWD), Government of Sikkim. The attested copy of the intending bidder shall be attached with Expression of Interest.
- ii. The intending bidder or his/her associate partner/consortium shall have adequate experience in construction of Temple, Statues or Religious complexes with a proven track record of having successfully executed and completed at least one similar nature of project of net worth not less than Rs. 10.00 crore in a single work order/job order or at least Rs. 15.00 crore in two work orders/job orders in the last 10 years within the State or any regions in India. The completion certificate of the client/client department issued in the name of the bidder or his/her associate partner/consortium for having successfully completed the similar work indication project cost, location, name or type of the project or any other relevant information about the project shall be attached with the Expression of Interest. In case the experience and expertise so desired is in the entity of associate partner/consortium of the intending bidder, the attested copy of the registration of such partnership/consortium legally authenticated and certified by the District Magistrate within State of Sikkim shall be attached with the Expression of Interest.
- iii. The Annual Turnover of the intending bidder shall not be less than Rs. 4.00 crore per annum in the three years or less than Rs. 8.00 crore cumulative in the past two years. The certified copy of the balance sheet of the last three years duly vetted by the registered Chartered Accountant shall be attached with the Expression of Interest.
- iv. The intending bidder or his/her associate partner/consortium shall have adequate tools, plants, equipments and skilled artisans, craftsman for such work to explicitly display the bidder's capacity to execute the project. List of the same shall be submitted in self sheets for manpower and equipments separately.
- v. The intending bidder shall submit a latest Solvency Certificate from the State Bank of Sikkim or any Nationalized Banks operating in Sikkim issued not earlier than 8th January, 2019 for a minimum amount of Rs. 2.00 crore with the Expression on Interest.

Sd/-

**Chief Engineer,**  
Tourism & Civil Aviation Department  
Paryatan Bhawan, Tadong

**R.O. No.: 575/IPR/PUB/Classi/2018-19**  
Date: 05/01/2019



# SummitTIMES

## Grooming a Generation on Boredom

*Sikkim continues to prove itself to be an uncaring parent*

With the winter break now rather deep into the holidays and outstation vacation season also drawing to an end, the near complete lack of outdoor options for the children must be becoming obvious for most families in Sikkim. With the long school hours no longer available to dodge the guilt of the boredom we impose on the kids, there is no hiding from the embarrassment of Sikkim consistently proving to be an uncaring parent.

For those who might think otherwise, take a look around. How many parks and playgrounds does Sikkim make available for its children. Even the few that do exist are horrendously designed and although they might look pretty, are not the best of spaces to let children play around unsupervised. Even as the population has increased, the public spaces for children to play around have decreased. Children's parks have been reclaimed as car parks and the grounds that are available are neither maintained nor always open. Almost every locality is now built up to the level of blocking out the sun and the wind, allowing not even the corners or gullies where the kids could be left to play unchaperoned. Little surprise then that playing games has now become an engagement with screens. Even homes are no longer residential areas which used to have earlier have some space for children to run around and find devise their timepass. Sequestered into flats and "rooms", we are grooming a generation on boredom.

Apart from the obvious health issues that we are imposing on the young, there are also the mental and social handicaps that we are straddling them with. Boredom never delivered positive results, and needs no further reiteration here. Further, even though the young might not notice the obvious, at least at a subconscious level, the denials must be getting internalized, and that can't be healthy either. How can we question them decades later when Sikkim also becomes a place where the elders are also left uncared for? If for nothing else, then for our own selfish reasons of securing more dignified senior citizen years, we should look out for the young in more earnest, motivated less by civil-engineering possibilities. What we tend to also forget when we crowd children out of public spaces is that apart from schools and among relatives, it is in parks and grounds that children build social skills and learn about social responsibility. Replace the parks with smart-phones and we are replacing social contract with social media. That is not even an option and can have disastrous consequences in later years.

And yet, that is how we continue to "look after" our young. There are many issues which continue to get addressed only from top down- substance abuse, skill enhancement, competitiveness to name a few. Efforts directed at all of these could be reinforced if we also looked into the options we offer our children for their leisure hours and months. The society, the people, the parents, however, still don't appear concerned enough to join the discussion. No one has really tried to understand what issues concern the young; and then we wonder why nothing works...

### WRITE US:

Readers are invited to comment on, criticise, run down, even appreciate if they like something in this paper. Letters carrying abusive/ indecorous language and personal attacks, except when against people responsible in this newspaper (who are fair game), will have to be ignored. Letters which carry forward a conversation or initiate a dialogue will command immediate attention and receive prominence.

Mail us at: [news@summittimes.com](mailto:news@summittimes.com)

# How to negotiate infrastructure deals with China: four things African governments need to get right

FOLASHADE SOULE  
*theconversation.com*

"You don't negotiate with China!" I was quickly told when I started interviewing African public servants about their infrastructure deals with Beijing. There is a widespread view in Africa that you accept whatever terms are offered, for fear that the money might go somewhere else instead.

China is the leading infrastructure finance provider on the continent – as demonstrated by a recent pledge of US\$60 billion (£47 billion), most of which is for infrastructure projects. Big projects on the slate include hydropower plants in Angola and Guinea, an oil refinery in Nigeria, and a new city in Egypt.

Yet, when you look closely at what happens on the ground, some African countries are much better at negotiating with the Chinese than others. Railway projects in East Africa appear to be a good example. In Kenya, the Standard Gauge Railway is the largest infrastructure project since independence from Britain in 1963. China Eximbank provided most of the finance for the first phase – 472 kilometres of track between Nairobi and Mombasa – at a cost of US\$3.2 billion.

In neighbouring Ethiopia, an electric train line from Addis Ababa to Djibouti, which is also Chinese-financed, opened two years ago. The cost for this more expensive type of railway was US\$3.4 billion – for 756 kilometres. Kenya claims that its railway cost more for reasons like the terrain and the need to carry higher volumes of cargo. At the same time, however, many believe other issues to have been at play – including failures around the negotiation process.

My ongoing research into China funded infrastructure projects is confirming that African governments can learn from best practice in this area. The best deals depend on the following four conditions being met.

### 1. INVOLVE EVERYONE

The process in Chinese deal-making tends to go like this: Beijing will begin by making financial pledges, often aimed at a number of countries; these are followed by meetings at state level between a Chinese delegation and the African head of state and their senior officials. Infrastructure projects under discussion have often already been passed over by Western donors.

Once a project is broadly agreed, the relevant Chinese contractors, mostly state owned enterprises, will typically contact African civil servants in the relevant branches of government to get detailed negotiations underway – with support from the Chinese trade mission and local embassy. Topics to be discussed will include costs, but also the use of materials and workers; technology transfer; and the effect of national regulations in areas like labour, construction and the environment.

In countries like Togo and Cameroon, key ministries like finance, planning or even the cabinet will

lead the negotiation. In the likes of Benin and Senegal, the relevant technical ministry, such as transport or housing, will lead instead or take over. They are supposed to consult with departments like finance and planning, but they often press ahead on their own to speed up the process – sometimes without any experience of dealing with China.

In practice, such deals can be less beneficial to the country in question. Where one arm of government is not clear about what another is doing, it increases the potential for corruption – there has been a corruption investigation in the case of the new Kenyan railway, for example, and I have been told during my research that this was also linked to coordination failures during the negotiations.

When all relevant government departments are involved in a negotiation, it does take longer.



The process is more coherent, however, and the resulting project is less likely to breach national regulations.

### 2. EMPOWER THE NEGOTIATORS

The president or his senior advisors also frequently intervene during negotiations. This is likely to be politically motivated – a need to fulfil electoral promises around infrastructure development, perhaps, or pressure from the Chinese authorities.

Where civil servant negotiators are being pressed to hurry up, it can mean that national regulations get ignored. In Benin, for example, during negotiations over road projects several years ago, the Chinese contractors were unhappy about certain conditions being imposed. Then president Yayi Boni agreed to intervene on their behalf to bypass national regulations in areas including labour and construction. Such situations are best avoided.

On the other hand, some outside interventions can be positive. In Togo, Senegal and Tunisia, and the current government in Benin, I've seen examples of the cabinet hiring international law firms with experts who have worked in the Chinese government and its development banks. This can

bridge the differences in Chinese and African negotiating styles.

The Chinese often adopt a take-it-or-leave-it approach. In many cases, Africans are not confrontational enough in return. They don't appreciate that China has a surplus of domestically produced materials they are seeking to offload, for example. Wiser negotiators will play China off against other countries seeking to finance infrastructure projects on the continent, such as South Korea or the United Arab Emirates.

### 3. KEEP THE PUBLIC ONSIDE

China tends to be popular in Africa – more so than the US in around 60% of countries on the continent. Yet the public also see negatives: many think Chinese products are poor quality, while there is a growing perception that dealing with China tends

to favour Chinese labourers.

African governments need to bear these concerns in mind. If not, they risk being denounced by the media or civil society organisations – as has happened in Kenya over the railway, for instance.

### 4. INCREASE KNOWLEDGE

African governments are still relatively new to dealing with China; they should take every opportunity to share lessons with one another. There is a role for African universities here. They should set up more centres of Asian studies to close the gap in information and knowledge.

Some have argued in the past that many African governments fail to negotiate successfully with the Chinese because they lack a strategy. I actually see plenty stratagems and tactics on the African side. What is required is a more coordinated and coherent approach – something China has been working on from its own perspective. It is better for African governments to have no deal than a bad deal. With the right approach, they can achieve much more than is often thought to be the case.

*[the writer is Senior Research Associate, University of Oxford]*

## Keeping fit: How to do the right exercise for your age

JULIE BRODERICK  
*theconversation.com*

The effect of exercise on health is profound. It can protect you from a range of conditions, including heart disease, type 2 diabetes and some cancers. But the type and amount of exercise you should do changes as you age. To ensure that you are doing the right type of exercise for your age, follow this simple guide.

### CHILDHOOD AND ADOLESCENCE

In childhood, exercise helps control body weight, builds healthy bones and promotes self-confidence and healthy sleep patterns. The government recommends that children should get at least one hour of exercise a day. As a tip:

- Children should try a variety of sports and develop skills, such as swimming and the ability to hit and kick a ball.
- Lots of non-scheduled physical activity is great, too, such as playing in playgrounds.

Exercise habits tend to steadily decline during teen years, particularly in girls. Getting enough exercise promotes a healthy body image and helps manage stress and anxiety. You can also:

- Encourage teenagers to keep one team sport, if possible.
- For teenagers who are not into team sports, swimming or athletics can be a good way to keep fitness levels up.

### IN YOUR 20s

You are at your absolute physical peak in your mid-20s, with the fastest reaction times and highest VO2 max – the maximum rate at which the body can pump oxygen to muscles. After this peak, your VO2 max decreases by up to 1% each year and your reaction time slows each year. The good news is that regular physical activity can slow this decline. Building lean muscle mass and bone density at this age

helps you retain them in later years.

- Vary your training and keep it fun. Try tag rugby, rowing or boot camp.
- If you are a regular exerciser, get advice from an exercise professional to build "periodisation" into your training regime. This involves dividing your training regime into progressive cycles that manipulate different aspects of training – such as intensity, volume and type of exercise – to optimise your performance and ensure you peak for a planned exercise event, such as a triathlon.

### IN YOUR 30s

As careers and family life for many intensify in their 30s, it is important that you maintain cardiovascular fitness and strength to slow normal physical decline. If you have a sedentary job, make sure you maintain good posture and break up long periods of sitting by forcing activity into your day, such as routing your printer to another room, climbing a flight of stairs to use the bathroom on another floor, or standing when taking a phone call so you are moving every half an hour where possible.

- Work smart. Try high-intensity interval training. This is where bursts of high-intensity activity, up to 80% of your maximum heart rate, such as sprinting and cycling, are broken up with periods of lower-intensity exercise. This kind of workout is good for the time poor as it can be done in 20 minutes.
- For all women, and especially after childbirth, do pelvic floor exercises, sometimes known as Kegel exercises daily to help prevent incontinence.
- Diversify your exercise pro-

gramme to keep it interesting. Try boot camp, spin class or yoga.

### IN YOUR 40s

Most people start to put on weight in their 40s. Resistance exercise is the best way to optimise calorie burning to counteract fat accumulation and reverse the loss of three to eight per cent of muscle mass per decade. Ten weeks of resistance training could increase lean weight by 1.4kg, increase resting metabolic rate by 7% and decrease fat weight by 1.8kg.

- Try kettlebells or start a weight-training programme in your gym.
- Take up running, if you don't run already, and don't be afraid to start a more intensive exercise programme. You get more bang for your buck with running versus walking.
- Pilates can be useful to build core strength to protect against back pain, which often starts in this decade.

### IN YOUR 50s

In this decade, aches and pains may crop up and chronic conditions, such as type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease, can manifest. As oestrogen declines in postmenopausal women, the risk of heart disease increases.

- Do strength training twice a week to maintain your muscle mass.
- Weight-bearing exercises, such as walking, is recommended. Walk fast enough so that your breathing rate increases and you break a sweat.
- Try something different. Tai chi can be excellent for balance and relaxation.

### IN YOUR 60s

Typically, people accumulate more chronic conditions as they get

older, and ageing is a major risk factor for cancer. Maintaining a high level of physical activity can help prevent cancers, such as post-menopausal breast cancer, colon cancer and cancer of the womb, and it reduces the risk of developing chronic conditions, such as heart disease and type 2 diabetes.

Physical activity tends to decline with age, so keep active and try to buck this trend.

- Try ballroom dancing or other forms of dancing; it's a fun and sociable way to exercise.
- Incorporate strength and flexibility exercises twice a week. Aqua-aerobics can be a great way to develop strength using water as resistance.
- Maintain cardiovascular exercise, such as brisk walking.

### 70s AND BEYOND

Exercise in your 70s and beyond helps prevent frailty and falls, and it's important for your cognitive function. If you have a period of ill health, try to keep mobile, if possible. Strength and fitness can decline rapidly if you are bed bound or very inactive, which can make it hard to get back to previous levels.

- Walk and talk. Instead of inactive visits from family and friends, go for a walk together. It will keep you motivated and boost your health more than solitary exercise.
- Incorporate some strength, balance and cardiovascular exercise in your regime. But get advice from a physiotherapist or other exercise professional, especially if you have several chronic conditions.

The main message is to keep moving throughout your life. Sustained exercise is what benefits health most.

*[the writer is Assistant Professor, Physiotherapy, Trinity College Dublin]*



GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM  
ROADS & BRIDGES DEPARTMENT  
SORENG, WEST SIKKIM

MEMO NO.:136/GOS/SD/R&B/305/Soreng

Dated:04.01.2019

For and on behalf of the Governor of Sikkim, Assistant Engineer (Soreng), Roads & Bridges Department Government of Sikkim, invites sealed tenders under single bid system from the eligible contractors of class IV Grade enlisted with Sikkim Public Works Department vide Notification No.515/R&B/PWD/Secy. Dated 12.06.2018, 556/ R&B/PWD/Secy. Dated 26/08/18, and 584/R&B/PWD/Secy. Date:08/10/2018 for the construction of fair weather roads ,through competitive bidding within the territorial jurisdiction of concerned ward of the Gram Panchayat / Urban Local Bodies where the work is to be executed.

Sl. No	Name of Work	Cost put to Tender (Rs)	Earnest Money @ 2.5%(Rs)	Cost of tender Form (Rs)	Completion Time
1	Construction of road from Anku PWD road to lower sengeng PHSC (KM 0.00-1.00)	4238496.00	105962.00	1500.00	09 Months
2	Construction of road from Anku PWD road to lower sengeng PHSC (KM 1.00-2.00)	4238496.00	105962.00	1500.00	09 Months
3	Construction of road from Anku PWD road to lower sengeng PHSC (KM 2.00-3.00)	4238496.00	105962.00	1500.00	09 Months
4	Construction of road from Anku PWD road to lower sengeng PHSC (KM 3.00-4.00)	4238496.00	105962.00	1500.00	09 Months
5	Construction of road from Jamuney to Lekdam via upper Namrick ward no.1 (KM 0.00 -1.00)	4238496.00	105962.00	1500.00	09 Months
6	Construction of road from Jamuney to Lekdam via upper Namrick ward no.1 (KM 1.00-2.00)	4238496.00	105962.00	1500.00	09 Months
7	Construction of road from Jamuney to Lekdam via upper Namrick ward no.1 (KM 2.00-3.00)	4238496.00	105962.00	1500.00	09 Months
8	Construction of road from Dhargaon to rockgarden (KM0.00- 1.00)	4238496.00	105962.00	1500.00	09 Months
9	Construction of road from Baidang golai to khimmat golai (KM 0.00-1.00)	4238496.00	105962.00	1500.00	09 Months
10	Construction of road from Bori golai along Soreng Malbasey road to santhang ward (KM0.00- 1.50)	6357744.00	158944.00	5000.00	12 Months
11	Construction of road from pakkigaon dispensary towards malidang Malbasey west sikkim (KM0.00-1.00)	4238496.00	105962.00	1500.00	09 Months
12	Construction of road from pakkigaon dispensary towards malidang Malbasey west sikkim (KM1.00-2.50)	6357744.00	158944.00	5000.00	12 Months
13	Construction of road from Deythang near PHC to lower Dhankutey ward (km 0.00-1.00)	4238496.00	105962.00	1500.00	09 Months
14	Construction of road from Deythang near PHC to lower Dhankutey ward (km 1.00-2.00)	4238496.00	105962.00	1500.00	09 Months
15	Construction of road from Lower Deythang to U/Gairi gaon (KM 0.00-1.00)	4238496.00	105962.00	1500.00	09 Months
16	Construction of road from Lower Deythang to U/Gairi gaon (KM 1.00-2.00)	4238496.00	105962.00	1500.00	09 Months
17	Construction of road from PMGSY road Jushingthang Dhurpeney mandir via Deorali Dara (KM 0.00-1.00)	4238496.00	105962.00	1500.00	09 Months
18	Construction of road from PMGSY road Jushingthang Dhurpeney mandir via Deorali Dara (KM 1.00-2.00)	4238496.00	105962.00	1500.00	09 Months
19	Construction of road from PMGSY road Jushingthang Dhurpeney mandir via Deorali Dara (KM 2.00-3.00)	4238496.00	105962.00	1500.00	09 Months
20	Construction of road from Nakang Dara upper kamling to maneydara (km0.00-1.00)	4238496.00	105962.00	1500.00	09 Months
21	Construction of road from Nakang Dara upper kamling to maneydara (km 1.00-2.00)	4238496.00	105962.00	1500.00	09 Months
22	Construction of road from suldung PMGSY road to upper suldung (km0.00-1.00)	4238496.00	105962.00	1500.00	09 Months
23	Construction of road from suldung PMGSY road to upper suldung (km1.00-2.00)	4238496.00	105962.00	1500.00	09 Months
24	Construction of road from upper sribadam Daragaon and Ramitaydara and church (salom Pentecostal church) (km 0.00-1.50)	6357744.00	158944.00	5000.00	12 Months
25	Construction of road from upper sribadam Daragaon and Ramitaydara and church (salom Pentecostal church) (km 1.50-3.00)	6357744.00	158944.00	5000.00	12 Months
26	Construction of road from Bara samsing school to Rock garden via rungdung khola km 1.00-2.30	5458327.24	138011.00	5000.00	12 months
27	Construction of road from upper Gelling Dham area to Bhimsing gaon km 2.00-3.00	4238496.00	105962.00	1500.00	09 Months

Details for Date and time of Tender and venue are as follows:-

Sl. No	Name of Con-stituency	Date of Sub-mission of Application with Bank receipt for is-sue of Tender Document (Excluding ten-der form)	. Date of issue of Tender form on Submission of TDR ( as Earnest money	Last Date of Submission of Tender form	Date & Time of opening of Tender	Tender venue
1	Zoom Salgari ConstituencySl. no- 1-4 & Sl. No. 26 – 27)	14/01/2019 (10:00 am to 4:00 Pm)	16/01/2019 (10:00 am to 4:00 Pm)	17/01/2019 (10:00 am to 12.00 noon)	17/01/2019 Sl.no.1-4 (12.30 pm)  Si.no 26-27 (1.30pm-2.30pm)	1.Mabong G.P.K (sl. no 1-4) 2.Gelling G.P.K (Sl no.26-27 )

2	Soreng Chakung Constituency (Sl. no- 10-12) Zoom Salgari constitu-encySl.no- 5-9	16/01/2019 (10:00 am to 4:00 Pm)	17/01/2019 (10:00 am to 4:00 Pm)	18/01/2019 (10:00 am to 12.00 noon)	18/01/2019	Sl.no 11-12 (3.00-4.00pm)  Sl.no 10 (1.30-2.30pm)  Sl.no.5-9 (12.30pm)	1.Budang G.P.K (sl. no 11-12) 2.Malbasey G.P.K (si.no 10)  3.Zoom G.P.K, (sl. no.5-9)
3	Rinchenpong Constituency(Sl. no-13-25)	17/01/2019 (10:00 am to 4:00 Pm)	18/01/2019 (10:00 am to 4:00 Pm)	19/01/2019 (10:00 am to 12.00noon)	19/01/2019	Sl.no 13-16 (2.30-3.30pm)  Sl.no 17-19 (1.30-2.30 pm)  Sl.no 20-23 (12.30 noon)  Sl. No. 24-25 (3.30-4.00pm)	1.Deythang G.P.K sl.no.13-16 2.Parengga-on G.P.K (Sl. no. 17-19) 3.Suldung Kamling (Sl. no. 20-23) 4.Sreebad-am G.P.K Sl.no. 24-25

CONDITIONS OF CONTRACT:-

1.

Tender is open only to the eligible Contractors/Firms of appropriate Class /concerned ward of the Gram Panchayat unit and Urban Local bodies Area.
2.

The intending tenders/contractors should apply in writing for issue of tender documents. The applica-tion would be invariably be signed by the contractor himself/herself. The tender document will not be issued to any person other than the INTENDING TENDER. The application shall be submitted initially for each work listed above with all required documents.
3.

The applicants should enclosed attested copies of the a) Goods & Services Tax Clearance Certificate (b) Validated/Updated Contractor Enlistment Certificate along with the application along with attested copy of COI, Adhar card, Voter card. It is mandatory to produce the Original validated/Updated Enlist-ment Certificate during sale/issue of the Tender Document for verification.
4.

The prescribed Non-Transferable Tender Documents (excluding the Tender Form) can be obtained during the period specified in (from the Assistant Engineer, Roads and Bridges Department, Soreng Sub-Division, on production of requisite Bank deposit slip in favour of the concerned GPU .
5.

Earnest money deposit @ 2.5% in State Bank of Sikkim shall be in the form of Deposit Receipt of Sched-ule Bank which includes deposits in the form of temporary deposit receipts (TDR) in favor of the Sr. Ac-counts Officer, Roads & Bridges, Gyalshing, West Sikkim. Tender form shall be issued only on production of toward deposit receipts of 2.5% earnest money.
6.

The Tender Documents, including the Tender Form with quoted offer should be placed in a sealed cover with the name of the tenderers and the name of the work superscripted on it, supporting documents listed at Sl.No 3(a &b) along with other relevant documents be enclosed with the offer.
7.

Sealed tenders may be deposited in the Tender box in the office Concerned GPU where the work is to be executed, on the date and within the time indicated above.
8.

Tenders shall be opened by a Tender Opening Committee as prescribed by the Government in the pres-ence of the tenderers on the date and time indicated above.
9.

The Tenderer should sign on every page of the tender documents as Acceptance of the general Direction and Conditions of the Contract and other laid down norms. The rate quoted should be both in figures and words and should be inclusive of GST all other applicable Taxes and Levies. Over writing and cor-rection should be avoided and if made should be authenticated. Incomplete/Conditional tenders shall be rejected forthwith.
10.

In case of any discrepancy in rate(s) printed in the Schedule of Rates and Quantities issued with the ten-der documents, rates as per approved Schedule of Rates will be taken as correct. For items outside the SOR, the rates shall be as per the technically checked estimate/analysis. Decision of the Principal Chief Engineer cum Secretary/ Head of the Department will be final in this regard.
11.

The work value, scope and quantum of work are subject to change, the contractor shall execute the work as per the directives of the Department. No claim on this account is entertained whatsoever. If any claim is made, it shall be as per the agreement rates.
12.

The Department reserves the rights to hold payments to the contractor unless test certificates are not produced by the contractor when called upon to do so.
13.

Avoidable damages due to negligence of the contractor shall be at his own risk and cost. The Depart-ment shall not be liable for payment of such damages (if any), including accidents to labours at site.
14.

The offer shall remain valid for a period of 90 days. The work should commence within 15 days from the issue of the work order.
15.

All the conditions as mentioned in the NIT shall be deemed to a part of the agreement to be entered with the contractor. Security deposit shall be collected by deductions from the running bills of the contractor @ 5% of the value of work done.
16.

The Department reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason thereof.
17.

The recoveries of Royalties on Forest Produce shall be as per rates notified by the Government from time to time and applicable on the date of payment. In no case, clam of any contractor for deduction as per rates incorporated in the analysis of rates or Schedule of Rates on the date of tender shall be acceptable.
18.

Subletting of contract work is against the norms and if it comes to notice, the original contract shall be cancelled and appropriate action shall be initiated as per the rules.
19.

The Department also reserves the right to increase, decrease, alter or modify the item of works as indi-cated in the NIT without assigning any reason thereof.
20.

In case the man powers employed by the contractors are from outside the State or neighboring coun-tries, it shall be the responsibility of the contractors to get them registered with the labour department, Government of Sikkim as per the relevant Labour Laws.
21.

Use of explosives shall be regulated as under:-

a)

Transportation, Handling, storage and use of Explosives (if necessary) shall be in accordance with the provisions of the India Explosive Act and General Guidelines, Circulars issued by the depart-ment and other competent authorities on the subject from time to time.

b)

The rules and regulations issued by the Sikkim Public Works department or any other competent authority shall strictly be adhered to with regard to transportation, storage; handling and use of explosives shall be maintained by the contractor.
22.

The contractor shall also make arrangements to have photographs of the works taken at least at three stages of the construction period. i.e. beginning, middle and completion stage.
23.

Damage to properties in and around the work site must be avoided at all cost. The contractor shall be held responsible for any acts of negligence and shall be made to make good the damages.
24.

It is accepted to the tenderer to have inspected the site before submitting his/her bid. There may be possible site difficulties for which the tenderer should have their own correct assessment before sub-mitting the bid.
25.

The cost of stock materials supplied from the Department store will be deducted from the contractors’ bills as per rules.
26.

The bidders shall produce a Certificate of Residence from the concerned Gram Panchayat Unit where the work is to be executed.

Sd/-

R.O. No. 574/IPR/Pub/classi./18-19  
Date:05.01.2019

Assistant Engineer,  
Roads & Bridges Department,  
Soreng Division, West Sikkim



# India on course for historic series win despite rain-hit day four

CHETAN NARULA

**SYDNEY, JAN 6 (PTI):** Fickle weather on day four prevented India from closing in on a big win in the fourth Test but they were well on course for their maiden series victory in Australia after forcing the hosts to follow-on at home for the first time since 1988.

Bad light and intermittent rain led to substantial loss of play with only 25.2 overs bowled on day four.

Australia were placed at 6-0 in 4 overs after Kuldeep Yadav's five-wicket haul in his maiden Test Down Under helped India bowl the home team out for 300 in the first innings.

Umpires took players off the field with eight minutes remaining in the belated afternoon session. Marcus Harris (2) and Usman Khawaja (4) were the unbeaten batsmen with Australia still trailing by 316 runs.

But play didn't resume at all once the scheduled tea break was over, as bad light hampered proceedings once again. The umpires waited for nearly an hour, coming out for inspection in between, before making a decision at 5 pm local time.

The match officials were ready to wait until 6 pm for light to improve,



but a slight drizzle put paid to the wait and the day was called off at 5.20 pm local time.

This was after Australia were bowled out for 300 runs (104.5 overs) in their first innings and were asked to follow on, surrendering a lead of 322 runs. Kuldeep Yadav took 5-99, making instant impact in his first game of the series.

After the morning session was washed out, play resumed at 1.50 pm

local time with 230 minutes lost to bad light and rain since day three.

India took the second new ball immediately and made quick inroads. Mohammed Shami (2-58) bowled Pat Cummins (25) with a ball that kept low on the sixth ball after resumption of play.

At the other end, Jasprit Bumrah (1-62) set up Peter Handscomb (37) who played on after a resilient innings facing 111 balls. Yadav then

trapped Nathan Lyon (0) lbw as Australia lost three wickets for 22 runs in the space of 44 balls.

And he could have immediately completed his five-wicket haul, but Hanuma Vihari put down a skier from Josh Hazlewood (21) at mid on. In the process, Vihari hurt his left shoulder whilst fielding and didn't take the field later on in the session, with Hardik Pandya coming on as a substitute fielder.

Hazlewood and Mitchell Starc (29 not out) then added 42 runs for the 10th wicket as Australia reached 300 despite another pitiful batting display.

Yadav got his reward thereafter with Hazlewood trapped lbw on a close umpire's call, and the decision stayed in the wrist-spinner's favour despite DRS.

Australia were then forced to follow on for the first time in Test

cricket since 2005 when England had enforced the same in Nottingham. On their home soil, this was the first instance of Australia following on since 1988, again in Sydney, versus England.

Earlier, incessant rain and bad light prevented the start of play. It couldn't commence at the scheduled early 10 am local time start due to bad light and wet conditions from overnight heavy rain.

The light improved in some time and the two umpires stipulated 11 am local time as the start of play, but rain arrived to prevent that from happening.

The inclement weather didn't relent until lunchtime and the morning session was completely washed out.

Australia were reduced to 236-6 at stumps on day three when bad light had stopped play.

On days one and two, Cheteshwar Pujara (193) and Rishabh Pant (159 not out) helped India to a grand first innings' total of 622-7 declared.

India have an unsailable 2-1 series' lead after winning the first Test in Adelaide by 31 runs and the third Test in Melbourne by 137 runs. Australia had won the second Test in Perth by 146 runs.

## Qatar coach to 'isolate' team from Gulf politics at Asian Cup



**DOHA, JAN 6 (AFP):** Qatar coach Felix Sanchez has vowed to "isolate" his players from politics at the Asian Cup, which is taking place in the United Arab Emirates during a diplomatic crisis between the countries.

The tournament represents the first visit by the Qatari national side to the UAE since the beginning of a row that has transformed the Gulf and left Doha cut off from its neighbouring former allies.

Since June 2017, the UAE and other regional powers have imposed a boycott on Qatar, accusing it of backing terrorism and being too close to Iran.

Two of the other nations who have enforced the boycott also have teams in the tournament, Saudi Arabia and Bahrain.

Qatar denies the charges and says its neighbours are seeking regime change in Doha.

With the dispute now into its nineteenth month, the Asian Cup is the most high-profile sporting competition so far between the former allies turned bitter rivals.

And nothing is likely to be more highly-charged than the meeting between Saudi and Qatar in a Group E match in Abu Dhabi on January 17.

As if the on-pitch weight of expectation surrounding Qatar's young team ahead of hosting the 2022 World Cup was not enough, now they have to navigate a delicate off-field situation.

Sanchez though has vowed to concentrate solely on football.

"This [political situation] is something we've discussed with the players," he told AFP.

"They are very conscious and I am convinced that during the competition they will be able to maintain their focus on the sport and to isolate ourselves from the rest of it all."

The team arrived in UAE on Saturday, having to fly via Kuwait in the first sign this is no ordinary trip -- a ban on direct flights has been imposed against Doha by the UAE, Saudi and Bahrain. A leading Qatari official and tournament organiser was earlier allegedly barred from entering the UAE on his first attempt, though officials in Abu Dhabi disputed this.

Saoud al-Mohannadi eventually entered the Emirates on Friday. But Qatar-based journalists also claim they were not allowed into the UAE to cover the tournament, after allegedly being kept waiting at Dubai airport for 13 hours before returning to Doha.

Qatari domestic sides

who have played in the UAE or Saudi in the AFC Champions League have previously spoken of delays at airport immigration and comments about Qatar, or encountered rival captains refusing to shake hands before the match.

However, goalkeeper Saad al-Sheeb said the players would remain unaffected.

"In the end this is football," he said. "We just control ourselves and play football."

On the pitch, Qatar have shown a distinct improvement since Spaniard Sanchez took charge in 2017.

Initially seen as a stop-gap appointment at the end of a failed World Cup qualification campaign, the 43-year-old has transformed the team.

He has placed emphasis on young, largely Qatari-born players -- rather than imported stars -- who have progressed through the Aspire Academy, an expensively-built Doha training centre which seeks to hothouse local talent.

These include forward Akram Afif, the first Qatari to play in Spain's La Liga, and defender Abdulkarim Hassan, just voted the AFC 2018 player of the year.

In November, Qatar achieved its most notable international victory, beating Switzerland 1-0 in Lugano.

The average age of Qatar's starting line-up in Switzerland was 24 years and 195 days, and 13 of the 25 players who travelled to Europe were Aspire graduates.

Sanchez is proving a unique problem for Qatar football association bosses who like to hire and fire coaches.

Since the beginning of the century Qatar has hired 15 separate coaches, and one of those twice, as they desperately seek to put the team on the world stage.

Sanchez has worked with the Qatari players at every level from the academy through the Under-19s, Under-20s, Under-23s and now the full team.

It is the beginning of a massive year for Sanchez and Qatar, who will also play in the Copa America later in 2019.

In an Asian Cup group also consisting of Lebanon and North Korea, a resurgent "al-An-nabi" (the Maroons) will be confident of reaching the knockouts.

It is the tenth time they have qualified for the Asian Cup but have never progressed further than the quarter-finals.

This time though they have a lot to prove.

"I certainly nominate Qatar to be the dark horse of the tournament," said Hassan.

## Federer, Kerber cautious on new Aus Open tie-break rule



**PERTH, JAN 6 (AFP):** Star players Roger Federer and Angelique Kerber have cautiously welcomed new tie-break rules for the deciding set at the Australian Open.

The year's opening Grand Slam, starting January 14, will for the first time feature an extended tie-break in the final set when the score reaches 6-6, rather than a traditional full set.

To win the decisive tie-break, a player will need to be the first to 10 with an advantage of at least two points.

The move means all four Slams now use different rules, with only the French Open holding off from introducing a tie-break in the decider.

Speaking at the Hopman Cup in Perth this week, Federer -- who said he had been asked for his opinion on the change by tournament officials -- admitted marathon final sets would be missed by some.

"We will miss the 70-68 in the fifth, so that's a pity," he said, referring to the famous final-set marathon between John Isner and Nicolas Mahut at Wimbledon in 2010.

But Federer, aiming for his third successive Australian Open title and seventh overall, said he was personally "a bit torn" between the options. "I am okay with any format really," he said. "Thing is, when it goes to six-all in the fifth, you've had plenty of chances to win it, or lose it, so from that standpoint how it ends is secondary in my opinion."

Kerber -- who has based her game on superior physical fitness -- suggested her advantage could be diluted by shortened deciders in Melbourne, where she won her first Slam in 2016. "I like physical matches and if you come here to Australia you have to be really fit," she said. "With the weather, the conditions, it's really

hot and humid and you have to be ready for that.

"I have no idea if I like (the new rule) or not, we will see." But the German world number two, who was beaten 9-7 in the deciding set of last year's Australian Open semi-final by Simona Halep, also said she could see both sides of the debate.

"It might be easier because you can save energy, on the other side it is a tradition to play the advantage set," she said.

"Let's see how it works this year."

Among the other Slams, Wimbledon will use final set tie-breaks at 12-12 starting from 2019, the US Open plays a traditional tie-break at 6-6 and the French Open does not use a final set tie-break.

"The funny thing is we have four different formats in four Slams, so it is important to remind yourself what's going on and which one it is," said Federer.

## 'Heartbreaking': tennis stars lament potential end of Hopman Cup

**PERTH, JAN 6 (AFP):** The likely demise of the Hopman Cup after three decades of the unique mixed teams tennis tournament has been greeted with sadness by players at this year's edition, with Serena Williams calling the prospect "heartbreaking".

Swiss duo Roger Federer and Belinda Bencic beat Germans Alexander Zverev and Angelique Kerber in Saturday's final in front of a sell-out crowd in Perth, but it is expected to be the last instalment of the event.

A dramatic finish to what was arguably the best Hopman Cup ever -- which also saw Federer and Serena face off for the first time in a historic mixed doubles clash -- came down to a single match point shared by both sides in the final.

However, the event is widely tipped to be scrapped to make way for the new ATP World Team Cup, which will start next year. While Tennis Australia has a contract with the West Australian State Government to run the ITF-sanctioned tournament until 2022, the new ATP event would make it very hard for the Hopman Cup to attract top men's players.

American superstar Serena, who was playing in Perth for the fifth time in her career and has won the title twice, said she was unaware of speculation on the Hopman's fate, but that she was upset by the prospect of it vanishing. "Obviously it would be heartbreaking," she said.

German world number two Kerber, who has reached successive finals



in the past two Hopman Cups, was saddened by the news. "I really love the tournament," she said. "We all will be sad that it is the last time at Hopman Cup."

"Playing here as a team with your partner, playing the mixed which is exciting, I will miss it."

Launched in 1989 by former Australian players Paul McNamee and Charlie Fancutt and named after Australian tennis great Harry Hopman, the Hopman Cup has been used as preparation for the Australian Open by three decades of players and has held a unique place in the tennis world as the only top level mixed teams tournament. Swiss legend Roger Federer, with five appearances in Perth including one partnered with his future wife Miroslava Vavrinec back in 2002, said it would be "a pity" if the event did not continue.

"We had an unbelievable event here for so many years -- the Hopman Cup has been very successful from a

player's viewpoint," the three-time winner said.

"The players have always enjoyed this event, so let's hope it continues in some shape and form," said Federer, adding that he believed a mixed teams event was good for tennis. "Where and how and what, honestly I don't know," he added.

Frenchwoman Alize Cornet, who played four times at the Hopman and won the title with Jo-Wilfried Tsonga in 2014, was mortified by the prospect of the event disappearing. "That would be the worst thing ever," she said. "Losing the Hopman Cup after losing Davis Cup and everything that is happening with the ITF, I think it's a big shame."

"I think people, what they enjoy about this competition, is the fact that it's mixed. "It's just a unique and special competition and losing it, I would be very sad." Zverev, beaten in the final two years in a row, said he hoped there would be a chance to atone and that he hadn't played his last Hopman match.



# 'Yellow vests' storm French ministry as protests turn violent

**PARIS, JAN 6 (AFP):** "Yellow vest" protesters returned in force to the streets of France this weekend, clashing with police in several cities and smashing their way into a government ministry in Paris with the help of a forklift truck.

The interior ministry put the number of protesters who took to the streets on Saturday at 50,000, compared with 32,000 on December 29 when the movement appeared to be weakening after holding a series of weekly Saturday protests since mid-November.

Government spokesman Benjamin Griveaux, who was evacuated from his ministry in central Paris when a handful of protesters in high-visibility vests smashed down the large wooden door to the ministry compound, denounced the break-in as an "unacceptable attack on the Republic".

"Some yellow vest protesters and other people dressed in black ... got hold of a construction vehicle which was in the street nearby and smashed open the entrance gate to the ministry," he told AFP.

They briefly entered the courtyard where they smashed up two cars, broke some windows then escaped, he added, saying police were trying to identify them from security footage.

President Emmanuel Macron did not specifically refer to the incident, but tweeted his condemnation of the "extreme violence" against "the Republic, its guardians, its



representatives and its symbols". Griveaux had on Friday criticised the yellow vest movement, describing those still involved as "agitators" who were seeking "to overthrow the government".

Police said some 3,500 demonstrators turned up on the Champs-Elysees on Saturday morning.

Some then made their way south of the river to the wealthy area around Boulevard St Germain, where they set light to a car and several motorbikes and set up burning barricades, prompting police to fire tear gas to try and disperse them.

Police said 35 people were arrested.

Demonstrators took to the streets of several other cities across France, with up to 2,000 people in Rouen north-west of Paris, where some set up burning barricades. One protester

was injured and at least two others were arrested, police said. Some 4,600 protesters hit the streets of the southwestern city of Bordeaux, with some hurling stones at police who answered with tear gas and water cannon.

Five police were hurt and 11 people arrested, local authorities said, adding that several cars were torched and shop windows broken.

Further south in Toulouse, 22 people were detained following clashes that erupted after 2,000 people turned out to demonstrate. And in the central-eastern city of Lyon, several thousands took to the streets, blocking access to the A7 motorway and causing traffic jams for those returning from Christmas holidays in the mountains.

The yellow vest movement began in rural France over plans to

increase fuel taxes. But it later ballooned into a wider revolt against Macron's pro-market policies and governing style, with 282,000 people joining the first Saturday rally on November 17.

Macron initially refused to make any concessions, but in mid-December, after weeks of violence, he scrapped the planned fuel tax hike and promised extra cash for minimum wage earners as well as tax cuts for pensioners. The protests have turned into the biggest political crisis of Macron's 20-month presidency and brought his popularity ratings to an all-time low.

Although public anger appeared to abate following his concessions and over the holiday period, the brief arrest on Wednesday of Eric Drouet, one of the leaders of the movement, appeared to rekindle resentment

among his supporters.

The latest opinion poll, published on Thursday by Odoxa Dentsu, indicated 55 percent support the protests -- a figure which, although lower than the 75 percent back in November, is still important enough to suggest the anti-austerity movement retains political clout.

Former cinema icon Brigitte Bardot, who is known today for her rightwing views and animal rights activism, on Sunday said she understood what motivated the yellow vest movement.

"When I see the millions spent on incredibly trivial things, when I see politicians using private planes and chauffeur-driven cars to get around (...) all this money spent is unacceptable," she told the Midi Libre newspaper. "It should be given instead to people in need."

## SKM rejects govt announcements as temporary appeasement tools

**SUMMIT REPORT GANGETOK, 06 JAN:**

Sikkim Krantikari Morcha today rejected the recent announcements of the State Government as "age-old tactics" of the Sikkim Democratic Front at the cusp of elections.

And SKM press release issued by its general secretary (Press & Publicity), Bikash Basnet, contends that there was even "unanimous suspicion" among the people that this "populist political rhetoric" was de-

signed as "an instrument of instant gratification... to quell the collective aspirations of the people".

The release goes on to allege that several such announcements prior to the 2014 elections were "short-lived" and that delivery on some of them was still due.

"Fake allotments, BPL Rice, Free Laptops for students were a few amongst the many announcements that became temporary appeasing tools," the release states.

"When State Admin-

istration/ Competent Authority issues notification, it is done with a purpose to achieve something. But ironically here in Sikkim notifications are issued to meet the short term political goals. Notifications here come with an expiry date," the release further alleges, while going to allege that regularisation of services of temporary employees has been announced, put on hold and announced again in the recent past in tempo with election cycles.

## Russia: Too early to consider exchange of US spy suspect

**MOSCOW, JAN 6 (AP):** Russia's deputy foreign minister brushed back suggestions Saturday that an American being held in Moscow on suspicion of spying could be exchanged for a Russian citizen.

The brother of Paul Whelan, however, tells The Associated Press that he can't help but question whether the events are indeed connected. "You look at what's going on and you wonder if this is just a large game of pieces being moved around," David Whelan told the AP via Skype from Newmarket, Ontario.

"You start to wonder if all of these things are connected. But at the same time, they could just be arbitrary events."

Paul Whelan, a former US Marine who also holds Canadian, British and Irish citizenship, was detained in Moscow in late December.

His arrest has led to speculation that Russia could be using him to bargain for a Russian who pleaded guilty to acting as a foreign agent in the United States.

Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said that discussing a possible swap involving Whelan and Maria Butina would be premature because Whelan hasn't been formally charged, according to Russian news agencies.

"As to the possibility of exchanges of one sort or another, it's impossible and incorrect to consider the question now when an official charge hasn't even been presented," Ryabkov was quoted as saying by state news agency RIA-Novosti.

"Charges will be presented in the near future," he said, according to the Interfax agency.

Some Russian news reports earlier cited unnamed sources as saying Whelan had been indicted on espionage charges that carry a possible prison sentence of 20 years.

Officials haven't given details of Whelan's suspected activities and he was initially identified only as an American.

His concurrent Canadian, British and Irish citizenships became known on Friday.

US Ambassador Jon Huntsman Jr visited Whelan on Wednesday in Moscow's Lefortovo Prison, a 130-year-old facility noted for strict conditions.

Britain, Canada and Ireland have applied for consular access to him.

Whelan, 48, was discharged from the Marines for bad conduct. He works as the global security director for a US automobile parts manufacturer and lives in Michigan. His family has said he was in Moscow to attend a wedding. His brother, David, told the

AP that Whelan loves to travel and likes to "interact with the people in the places that he goes," but that Whelan would be too "conspicuous" to be selected as a spy.

David Whelan said his family had had no direct contact with Paul and had received no details about the espionage charges from either the Russian or US governments.

"He likes to go places and Russia happens to be a place where he knows people and when he's there, he does go and visit," David Whelan said.

Paul Whelan established an account on VKontakte, a social media service similar to Facebook that is popular among Russians, which showed he had scores of contacts in Russia.

Many attended universities affiliated with the military, civil aviation or technical studies. Many share his interest in sports and firearms.

Also Saturday, the Foreign Ministry said it was seeking information about a Russian who was arrested December 29 in Saipan in the Northern Mariana Islands, a United States commonwealth in the Pacific.

In a statement, the ministry said Sergei Makarenko was sent to the US state of Florida after his arrest and it wants consular access to him.

## Death toll from Philippines storm, landslides climbs to 126

**MANILA, JAN 6 (AFP):** The death toll from a storm that devastated the Philippines shortly after Christmas rose to 126, authorities said Sunday, adding landslides caused by torrential rain were the top cause.

The storm hit central and eastern Philippine islands on December 29 and caused massive flooding and landslides.

More than 100 people died in the mountainous Bicol region southeast of Manila, regional disaster officials said.

While the Bicol region is often hit by deadly typhoons, many people failed to take necessary precautions because the storm was not strong enough to be rated as a typhoon under the government's storm alert system, according to civil defence officials.

Officials also said that many residents were reluctant to leave their homes during the Christmas holidays.

"In two days alone, Usman poured more than a month's worth of rainfall in the Bicol region," national disaster agency spokesman Edgar Posadas told AFP, using the local name for the storm which had weakened into a low pressure area. "Our search and retrieval operations are ongoing but the sticky mud and the unstable soil are a challenge."

## At least 30 killed in Afghan gold mine collapse: officials

**KUNDUZ, JAN 6 (AFP):** At least 30 people were killed when a gold mine collapsed in northeastern Afghanistan on Sunday, officials said, in the latest tragedy to strike the war-torn country.

Another seven were injured in the incident in Kohistan district of Badakhshan province, district governor Mohammad Rustam Raghi told AFP. Villagers had dug a 60-metre (200-feet) deep shaft in a river bed to search for gold. They were inside when the walls fell in.

"The people were using an excavator to dig a big hole in the river when it collapsed, trapping dozens of workers," Raghi said.

"At least 30 people have been killed and seven wounded." It was not clear why the shaft col-

lapsed, but the provincial governor's spokesman Nik Mohammad Nazari told AFP the miners were not professionals.

"The villagers have been involved in this business for decades with no government control over them," Nazari said.

"We have sent a rescue team to the area, but villagers have already started removing bodies from the site." Defense ministry helicopters have been dispatched to deliver cash to the families of the victims and airlift the wounded to hospitals, said Hashmat Bahaduri, spokesman for the National Disaster Management Authority.

Bahaduri confirmed the casualty toll, but warned the figures could change. Families of

the wounded will receive 10,000 afghanis (about USD 130) in compensation, while those of the dead will get 50,000 afghanis, he said.

Badakhshan is a remote, mountainous province in northeast Afghanistan bordering Tajikistan, China and Pakistan.

The impoverished region is prone to landslides, particularly in the colder months when heavy snow blankets the province.

Illegal mining is common in resource-rich Afghanistan, with the Taliban relying on the sector for much of its revenue.

But most of the country's minerals remain untapped as the raging conflict and lack of regulation deter international miners from exploiting the huge reserves.

## Thousands brave snow to rally against Serbia populist leader



**BELGRADE (SERBIA), JAN 6 (AP):** Thousands of people have braved snow and freezing temperatures in Serbia's capital to turn up for the fifth week of street protests against populist President Aleksandar Vucic.

The demonstrators marched through down-

town Belgrade blowing whistles and booing loudly as they passed the Serbian presidency building on Saturday.

Some carried Serbian flags and banners reading "We are the people" or "Down with the thieves."

The demonstrations started after thugs beat up an opposition leader in November, putting pressure on Vucic.

Critics accuse the president of imposing an autocracy through strict control over the media and promoting hate speech against

opponents.

Vucic rejects being labelled as domineering and has suggested he might call an early election this year.

A former extreme nationalist, he has held office saying he favours Serbia joining the European Union.



**Namchi Smart City Limited**  
UD HD Building, Kavi Agam Singh Road  
Namchi-737126, South Sikkim

## NOTICE

This is to inform that the advertisement under project "Namchi Smart City Limited, UD HD Building, Kavi Agam Singh Road, Namchi-737126, South Sikkim" under the caption '01. INVITATION FOR BIDS' published in SummitTIMES Vol. 03 no. 315 dt. 10.12.2018 no 361 dt. 11. 12. 2018 has been change as below

The work mentioned in serial No: 14- **Pedestrian Walkway from Purano Namchi to School Rolep** has been postponed until further notice.

SD/-  
**Chief Executive officer,**  
**Namchi Smart City Limited (NSCL)**  
**Namchi, South Sikkim**  
**Dated: 5. 01.2019**



# 2018 was just the beginning: Emma Watson on Time's Up anniversary

**LONDON, JAN 6 (PTI):** Emma Watson has said that she feels optimistic about a "fairer future" for women courtesy the Time's Up campaign.

On the first anniversary of the campaign, the actor took to Instagram on Saturday to express gratitude towards people who have been a part of the revolution.

"From my sisters in the film industry to the activists and campaigners around the world who have supported us, I've been so inspired by the way people have reached out to each other, shared experiences and advice, and organised together as part of this movement for change.

"Gender equality can only become a reality if we harness the transformative power of solidarity across professions and across borders," Watson wrote.

The "Harry Potter" alum said there is still a long way to go but "the achievements so far make me optimistic for a fairer future". "2018 was just the beginning," she said.

A vocal feminist, Watson, in another post urged the masses to be a part of Time's Up UK chapter that launched the

Justice and Equality Fund (JEF), which is the UK's version of the Legal Defence Fund.

The JEF aims to support women who have experienced



harassment and abuse, improve accountability, and prevent future abuses from occurring.

"I hope that more people will be inspired by the #TIME-SUP anniversary to give at home here in the UK, so the Justice and Equality Fund can reach even more under-resourced organisations and campaign groups in 2019," the actor wrote.

## Drake faces flak for kissing, touching minor in resurfaced video

**LOS ANGELES, JAN 6 (PTI):** Drake is under fire after an old video resurfaced on social media in which he could be seen touching and kissing a 17-year-old girl.

The clip, which was shared on Twitter on January 3, shows the rapper flirting and dancing with the fan on stage.

According to Spin magazine, the video is from 2010, when Drake was 24.

In the 94 second-long video, the rapper is visible standing behind the girl and asks her, "I told you I like your hair, right? What is it, like herbal essences? Smells

fresh." He then goes on to kiss her neck and wrap his arms around her chest as the amused audience roared with laughter.

After taking a moment, Drake addressed the crowd on the mic, "Y'all know I get carried away again, I get in trouble for s\*\*t."

The rapper next asked the girl her age and she replied she was 17.

In the video, an exasperated Drake can be seen flinging his hands as the crowd laughed and booed him off simultaneously.

Drake said, "I can't go to jail yet, man! 17? Why you

look like that? You thick." "I don't know if I should feel guilty or not but I had fun. I like the way your breasts feel against my chest," he added.

The "Signs" hitmaker then kissed the girl on her hand, both cheeks and forehead before giving her a peck on the lips.

The video was posted the same day "Surviving R Kelly", a controversial six-part documentary about Drake's alleged decades of sexual abuse with under-aged women, started airing.

A representative for the rapper did not respond to a request for comment.

## Streaming has elevated the bar for cinema, says Sandra Bullock

**LONDON, JAN 6 (PTI):** Sandra Bullock believes showbiz is changing for the better following the arrival of streaming services and it has encouraged films to up their game. The 54-year-old actor, who stars in Netflix's acclaimed thriller "Bird Box", said the digital platform has provided more working opportunities to women and people of colour.

"Cinema is not going anywhere, streaming has elevated the bar. Before, if you were a superhero, you were able to get a movie made; anything else was not getting made. "Now, with streaming, we have all kinds of work available. The movie business is changing, and providing so many more opportunities for women and for people of colour", Bullock told The I Paper. The Oscar winner, whose last film was "Ocean's 8", said there has been an evident change in the attitude towards women before and after filming the all-female heist movie.

"We started that film before #MeToo and we ended it during. I saw a noticeable difference," she said.

Bullock said having Susanne Bier as "Bird Box" director made a difference on the sets of the Netflix film.

"Because the boss was a woman, I did see a lot of fear in our crew members. The men were walking on eggshells so I said 'Guys you're allowed to joke I'll tell you when you've gone too far', she said. The film follows a woman (Bullock) who, along with a pair of children must cross a forest and river blindfolded to avoid supernatural entities which cause people who see them to die by suicide.

## Malaysia's king abdicates: palace statement



**KUALA LUMPUR, JAN 6 (AFP):** Malaysia's king has abdicated, royal officials said Sunday, ending weeks of speculation about his future after he took a leave of absence and amid rumours he married a Russian former beauty queen.

Sultan Muhammad V's decision marks the first time a king has abdicated in the Muslim-majority country since it gained independence from Britain in 1957.

"The National Palace informs that his majesty has resigned as the 15th king effective January 6," said a statement from the palace.

It did not give any reason for the 49-year-old royal's move.

But there had been a question mark

over the reign of the king, who ascended to the throne in December 2016, since he took a leave of absence for medical treatment in November.

Reports then circulated online that he had married a former Miss Moscow in Russia -- although royal officials in Malaysia have so far not commented on the rumours.

Speculation intensified about his future this week when the country's Islamic royals reportedly held a special meeting.

Malaysia is a constitutional monarchy, with an unique arrangement where the throne changes hands every five years between rulers of the nine Malaysian states headed by centuries-old Islamic royalty.

**SCORPIO:** This might not be the NYE that sees you dancing on the bar till dawn, but considering the year of wild growth that's behind you, a gentler pace is fine by you—isn't it, Scorpio? Thanks to your co-ruler Mars settling into Aries and your sixth house of self-care this evening, 2018 slinks out more like a kitten than a lion. You'll be just as happy (happier, probably) bidding adieu to the year in a meditation circle, candlelight yoga class or perhaps on some sandy beach

**SAGITTARIUS:** Party costume: Check. Crazy shoes and accessories: Check! Wild hair and makeup: Up to you, Archer, but why not? This NYE gets a turbo-charge from passionate Mars. Just before midnight, the red planet bursts into Aries and your festive, flamboyant fifth house until February 14. Since the fifth house also rules fame, this NYE (and the first six weeks of 2019) could turn into one giant photo op for you and your crew.

**CAPRICORN:** How's this for a perfect NYE gameplan: Get yourself suitably dressed up; have everyone stop by just

as the bubbly reaches the perfect temperature; cue up your killer playlist; and let the rest unfold spontaneously. With passionate Mars nestling into your domestic quarters shortly before the ball drops, you may relish the thought of staying home and turning your living room into "the club."

**AQUARIUS:** Wait a second there, Water Bearer. If you're about to hit Go on a team project without running your decisions up the flagpole, you need to do a rethink on that. Last we checked, democracy still rules. And with savvy Mercury in your collaborative zone connected with healer-feeler Chiron in Pisces, you have no business trying to be the whole voting committee!

**PISCES:** How happy are you with your so-called soul squad? Saturday's solar (new moon) eclipse in Capricorn activates your eleventh house of friendship and community. Even if you fancy yourself a "gregarious introvert," there's no denying that the people you surround yourself with have a strong influence on your life—and your day-to-day moods.



**BIRDS OF A FEATHER:** The Favourite star Emma Stone rocks a bird-patterned Fendi dress and Givenchy shoes at the BAFTA Tea Party in Los Angeles.

## Witnessed changes in Hollywood post #MeToo, says Margot Robbie

**LOS ANGELES, JAN 6 (PTI):** Actor Margot Robbie says she has witnessed positive changes in Hollywood following movements such as #MeToo and Time's Up. The "Mary Queen of Scots" actor told Sunday Today that her new film and upcoming project "Birds of Prey" are examples of the changed mindset in the film industry.

"Right now, I'm promoting a film directed by a woman. I just wrapped a film where most heads of departments where female roles, it's a female-led ensemble piece. And I'm in prep for a film with a second-time female director with a big budget behind it," Robbie said. "I think up until recent times, saying that and actually getting people to put their money behind

that, were two different conversations. I think it's easy to say, 'Yes, wouldn't that be nice,' it's



quite another to say, 'Yes, I'll sign off on that decision,'" she added. "Mary Queen of Scots", which also features Saoirse Ronan, released in US last November.

help you with a project!

**GEMINI:** Thinking of a mellow NYE, Gemini? Think again! Before the stroke of midnight, firebrand Mars rushes into Aries and your eleventh house of groups, which means more will definitely be merrier. Early in the day, set some lofty intentions, perhaps writing them down in a dedicated journal or making a vision board that will inspire you on a daily basis.

**CANCER:** Upgrade to the VIP tickets, Cancer. Shortly before the ball drops on 2019, uncompromising Mars rushes into Aries and your prestigious tenth house until February 14. You've got grand plans for the year ahead, and it all starts NOW. Tonight, you practically owe yourself an upscale celebration.

**LEO:** You may still be digesting Christmas cookies, but you can start burning off those holiday indulgences now. Today, as the life-giving Sun links up with disciplined Saturn in your sixth house of wellbeing, you may find sticking to an exercise routine or a healthy-eating plan

easier than ever. Exploit this planetary lift by diving in headfirst. Join a gym—or become a regular at yours—and find a class that will keep you pumped up. In the food department, experiment with cutting back on just one "evil," like sugar or processed food.

**VIRGO:** Simmer down! You want to tune out the outer world and listen for messages from your muse today, as the creative Sun winks at structured Saturn in Capricorn and your fifth house of self-expression. If you've been taking your talents for granted, it's time to get a little more about serious about them. Withhold judgment for now and just start devoting a few hours a week (and more on weekends) to pursuing your craft—whatever it may be. Romance could reach a passionate peak, but you need to know if the object of your affections is playing for keeps. Ask!

**LIBRA:** You'll be in your gracious, glamorous element this NYE as passionate Mars launches a six-week tour through Aries and your seventh house of relationships (aka "the Libra house").

**ARIES:** Your rise to the top can wait no longer! On Saturday, the solar (new moon) eclipse in Capricorn powers up your tenth house of career ambition and success, dangling an irresistible carrot in front of you. Talk about a power surge! But before you go charging into action Aries-style—i.e., spontaneously and without a solid game plan—spend some time thinking about your goals and visualizing yourself exactly where you want to be. Then take one giant step in that direction. Another major boost comes on Sunday as innovator Uranus resumes forward motion in Aries after a five-month retrograde!

**TAURUS:** You're in your social element today, as messenger Mercury teams up with your co-ruler innovative Uranus in your friendship houses. Even if you're up to your eyebrows in back-to-the-grind undertakings, there's no reason you can't connect with people while you're hustling and bustling. Catch up with a friend during your commute; listen to an inspiring podcast while paying bills. Or cut your task time in half by asking a colleague to