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# SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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## EIGHTH SUSTAINABLE MOUNTAIN DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT

# Himalayan states seek climate risk fund to shore up entrepreneurship



### SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 05 NOV:**

The 8th Sustainable Mountain Development Summit (SMDS-VIII) concluded in Shillong on Tuesday with a call for action on a few identified issues critical to the building of an enabling ecosystem for entrepreneurs in the Indian Himalayan region, a press release informs.

Summing up the outcomes of the summit de-

liberations, IMI Councilor and former MP from Sikkim, PD Rai, zeroed in on few action points that demand immediate action; chief among these being the creation of tax and financial literacy among the local entrepreneurs, and the institution of a climate risk fund to shore up entrepreneurship in the mountain region.

Recognizing that the tangle of red-tape still

cripples the entrepreneurial ventures, the summit urged the lawmakers representing the mountain states and uplands of the Indian Himalayan region to urgently take up these recommendations at the appropriate policy platform, the release mentions.

Mr Rai said that the key recommendations would be further deliberated upon at the meeting of the lawmakers' forum,

which had been scheduled for Wednesday here in Shillong.

"Lawmakers need to mull over these recommendations and take actions," he opined.

Taking a step forward in its agenda to encourage entrepreneurship, the summit came up with a concrete decision to set up immediately a start-up incubation centre in partnership with IMI, Villgro and IIM, Shillong.

He also suggested that many of the government schemes should be better targeted.

Other important issues that emerged through the two-day marathon discussions was the recognition of the need for a Himalayan brand for products of the mountain region.

The summit also paid rich tribute to late founder president of IMI, Dr RS Tolia, who played a pioneering role in setting up the IMI. An award instituted in his honour was awarded to Satyanarayan Bharti for his life-long works on community forestry and water conservation in Uttarakhand.

NEC Secretary, Moses Chalai, while applauding the organisers of the summit, highlighted the importance of compelling and collective voices from the region for advancing the specific developmental needs.

In his valedictory address, Prof BK Dutta, Member, NEC and the chief

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## CM pays surprise visit to Melli Check Post



**MELLI, 05 Nov (IPR):** Chief Minister, PS Tamang, who is on his way to Delhi, made a surprise visit to Melli Check Post along with DC South, SP South and other officials today.

During his visit, he inspected the check post and suggested upgradation of infrastructural facilities along with adequate facilities for police personnel who are put on duty for which he instructed DC South to

make necessary proposals at the earliest.

The CM emphasised on modernisation of check post along with sufficient manpower strength so that work is not compromised. He also instructed the personnel deployed there to be more vigilant and check on illegal activities as well as work towards curbing illegal trafficking of drugs since the check post is at a crucial point.

## Lepcha organization thanks CM for recognizing dumvun as official uniform

### SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 05 NOV:**

Renjyong Mutanchi Rong Tarjum, on behalf of the entire Lepcha community of Sikkim and the sub-Himalayan region, has expressed gratitude to the Chief Minister of Sikkim, PS Tamang for fulfilling the aspiration of the Lepchas by recognizing the traditional dress of the Lepcha women 'Dumvun' as the official uniform for the Assistant Nursing Superintendents (ANS), Deputy Nursing Superintendent NS, DNS, NS (above staff nurse) along with the Saree and Bakhu under the Health and Family Welfare Department.

"We would further like to thank the Minister of Health and Family



Welfare Department and officials of the Health Department for having supported this important initiative," the organization has said.

They have also expressed special gratitude to DGHS & Secretary, Dr Pempha Bhutia, Principal Chief

Consultant, Dr KB Gurung, Medical Superintendent, Dr Passang Phempunadikpa for their effort in making this a reality.

Further, RMRT has thanked Education Minister, Kunga Nima Lepcha and Culture Minister, Samdup Lepcha.

## GOVERNOR'S GOLD CUP

# Hattrick helps Royal FC enter semis of Gold Cup



### SAGAR CHHETRI

**GANGTOK, 05 NOV:**

A hattrick by Debasish Rai helped Royal Football Club, Siliguri, to secure its berth in the semi-final round of the ongoing 39th All India Governor's Gold Cup Football Tournament 2019 here at Paljor Stadium. In the first quarter-final match played on Tuesday, Royal FC has registered a convincing 4-1 victory against ISL club, Jamshedpur Football Club [Reserve] to enter into the semi-final round of the tournament.

Royal FC maintained constant pressure on Jamshedpur FC led by a

local lad, Boxer Pradhan as the team captain. Both teams took on each other with an attacking game but failed to convert some good chances into early lead in the match.

Tempa Lhendup Bhutia finally scored the lead for Royal FC in the 32nd minute and within two minutes his teammate, Debasish Rai doubled the lead. Debasish Rai further extended the lead of Royal FC with his brace in the 45th minute to end the first half with 3-0 lead.

Jamshedpur FC players tried hard to bounce back into the match but failed to breach the defense line of the opponent

until Gaurab Mukhi gave some hope to Jamshedpur FC with his goal in the 70th minute. However, Debasish Rai scored his hattrick goal in the 76th minute to further take the lead of Royal FC to 4-1.

The referee sent Ashish Chhetri of Royal FC off the field on a red card in the injury time of the match but it was too late for Jamshedpur FC players to stop the 10-man Royal FC from reaching the semi-final round of the tournament.

Sikkim Police will take on Punjab Police in the second quarter-final match of the tournament on Wednesday.

## Puskar Mela: Murrah bull Bhima main attraction

**JAIPUR, NOV 5 (PTI):**

'Bhima', a seven-year-old Murrah bull, has become the centre of attraction at the animal fair in Rajasthan's Pushkar, with several making a beeline to take selfies with 1300-kg animal on Tuesday. Fourteen-foot-long and six feet in height, its owner spends about Rs 1 lakh for its food and maintenance every month.

Bhima is fed one kg of ghee, 500 grams of butter, 200 grams of honey, 25 litres of milk and dry fruits, among other things, everyday, said owner Arvind Jangid. The bull was brought from Jodhpur by Arvind and his father Jawahar Jangid.

Bhima was first showcased at the agro-tech meet in Udaipur in 2017, when it was four years old, and it was awarded the best animal, Arvind told PTI.

He said they have

brought Bhima to the fair to promote the Murrah breed and not to sell.

The bull's semen is also being sold at the Pushkar Mela. There are over 5000 animals at the international fair and among them are camels and horses.

Joint Director of the Animal Husbandry Department, Dr Ajay Aroora, said a bull of good breed usually weighs 600 to 700 kg.

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## JK High Court dismisses petition challenging detention

**SRINAGAR/JAMMU, NOV 5 (PTI):**

The Jammu and Kashmir High Court on Tuesday dismissed a petition challenging alleged house arrest of Mustafa Kamal -- the NC additional general secretary and brother of party president Farooq Abdullah -- and ANC chief Begum Khalida Shah along with her son Muzaffar Shah.

Justice Ali Mohammed Magray observed that the petition is not maintainable and is unnecessary after communication submitted by SSP Srinagar stated

that the petitioners have neither been put under house arrest at 10, Maulana Azad Road nor their liberty curbed.

In response to petitions filed by the three leaders in the High Court seeking their release, the government on Wednesday last informed the High Court that it has not put Mustafa Kamal, Khalida Shah and Muzaffar Shah under house arrest.

In their petitions, the leaders had said they have been under unlawful detention since August 5.

**NEW DELHI, NOV 5 (PTI):** In a bid to curb burning of waste in the city, the National Green Tribunal on Tuesday suggested use of drones to help authorities to easily identify the sites where such incidents take place.

A bench headed by NGT chairperson Justice Adarsh Kumar Goel expressed concern over rise in waste burning incidents and noted that as against 5,000 sanitary inspectors, who are tasked to control burning in the city, only 50 are available.

"What is lacking is implementation. People are burning garbage in open, we have seen it with our eyes. Holistic solution to the problem has to be found. Use of technology can be invoked and drones can be put to use for preventing garbage burning," the bench said.

The tribunal also suggested that if the corporations are suffering from manpower crunch, then authorities



can employ unemployed youth and civil defense groups by paying them a token amount in lieu of their monitoring services.

It said that the problem of deterioration in air quality is not a creation of just one day, but a result of continuous

negligence and apathy in enforcing the law. There are acknowledged gaps in the existing undesirable situation and enforcement strategies in place.

"The past experience shows the deterioration of air quality in the months of October and November is a recur-

ring phenomenon. It is not difficult to identify the causes and to have advance planned strategies to remedy the same.

"The causes and sources of air pollution may be crop burning, plastic burning, garbage burning, industrial emissions, vehicular emission, construction and debris waste, and pollution caused by crackers. A robust mechanism needs to be planned in the light of expert studies and remedying the failures in satisfactorily handling the situation in the past," the bench, also comprising Justices S P Wangdi and K Ramakrishnan, said.

The tribunal was deliberating on the issue of air pollution in Delhi-NCR after taking cognisance of media reports that air quality has worsened.

The NGT noted that the Supreme Court is already seized of the matter and said it would take up the issue thereafter.



## NHPC-sponsored tailoring training begins at Singbel

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 04 OCT:**

NHPC's Teesta-V Power Station organized a Tailoring training for Self Help Groups as part of its CSR &SD activities here at Singbel, East Sikkim today.

Speaking on occasion, Head of the Project, Sahadev Khatua, explained that the aim of the training programme was to give a stronger impetus to women's empowerment and enhance employability and sustainable livelihood support and financial independence for women.

He claimed that NHPC was committed to the social and economic upliftment of rural women and that the tailoring training program launched today was another step closer towards realizing that dream.

BDO-Rakdong block, Pema Wangchen Bhutia appreciated NHPC Teesta-V's Family Income Supplement activities and assured that all assistance will be provided to trainee candidates.

The 45-day training is being imparted to 31 trainee candidates from five Self Help Groups of Singbel Ward.

## BJP meets MP Guv after speaker disqualifies MLA

**BHOPAL, Nov 5 (PTI):** A BJP delegation on Tuesday met the Madhya Pradesh governor and urged him to review the state Assembly speaker's decision to disqualify its MLA Prahlad Lodhi, following his conviction in a criminal case. Speaker NP Prajapati on Saturday disqualified Lodhi after a Bhopal court last week sentenced the Pawai MLA and 12 others to two years in jail for attacking Raipura tehsildar RK Verma in August, 2014 for seizing a tractor smuggling sand.

"We have conveyed to Governor Lalji Tandon that the Assembly Speaker's decision to disqualify Pawai MLA Prahlad Lodhi is not in accordance with the law," Sitasharan Sharma, ex-Speaker and MLA, who led the BJP delegation, told PTI. Sharma said the delegation also conveyed that in such cases, as per Constitutional provisions, only the governor can take a decision about an MLA's disqualification.

"The Assembly Speaker's decision is not in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and Representation of The People Act," Sharma added. He said the party would give a detailed memorandum on the issue to Tandon later in the evening, and expressed hope Lodhi would get relief from the High Court.

The Congress' state media cell coordinator Narendra Saluja, meanwhile, said the decision was taken as per a Supreme Court ruling of 2013. Speaker Prajapati had earlier said, as per the SC ruling, a public representative should be disqualified as soon as he or she is convicted, and the rule was followed in Lodhi's case after the Assembly secretariat got a certified copy of the trial court's order.

# CAEPHT Gangtok bulletins released in annual workshop on plasticulture

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 05 NOV:**

Two-day annual workshop of All India Coordinated Research Project (AICRP) on Plasticulture Engineering Technology (PET) - (ICAR) has begun at ICAR-CIFA, Bhubaneswar, Odisha on 05 Nov, 2019, a press release informs.

Dr RK Singh [PC, AICRP-PET and Director, CIPHET, Ludhiana, Punjab] presented the annual report of the scheme by highlighting the salient features of major achievements of accepted research proposals, major extension activities in the form of construction of greenhouses, solar dryers, laying of plastic pond liners and conducting the skill development training, organizing Technology and Machinery demonstration mela and awareness programs.

The chief guest of the inaugural program was Vice-Chancellor, OUAT, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, Dr PK Agrawal. The chair-



person and co-chairpersons of the inaugural session were (ADG, PE), IACR New Delhi, Dr SN Jha and Director CIFA, Bhubaneswar, Dr Bindu R Pillai.

The annual workshop is being attended by Project Investigators and Scientists from all the fourteen centres of PET situated in different states of India including the AICRP-PET

(CAEPHT), Gangtok (Sikkim) centre represented by Prof Deepak Jhaharia (PI, PET & Professor, Dept of SWCE, CAEPHT) and Dr Kh Lily Devi (Junior Research Scientist, AICRP-PET, CAEPHT).

During the inaugural session, two bulletins prepared by Prof D Jhaharia and Dr Kh Lily Devi were released by the AICRP-PET (CAEPHT), Gangtok centre. The first

bulletin covered the print media coverage of plasticulture outreach activities under the AICRP on PET, CAEPHT (CAU), Gangtok centre.

This bulletin highlighted the newspapers clippings having details of type of extension activities, types of greenhouses and solar dryers constructed in farmer's field along with names of beneficiary farmers, vil-

lage and district, etc.

The second bulletin "Uttarpuravi Pahadi Shetrama Puravi Himalaya ko Sikkim Paristhithi Antargat Varshbhari Nei Sabji Ko Uttapadan Ko Lagi Kam Lagatma Baans Dwara Nirmit Hawadar Polyhouse" is in Nepali language and is authored by Prof D Jhaharia and Dr Kh Lily Devi for the benefit of local progressive farmers of Sikkim.

## Ministers' Gold Cup enters fourth day



**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 05 NOV:**

The 4th day of the 1st Ministers' Gold Cup Invitational Football Tournament 2019 was attended by ADC Soreng, Gayas Pega as the chief guest and BDO, Daramdin, Ranjan Rai, as special guest, a press release informs.

Mr Pega in his address said that the 'Sangh' has been doing commend-

able task of conducting such tournaments.

He further suggested that DKKS should also organize tournaments in other disciplines like Cricket, Volleyball, Badminton, Chess, Table Tennis, etc. and provide platforms to youngsters.

The day also saw colourful cultural dances presented by the students of Govt Sr Sec School, Sombaria and

Model English School (MES), Nakku Dara. People also enjoyed 'Tambola' Game that was conducted during the day.

On the day, Sikkim Football Academy (SFA), Gangtok, defeated UKFC, Kurseong by a score of 4-1.

On the 5th day on 06 Nov, the first Quarter Final match will be played between Jhapa (Nepal) 11 and Sikkim Aakraman FC.

## Men's Open and Inter-School marathon to be held in Darap

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 05 NOV:**

As a part of its Silver Jubilee Celebration 2019, Western Modern English Junior High School, Darap in West Sikkim is organizing a marathon on 10 November. The marathon has two categories of 10 KMs Men's Open Marathon and 5 KMs Inter-School Marathon for boys and girls from class VIII to XII. The competition

carries cash prize of Rs 10,000 to winner, Rs 7,000 to runner-up and Rs 5,000 to second runner-up in open category, while inter-school category has cash prize of Rs 3,000 to the winner and Rs 2,000 for second position and Rs 1,000 for third position.

Interested may contact Marathon Man of Sikkim, Amar Subba to participate in the marathon.

## CM takes stock of Thakurbari project

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 04 NOV:**

Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang [Golay] chaired a high level meeting at Samman Bhawan on Sunday regarding the construction of Thakurbari Mandir here in Gangtok.

Discussions were held on every aspect of the project, a press release informs.

The Chief Minister is reported to have sought a detailed report on the project and suggested that the District Collector hold a series of coordina-

tion meetings to expedite completion.

The meeting was attended by Ministers Arun Upreti, Sandup Lepcha and Sanjeet Kharel, Political Secretary to the CM, Jacob Khaling, Advisors to the CM, DC East, SP East, Gangtok Mayor, officials of various departments, concerned devotees, senior citizens, religious figures including Rohit Raj ji Maharaj, contractor, architect, committee members and representatives of concerned communities.

## Sikkim outplays Meghalaya in Men's U-23 One Day Trophy

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 04 NOV:**

Men's Under-23 One Day Trophy 2019-20, hosted by Sikkim for the very first time has commenced in Odisha from 31 October and Sikkim has played two matches out of nine league matches to be played.

After losing the first match against Puducherry, Sikkim came back strong and won their second match played against Meghalaya at Vikash Cricket Ground in Cuttack. Sikkim earned 4 point(s) for this win on 03 November.

Sikkim won the toss and chose to bat first. They scored 211 runs off 50 overs losing 7 wickets, with a brilliant knock from Parth Palawat of 93 runs not-out off 70 balls, well supported by Saurav Kumar Prasad (37 runs), Shahbaz Anwar (36 runs) and Chandra Bahadur Chettri (11 runs not-out). Meghalaya

had the target of 212 runs to win in 50 overs at a run rate of 4.24 per over.

From the beginning of the second innings, Sikkim maintained the pressure on the opponent by taking the early wickets. It was Dinesh Kumar Dhoi who played the Captain's inning by taking 5 wickets; Mohammad Saptula took 2 wickets, 1 wicket each was taken by Chandra Bahadur Chettri, Harit Chauhan & Path Palawat. Meghalaya was all-out for 181 runs in 47.4 overs. Sikkim won the match by 30 runs.

The next match will be played at DRIEMS Ground, Cuttack against Mizoram on 07 November followed by other matches against Manipur, Nagaland, Assam, Bihar, Chandigarh, and Arunachal Pradesh. The players are boosted with this win and positively looking forward to the upcoming matches.

## Himalayan states...

guest at the closing session of the summit, emphasized on the need to integrate the rich heritage of traditional knowledge and the genetic bio-diversity of the upland communities of the Himalayan region into the plans and programmes meant for them.

The deliberations began with an inspirational presentation by Neichute Doulo, one of north east region's most celebrated entrepreneurs, who echoed the summit theme that the oozing energy of the region's youth must be harnessed to build sustainable entrepreneurship in the uplands.

"Innovation is the soul of entrepreneurship, but nothing can happen unless we create an enabling ecosystem for the youth to get them interested in it," said Mr Doulo.

He urged the youth to focus on new ideas and innovations by taking advantage of new technologies and the entrepreneurial ecosystem being laid out for that purposes.

Over six other inspirational stories of entrepreneurs from different states fuelled the discussions on sustainable agri-business and sustainable tourism, and their potential as livelihood options in the mountain regions.

The two days of discussions threw up many ideas for follow-up, but almost all emphasized on the need for an entrepreneurial ecosystem by convergence of government, civil society, industry and financial institutions. It was also underlined that there was urgent need to revitalize all government extension services.

A panel discussion followed the presentations during the thematic sessions – sustainable agri-business and sustainable Tourism. One of the key points flagged was that entrepreneurship and business can grow only in an atmosphere of openness, and congenial environment that encourages investment and free flow of technology from outside.

The baton for the next Sustainable Mountain Development Summit 2020 was handed over to STS Lepcha of SDFU – the IMI State Chapter in Uttarakhand.

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## ANYESTHI KRIYA

Anthesti Kriya of late. Kiran Rai (Shyakri) who left his heavenly body on 1st of November falls on 6th day of November 2019 at Temi bazar near Oralay homestay at Rajalim Khim.

**Contact no: 9733275092, 8509758180, 7363877415**



## ANYESTHI KRIYA

The 13th day Anyesthi Kriya of late K.B. Chettri (Orient Studio) falls on 9th November, 2019.

All relatives, well wishers and friends are requested to join us in offering prayers for the departed soul on 09.11.2019 at our residence at Upper Shyari, Opposite New Bishal Hotel.

We would like to express our gratitude to all those who stood by us at the time of bereavement.

**Mrs. Bal Kumari Chettri (Wife)**

**Mr. Binod K. Chettri and Mr.**

**Hemant Chettri (Sons)**

**Mrs. Matilda Isaacs and Mrs. Rebecca**

**Pradhan (Daughter-in-Laws)**

**Mrs. Bhakti Pradhan and Mr. Om**

**Pradhan (Daughter and Son-in-Law)**

**Mr. Arun K. Chettri and Mrs. Mani Kumari**

**Chettri (Brother and Sister-in-Law)**

**Mrs. Tina, Mr. Avinash, Dr. Mona**

**Chettri and all Grand Children.**

**Contact: 9933462560, 9434103792**



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Roadside plots for sale at Adampool, Ranipool-Rumtek highway.

**For details contact: 9083826462**

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Fully furnished 3BHK flat available for rent/lease at Church Road near DPH. Roadside and five minutes walking distance from MG Marg.

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General land 30X40 (3 Plots) available for sale at Tadong 6th Mile next to Harka Maya College.

Flat Land no cutting required. Price 30 Lakhs (negotiable).

**Contact: 9800201335**



# Tem Tea Mr Sikkim finalist Bahar Dewan

NITESH R PRADHAN

GANGTOK, 05 Nov:

Bahar Dewan, an architect by profession, has switched his course to participate in Tem Tea Mr Sikkim 2019 Manhunt. He is one of the finalists this season and hopes to make it big.

He shares his experiences with SummitTIMES in this brief interview.

**Why Mr Sikkim?**

I chose to participate in Mr. Sikkim Manhunt because it is an excellent platform that allows us to showcase our potential. This is the kind of platform that will most certainly help me step out of my comfort zone perhaps represent Sikkim on a bigger level someday. I wouldn't want to miss out on an opportunity like this one.

**What are the qualities that make you stand out?**

I believe that I am very consistent and meticulous. This is the kind of field that requires a lot of determination and dedication and I believe I have it in me. I want to make the most out of this opportunity and be as productive I can. Above everything else, I am certain that I am sharp under pressure and will perform to my highest potential when required.

**What if you win or lose?**

It would be unnecessarily humble of me to say that I am in this only for the purpose of participating. Like everyone else, I am here with the intention of winning. But, if the odds are not in my favour, I will be graceful in accepting the fate and not have any hard feelings.

**Define yourself.**



In technical terms, I am an architect by choice. Technicality aside, I'm an individual striving to live my best life whilst constantly working towards it. I'm very determined and focused. I'm a fast learner and I pick up on new things easy. I believe that could work in my favour in this platform as well. I love exploring new things and as I mentioned earlier, coming out of my comfort zone.

**What is that one thing that can unite humanity?**

In today's day and age, the one thing that can unite humanity in my opinion is the global idea of equality. No 'rich and poor', 'No developed and underdeveloped'. For us humans, the most important thing should be the betterment of each and everyone. People should help those in need and do it without

expecting something in return. For starters, we should take a moment out of our busy lives and try to do something good for our future generations regardless of how small or big the deed is. All for a better future.

**Any message for others?**

The one message I have for everyone is that we should never let other people's opinions affect us in a negative way. I do believe in healthy criticism and we should be open to views and suggestions. There will be many people who will doubt your abilities but that should not keep you from doing things you believe in. I believe that we rise by lifting others. Always be humble, always be open to healthy criticism and always be sure about what you can do no matter what others may say.

## Sikkim State Higher Education Council meets



GANGTOK, 05 Nov (IPR):

The 5th Sikkim State Higher Education Council (SSHEC) meeting was held in the Conference hall of the Education Department on 04 Nov. The meeting was chaired by Education Minister, KN Lepcha who is also the chairman for the Council.

The meeting was attended by the vice chancellor of Sikkim University, Dr Avinash Khare who is also the vice chairman for the SHEC along with the Vice Chancellors of Sikkim Manipal University, SRM University and Sikkim state University.

The Additional Chief Secretary, GP Upadhyaya in his deliberation apprised the meeting on the progress of Higher education in the state in general with special focus on the scheme Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA).

The meeting was followed by brainstorming discussion about the present scenario of higher education in the state with special focus on technology, autonomy, accreditation etc.

The meeting was also attended by representative from NAAC, Dr BS Madhukar, representatives from Finance Department, Science and Technology Department, Commerce and Industries Department, Health Department, Director Technical Education, Principals and associate professors of different government colleges and universities, officials from education dept and RUSA consultants

It was unanimously felt that Intensive Counseling of school students especially in Classes XI and XII has to be done in a consistent way. This

is required in order to make them aware of various emerging opportunities especially in the field of skill development as well as opportunities already available in various higher educational institutions in the State.

Further, it was also felt that there is a need to start futuristic courses in Vocational education and skill development with the contemporary requirements of the economy. The Committee requested the Vice Chancellor of Sikkim Manipal University to send a note regarding the emergent trends and new course in higher and technical education for the benefit of the State.

The meeting also discussed issues related to requirement of permanent faculty in different institutions, infrastructure, improvement of laboratories and libraries and urgent need towards sharing of each other resource.

Since building of new infrastructure is a very costly affair, it would be to everybody's advantage if resources of various institutions including that of laboratories and libraries are shared by those in need.

The Committee also felt that students of Sikkim need to explore opportunities emerging outside Sikkim in various parts of the Country as well as abroad. There was also a strong recommendation to start more para medical courses as there is a severe shortage of para medics all over the country.

The meeting also unanimously endorsed all the sanctions of new projects under RUSA 2.0 for the State of Sikkim.

SummitTIMES IN NEPALI

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## CONTRIBUTIONS INVITED FOR AMBA SCHOOL LIBRARY UPGRADATION

Wandering Souls of Sikkim is excited to announce our plan to upgrade the school library of Govt. Secondary School, Amba, East Sikkim. This will be fourth such upgradation of school libraries by WSOS.

We have successfully upgraded 3 school libraries so far with the support and contributions of our generous patrons and are looking forward to receive more such contributions.

We request all to kindly contribute books either old or new or cash for the upgradation of school library at Amba.

Our Library Initiative is aimed at upgrading School libraries specially in rural areas of the state and for laying a foundation for better future of our young minds studying in these schools.

**To Contribute Contact WSOS at 7384639193.**



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## Taiwan badminton star treads coachless path to Olympic glory

TAIPEI, NOV 5 (AFP):

Chou Tien-chen is taking the unusual step of gearing up for the 2020 Olympics without a coach, with his longtime physio and confidante shepherding him towards Tokyo gold.

The soft-spoken and boyish 29-year-old, known for pointing to heaven to thank God at the end of a match, parted ways with his trainer early this year.

Since then the world number two has been on a hot streak, winning the men's singles at July's Indonesia Open to claim his first title in a Super 1000 level event.

"I do a lot of homework a coach does before a game and spend more time analysing opponents and what I should do under what circumstances," he told AFP at a recent practice session in Taipei.

Cheering him on from the sidelines has been physiotherapist Victoria Kao, who has shouldered some of the traditional roles of a coach by acting as Chou's mentor, cheerleader and chief critic.

**- 'EMBRACE YOUR DREAMS' -**

Kao accompanies her charge on and off the court, handing him drinks during match intervals and chaperoning him at charity events.

She says her main job is to "maintain his health and character" in a training regimen that includes pilates and belly dancing sessions. But Kao said she also has a duty to keep Chou grounded in the wake of his recent winning form.

"I will pour cold water on him and tell him it's just one victory, it's over and you need to calm down,"

she says. "But when there are setbacks I will tell him it's okay -- embrace your dreams and persist -- to try to lift him up emotionally"

Competing in professional badminton without a personal coach is almost unheard of among top players from the sport's traditional Asian powerhouses.

Chou still has access to the Taiwanese coaching team, and regularly consults experts including a retired physics professor on improving his form. But his decision to take tactical matters into his own hands, with Kao's support, has earned him a series of wins on this year's tour.

He triumphed at the Thailand Open two weeks after his Jakarta victory and took a record third title at the Taipei Open in September in front of rapturous home crowd.

## GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT ENGINEER SOUTH DISTRICT ZILLA PANCHYAT NAMCHI

### NOTICE INVITING TENDER

N.I.T. No.:- 455/AE/SDZP

Dated: 01.11.2019

For and on behalf of the Governor of Sikkim, Assistant Engineer, South District, Zilla Panchayat Namchi, invited sealed tenders on percentages basis from the eligible registered Contractor vide Notification No. 10/PWD/R&B/10-11/Acctt/130 dated 26/07/2010 having adequate resources & experience in similar Civil Constructional Works from South District for the following works.

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Estimated cost (in Rs.)	Value put to Tender (in Rs.)	Earnest Money @2.5% of tender value (in Rs)	Cost of Tender Form (in Rs.)	Completion Time (in Months)
1.	Water Supply Scheme for Phong from PA Khola source	1,62,45,400/-	40,50,282/-	1,01,257/-	30,000/-	18 months.
2	Water Supply Scheme for Upper Karek from Changey Source	1,00,23,200/-	27,26,289/-	68,157/-	30,000/-	18 months

#### TIME SCHEDULE

- Date of submission of application with Bank Receipt/Challan for issue of Tender Documents (excluding the Tender Form):- 15/11/2019.
- Date of issue of Tender Form:- 15/11/2019.
- Date and Time of submission of Tenders:- 02/12/2019
- Date and Time of Opening of Tenders:- 01/12/2019

#### CONDITIONS OF CONTRACTS:-

- Tender is open only to the eligible registered contractor of eligible class of respective Territory under South Sikkim.
- The intending tenders/Contractor should apply in writing for issue of Tender documents. The application would invariably be signed by himself. The tender document will not be issued to any person other than the **INTENDING TENDERER**. The application shall be submitted initially for each work listed above with all required documents.
- The applicant should enclose attested copies of the (a) Latest Income Tax Clearance Certificate as per the Indian Income Tax Act and (b) Validated/Updated Contractor Enlistment Certificate, and Professional Tax Clearance Certificate along with the application. It is mandatory to produce the original Certificate after accepting the Tender GST(Goods & Service Tax).
- The prescribed Non-Transferable Tender Document (excluding the Tender Form) can be obtained during the period specified above from the office of the Assistant Engineer, SDZP(South) RM&DD, Namchi, on production of requisite Bank receipt of the state of Sikkim towards the cost of Tender Document (non-refundable) under the receipt Head "cost of Tender Form", **Head of account (0515-15 Kother Rural Development Programme, 800 other receipts)**.
- Earnest money deposits 2.5% in the state Bank of Sikkim shall be in the form of Deposit Receipt of Scheduled Bank in the form of temporary deposits receipts in favour of the Sr. Accounts Officer, SDZP/RMDD, Namchi. Tender form shall be issued only on production of the deposit receipts who have obtained the tender Documents.
- 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 3(a) and (b) above should be enclosed with the offer.
- Sealed tenders may be deposited in the Tender/box in the Office of the **Concerned Divisional Office, South District Zilla Panchayat, Namchi**, on the date and within the time indicated above.
- The Tenderers should sign on every page of the Tender Documents as Acceptance of the General Direction and conditions of the contract and other laid norms. The rate quoted should be both in figures and words and should be inclusive of all other Taxes and Levies. Overwriting and correction should be avoided and if made should be authenticated. Incomplete/Conditional tenders shall be rejected forthwith.
- In case of any discrepancy in rates (s) printed in the Schedule of Rates and Quantities issued with the tender 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 Chief Engineer/ Head of the Department will be final in this regard.
- 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 shall be entertained whatsoever. If any extra claim is made, it shall be as per the agreement rates.
- Avoidable damages due to negligence of the contractor shall be at his own risk and cost. The Department shall not be liable for payment of such damages (if any), including accidents to labourer at site.
- The offer shall remain valid for a period of 90 days. The work should be commenced within 15 days from the date of issue of work order.
- All the conditions as mentioned in the NIT shall be deemed to be a part of the agreement to be entered with the contractor. Security deposit shall be collected by deductions from the running bills to the contractor @ 5% of the value of work done.
- The Department reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason thereof.
- The recoveries of Income Tax, GST and Royalties of Forest produces shall be as per the rates notified by the Government from time to time and applicable on the date of payment. In no case, claim of any contractor for deduction as per rates incorporated in Analysis of Rates or Schedule of Rates or Rates on the date of tender shall be acceptable.
- In case of carriage of Non Stock Materials, if these materials are available to site or are actually transported from a lesser distance indicated in the schedules, the department shall pay the carriage as per actual proof of carriage supported by permits issued by Forest Department indicating the quarries which is required to be submitted by contractor with bill, not exceeding the rates as incorporated in the schedules. The contractors are required to submit necessary documents to fulfill the claim or payment of carriage of Non-Stock Materials.
- Mobilization advance shall be given as per paragraph 24.6 of the Sikkim Public Work Department Manual and General Conditions of Contract subject to availability of resources.
- Subletting of contract work if against the norms and if it comes to the notice, the original contract shall be cancelled and appropriate action shall be initiated as per the rules.
- In case of the man powers employed by the contractor are from outside the State or neighboring countries, it shall be the responsibility of the Contractor to get them registered with the Labour Department, Government of Sikkim as per the relevant Labour Laws.
- The Department also reserves the right to increase, decrease, alter or modify the item of works as indicated in the NIT without assigning any reason thereof.
- The contractor shall also make arrangement to have photographs of the works taken at least at three stages of the construction period i.e. beginning, middle and completion stage.
- Damages to properties in and around the work site must be avoided at all cost. The contractor shall be held responsible for any acts to negligence and shall be made to make the damages.
- It is accepted to the tenders to have inspected the site before submitting his bid. There may be possible site difficulties for which the tenderer should have their own correct assessment before submitting the bid.
- The contractor shall have to pay all taxes and duties as applicable and notified by the State Government and no claim shall be entertained in this regard whatsoever.
- The cost of stock materials supplied from the department store will be deducted from the contractors' bills as per rules.

Sd/-  
(Assistant Engineer)  
R.O. No. 229/IPR/Pub/Classi./19-20  
Date. 01.11.2019  
South District Zilla Panchayat  
Namchi, South Sikkim.



## Living With HIV

*It can't be easy, but it should be this tough either*

The trauma and privations of People Living with HIV and AIDS remain largely unaddressed because the society at large remains uninvolved, allowing them to struggle in the shadows. It cannot be easy coming to grips with getting tested positive for HIV, especially in a society as closed and prone to jumping-judgmentalism as Sikkim. The heart goes out for the nearly 600 People Living with HIV/ AIDS (as of 31 March 2014, the latest figures updated by the National AIDS Control Organisation). As per NACO records, there are also 19 children living with HIV in Sikkim, having been born with the Virus. These, one must qualify are numbers projected by NACO. As far as the State AIDS Control Society is concerned, the number, as of 30 Nov 2016, was much lower but they count only people who have tested positive in Sikkim while there could be some from Sikkim who got themselves tested outside the State.

It cannot be easy to be a PLHA in Sikkim where neither the civil society nor the government appears really too moved to address their situation beyond what is strictly provided for by rules or sponsored by way of funds. What is worse, ever since NDA assumed office at the Centre in 2014, HIV and AIDS, along with a host of other social sector interventions, have found their finances blackballed by inconsiderate policy makers and their kowtowing minions in the departments who have consistently failed to lobby for population groups they have been tasked to look out for. Meanwhile, since the first HIV+ve case was detected in Sikkim in the year 1994, AIDS has claimed lives. The number of HIV+ve people and those struck by full-blown AIDS could be higher since there can be a substantial mismatch between what is officially recorded and what is the ground reality.

Getting to zero, by way of no more infections and no more fatalities, is a global pursuit when it comes to the HIV and AIDS scenario. Unfortunately, where this should have resulted in higher allocation of funds and support for awareness and care, in India, the zero target appears to be for financial commitments to the battle against HIV/ AIDS. AIDS awareness finds itself budgeted down to a sliver of what it was receiving till three years ago. The corridors of power in Delhi are taking the "getting to zero" call too literally and extending it to funding support for interventions by people living with HIV AIDS as well. And one sees the warning signs in such unexpected corners as the latest data on HIV/ AIDS. The numbers are of 31 March 2014 vintage! When it comes to continuing challenges like AIDS, data should be real-time, and yet, even as the country claims that the numbers are falling, we have only data from two years ago for reference. Why? Data can be officially updated only after "surveillance" has been completed. This has not happened for two years now obviously because this was one of sectors which saw its funding slashed. When basics like data collection which would inform policy interventions and project adjustments get compromised, one fears for where AIDS awareness and care are headed.

Support for People Living With HIV has also taken a hit, one of the casualties of the change in the Central Government's approach to addressing HIV AIDS in the country. International funding, which was lavish to say the least, was scaled down once the rate of infection came down. That was expected, since the immediate threat had been managed. And once the bushfire had been stamped out, the funding was expectedly diverted to other countries and regions where the problem continues to remain urgent. But that does not mean that HIV and AIDS have ceased to be issues of concern in the country. They might have stopped being on the top of priority intervention for international funding agencies, but as far as the nation is concerned, AIDS awareness cannot be allowed to slacken because if that happens, the disease will relapse and all gains made by the past decades of awareness and sensitization will have been squandered. Delhi might have stuck its head in the sand, and will have to eventually pull its head out, but till then, the state exchequer will need to sustain the AIDS control mission. It cannot do that if it starts winding up dedicated cells just because USAID or the Bill Gates Foundation is not writing the cheques any more. It should not be allowed to do. But who will make some noise about it?

The problem of funding has been around for some years now, but it has not really made news or headlines on a scale that it requires. That is clearly because like with most social concerns which don't make the headlines, this situation lacks the titillation and sensationalism that would attract TRPs. Maybe the HIV+ve form neither a visible vote-bank nor constitute a purchasing pocket to receive attention. Maybe at a subconscious level, the society at large does not see anything wrong in such withdrawal of assistance for condition which most people still blame on lifestyle choices. Maybe these are the reasons why the problem is not receiving the attention it should. This has to change, but won't until more people take notice. No one has take note thus far because when it comes to real work, HIV and AIDS continue to be battled in the shadows with only a sanitized version of awareness and empathy put out on display. Let's try and change; let's try and improve this World AIDS Day.

# California wildfires signal the arrival of a planetary fire age

STEPHEN PYNE  
*theconversation.com*

Another autumn, more fires, more refugees and incinerated homes. For California, flames have become the colors of fall.

Free-burning fire is the proximate provocation for the havoc, since its ember storms are engulfing landscapes. But in the hands of humans, combustion is also the deeper cause. Modern societies are burning lithic landscapes - once-living biomass now fossilized into coal, gas and oil - which is aggravating the burning of living landscapes.

The influence doesn't come only through climate change, although that is clearly a factor. The transition to a fossil fuel civilization also affects how people in industrial societies live on the land and what kind of fire practices they adopt.

Even without climate change, a serious fire problem would exist. U.S. land agencies reformed policies to reinstate good fire 40 to 50 years ago, but outside a few locales, it has not been achievable at scale.

What were lithic landscapes have been exhumed and no longer only underlie living ones. In effect, once released, the lithic overlies the living and the two different kinds of burning interact in ways that sometimes compete and sometimes collude. Like the power lines that have sparked so many wildfires, the two fires are crossing, with lethal consequences.

### FIRE AS FRAMEWORK

As a historian of fire, I know that no single factor drives it. Flames synthesize their surroundings. Fire is a driverless car that barrels down the road integrating whatever is around it.

Sometimes it confronts a sharp curve called climate change. Sometimes it's a tricky intersection where townscape and countryside meet. Sometimes it's road hazards left from past accidents, like logging slash, invasive grasses or post-burn environments.

Climate change acts as a performance enhancer, and understandably, it claims most of the attention because it's global and its reach extends beyond flames to oceans, mass extinctions and other

knock-on effects. But climate change is not enough by itself to account for the plague of megafires. Climate integrates many factors, and so does fire. Their interplay makes attribution tricky.

Instead, consider fire in all its manifestations as the informing narrative. The critical inflection in modern times occurred when humans began to burn fossilized rather than living biomass. That set into motion a "pyric transition" that resembles the demographic transition which accompanies industrialization as human populations first expand, then recede. Something similar happens with the population of fires, as new ignition sources and fuels become available while old ones persist.

In the U.S., the transition sparked a wave of monster fires that rode the rails of settlement - fires an order of magnitude larger and more lethal than those of recent decades. Land clearing and logging slash fed serial conflagrations, which blew up in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the waning decades of the Little Ice Age.

It was a period of flame-catalyzed havoc that inspired state-sponsored conservation and a determination to eliminate free-burning flame. Led by foresters, the belief spread that fire on landscapes could be caged, as it was in furnaces and dynamos.

Eventually, as technological substitution (think of replacing candles with lightbulbs) and active suppression reduced the presence of open flame, the population of fires fell to the point where fire could no longer do the ecological work required. Meanwhile, society reorganized itself around fossil fuels, adapting to the combustion of lithic landscapes and ignoring the fire latent in living ones.

Now the sources overload the sinks: Too much fossil biomass is burned to be absorbed within ancient ecological bounds. Fuels in the living landscape pile up and rearrange themselves. The climate is unhealed. When flame returns, as it must, it comes as wildfire.

### WELCOME TO THE PYROCENE

Widen the aperture a bit, and we can envision Earth entering a fire age comparable to the ice ages of the Pleistocene, complete with the pyric equivalent of ice sheets, pluvial lakes, periglacial outwash

plains, mass extinctions, and sea level changes. It's an epoch in which fire is both prime mover and principal expression.

Even climate history has become a subset of fire history. Humanity's firepower underwrites the Anthropocene, which is the outcome not just of human meddling but of a particular kind of meddling through humanity's species monopoly over fire.

The interaction of these two realms of fire has not been much studied. It's been a stretch to fully include human fire practices within traditional ecology. But industrial fire, unlike landscape fires, is solely a product of human finagling, and so has stood outside the bounds of ecological science. It's as though the intellectual sink for understanding can no more hold the new realm of burning than nature can its emissions.

Yet in humanity - the keystone species for fire on Earth - those two arenas of earthly burning, like smoke from separate fires drawn into a single convective column, are merging. Their give and take is reshaping the planet.

In the developed world, industrial combustion arranges agriculture, built environments, peri-urban settings and reserves for wildlands - all the stuff available for landscape fire. Societies even fight landscape fire with the counterforce of industrial fire in the form of pumps, engines, aircraft and vehicles to haul crews. The interaction of the two realms of fire determines not only what gets burned, but also what needs to be burned and isn't. It changes the road fire drives down.

Add up all the effects, direct and indirect - the areas burning, the areas needing to be burned, the off-site impacts with damaged watersheds and airsheds, the unraveling of biotas, the pervasive power of climate change, rising sea levels, a mass extinction, the disruption of human life and habitats - and you have a pyrogeography that looks eerily like an ice age for fire. You have a Pyroocene. The contours of such an epoch are already becoming visible through the smoke.

If you doubt it, just ask California.

*[the writer is Emeritus Professor, School of Life Sciences, Arizona State University]*



## Writing and reading starts with children's hands-on play

HETTY ROESSINGH  
*theconversation.com*

Perhaps evolution's most wondrous manifestation is visible in the unparalleled elegance and versatility in the design of the human hand. The miracle of the hand-brain connection, a development that probably began about three or four million years ago, lies at the existential core of what it means to be human - that is, to have developed as tool makers and language users.

Yet writing, a phenomenon of only the past 5,000 years, was a late-comer in human development. It required representational capacity and the dawning idea that a tool in hand could preserve our thoughts and share them across time and space.

The story of Helen Keller, rendered blind and deaf from a fever as a toddler, is a poignant testimony to the human capacity to find meaning through the hands and through language.

It was Anne Sullivan, her teacher, who stayed by her side as a lifelong sojourner and unlocked the world. She gave Helen her freedom through a constant flow of finger-spelling into her young pupil's hand.

Helen later wrote: "That living word awakened my soul, gave it light, hope, joy, set it free!"

### HANDS-ON LEARNING

The hands attach humans intimately to the grand adventure of our Earthly existence. The child's first 2,000 days are full of adventure, discovery, making connections and learning the world - especially through the hands. In turn, the child is laying down the bundles of neuro-circuitry in the cognitive, linguistic, motor domains that underpin literacy.

Language in these early moments of life, provided mostly by parents or

primary caregivers, is what supports these processes. It is through back-and-forth, or "serve-and-return" kinds of conversations that such language grows. With attentive adults who take an interest in children's hands-on learning, children grow and gain capacities to be ready for school and to keep up with school.

There is no question that we live in the 21st century of digital devices that compete for a child's time and attention that open other possibilities for knowing and learning. But the digital world can wait.

There is no substitute for physical play, language, adult engagement and the crucial hand-brain connection that underpins all that is to come.

### MOTOR SKILLS AND LITERACY

Gripping and pushing a pencil to convey meaning on the page is more than a simple motor skill. Rather, it requires marshalling a host of neuro-motor, cognitive and linguistic resources - whether children can retrieve the vocabulary they have and get it on the page. For our youngest learners it starts with nimble fingers.

Fine motor skills are those involving the small muscle groups in the hands, fingers and wrists that are needed for gripping and grasping. In turn these are used for handling pencils, erasers, scissors and cutlery, for example. Precision and co-ordination of these small muscles is so important to school readiness.

The Ages and Stages Instrument, a screening tool to detect children's developmental abilities, expects a five-year-old to be able to cut a straight line, copy shapes and draw a figure.

### MANY CHILDREN NOT PREPARED

In Alberta, data from 2009 to 2013 found that almost a quarter (24 per cent) of all children entering kindergarten were not meeting

benchmarks for physical health and well-being. This benchmark includes fine motor skills.

Similar results are corroborated in 2019 pan-Canadian data: 27 per cent of youngsters at age five aren't meeting readiness benchmarks upon their arrival in kindergarten. Among children raised in poverty, this figure increased to 36 per cent.

Schools collect this data through a screening tool that captures children's development in different areas: physical health; social competence; emotional maturity; language and cognitive development; communication skills and general knowledge.

When students get a slow start, they don't necessarily catch up. Our research findings from a study of Grade 2 students in Alberta indicate a lack of control over printing that impedes students' abilities to put words on the page. Another study we conducted of Grade 3 students similarly suggests room for improvement.

### HAND TO MOUTH

In grades 3 and 4, the transition to academic literacy development and vocabulary knowledge becomes increasingly important. But this can only be unlocked if handwriting is under control and students have a foundation of vocabulary, nurtured partly through hands-on learning.

The acclaimed psychologist Jean Piaget aptly described how children's sensory motor developmental stage requires "concrete operations." Children have a fundamental need to take in and learn their world through direct contact, principally with their hands, in real time. This matters for learning how to reconstruct the external world into internal representations - and to name these with language.

Such learning occurs through con-

tinuous, sensitive windows of opportunity that open and close as children become ready for more experiences. Visually mediated simulations on a screen are no substitute for this direct experience.

Nature and nurture interact in a complex ecology. The Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky taught the importance of the socio-cultural contexts in which children develop and learn with someone more experienced. With encouragement and talking together, children master budding skills when they receive just enough challenge to take the next step.

Vocabulary growth helps predict a child's success with reading. It is not only the quantity of words that matter, but also the range of words and the quality of the interactions that matter.

### INTERNALIZED KNOWLEDGE

The child's first 2,000 days are precious ones that teachers cannot "pay back" once lost.

A deep pool of internalized knowledge is necessary for children to become critical thinkers, problem solvers and savvy, literate users of language. The single biggest predictor of what children will learn next is what they already know. Access to Google doesn't count.

Inadequate literacy skills hurt individuals' potential for opportunity and a globally connected, complex, competitive knowledge economy demands high literacy outcomes. The critical skills of reading, writing, communicating, filtering and analyzing information are ever-important in our complex world.

It all starts with nimble fingers.

*[the writer is Professor, Werklund School of Education, University of Calgary]*



# IPL players' auction on Dec 19 in Kolkata

**MUMBAI, Nov 5 (PTI):** The players' auction for the next Indian Premier League (IPL) will be held on December 19 in Kolkata, the event's Governing Council decided in a meeting here on Tuesday.

The glitzy league is usually held in April-May every year and players' auction is being conducted in Kolkata for the first time. The city is the home ground of the Shah Rukh Khan co-owned Kolkata Knight Riders franchise.

"The IPL auction will be in Kolkata on December 19. It's a departure from the traditional venue of Bengaluru," an IPL Governing Council member said on conditions of anonymity after the meeting here.

While the franchises were allotted Rs 82



crore each for IPL 2019, Rs 85 crore per team has been earmarked for the 2020 season.

Every franchise will also have an additional purse of Rs three crore in addition to the balance in their kitties from the last

year's auction. This year's auction is the last one before the franchises disband

and prepare to assemble fresh squads from 2021 at a mega auction.

Funds left with franchises ahead of IPL 2020 auction:

Chennai Super Kings Rs 3.2 crore, Delhi Capitals Rs 7.7 crore, Kings

XI Punjab Rs 3.7 crore, Kolkata Knight Riders Rs 6.05 crore, Mumbai Indians Rs 3.55 crore, Rajasthan Royals Rs 7.15 crore, Royal Challengers Bangalore Rs 1.80 crore, Sunrisers Hyderabad Rs 5.30 crore.

## PF scam: UPPCL managing director transferred

**LUCKNOW, Nov 4 (PTI):** The Adityanath government has removed power secretary and managing director of the Uttar Pradesh Power Corporation Limited late on Sunday night.

The move comes after the Opposition attacked the BJP government over investments of over Rs 2,600 crore of the employees provident fund (EPF) of the UPPCL in scam-hit housing fiance firm DHFL.

Aparna U has been shifted to the irrigation department as secretary. M Devraj, who has returned from central deputation, will be the new power secretary and UPPCL managing director, a government spokesperson said.

The Samajwadi Party and the Congress have demanded dismissal of Power Minister Shri-

kant Sharma and the principal secretary of his department.

The SP also demanded a probe by a sitting high court judge into the scam.

Congress workers held a protest demonstration over the issue in Lucknow and demanded dismissal of Sharma, saying that a scam of this magnitude cannot take place without the "connivance" of the minister.

Last Saturday, the state government had recommended a CBI probe into the matter.

The state government had on Sunday claimed that the "dubious" decision was taken by the previous government headed by Akhilesh Yadav of the Samajwadi Party in April 2014 and the process of investment was further carried forward in 2016.

## Those consuming beef should eat dog meat too: Bengal BJP chief

**BURDWAN (WB), Nov 5 (PTI):** West Bengal BJP president Dilip Ghosh courted controversy on Tuesday when he said intellectuals who consume beef and "demean" cows should also eat dog meat.

His remark drew sharp reactions from senior TMC leader Subrata Mukherjee, who said "people of Bengal would be the best judge of such insane statements".

Ghosh, a Lok Sabha MP from Bengal, also said that "any meat" should be eaten at home, not on roads.

Insisting that cow milk contains gold, the state BJP chief said people take pride in cleaning excreta of foreign pet

dogs, but has no reverence for "our mother".

"Few intellectuals eat beef on roads, I am asking them to eat dog meat too. Their health will do fine, no matter which animal they eat, but why on roads? Eat at your home," Ghosh told reporters on the sidelines of a programme here.

Demeaning and killing of cows is a crime in India, the parliamentarian claimed.

"The milk of desi cows contains gold. That is why it is golden in colour and also healthy. There are some intellectuals who find it humiliating to worship cow as mother but take pride in cleaning excreta of foreign

eign dogs," he said.

Anyone who misbehaves with "my mother" will be treated the way they should be, Ghosh warned.

"Indian cow is a special breed which has gold in their milk. Foreign breeds such as jersey cows don't have gold in their milk. Also, their milk is not as healthy," he insisted.

Mukherjee, who is also the state panchayat minister, said it was best for him not to react to Ghosh's remarks.

"What can we say about such statements? The people of Bengal will be the best judge of such insane statements," he added.

## TSRTC depot manager attacked while on way to work



**HYDERABAD, Nov 5 (PTI):** With the midnight deadline set by the Telangana government for striking TSRTC employees to rejoin duty just hours away, a depot manager in Nirmal on his way to work was allegedly attacked by some people, suffering minor injuries, police said here on Tuesday.

Janardhan, the Depot manager at Bhainsa in the town was attacked while proceeding to work, they said, adding he was taken to a hospital and treated for his injuries. CCTV footage was being examined, the culprits caught soon and the reasons behind the attack ascertained, police said.

They assured that the safety and security of those willing to rejoin duty would be taken care of. All depots have been provided with sufficient security, police said and warned of stern action against anyone trying to take the law into their own hands

Meanwhile, the month-long indefinite strike by Telangana State Road Transport Corporation employees' union over various demands, including merger of RTC with the government continued on Tuesday, the last day for submission of letters by the workers to re-join duty.

The government had on Monday toughened its stance against the striking employees and decided not to allow any of them to work after the expiry of the November 5 deadline.

They warned that if the employees continued their stir, it would go ahead with the plan to permit private bus operators to run services in 5,000 of the total of 10,400 routes, leading to a situation where the Telangana State Road

Transport Corporation (TSRTC) virtually ceased to exist.

Chief Minister K Chandrasekhar Rao had on Saturday said the cabinet decided to allot 5,100 of 10,400 routes to private operators and warned that the other routes would also be given to them if those on strike don't join duty by the midnight of November 5.

However, the unions have been urging the government to hold talks with them to end the strike, which entered the 32nd day on Tuesday with workers holding protests at various places in the state.

They reiterated that they would continue the stir if their demands are not met.

TSRTC Managing Director Sunil Sharma said in a statement that those employees wishing to join duty can submit joining letters to various offices, including that of the District Collector, Superintendent of Police, Revenue Divisional Officer and Depot Managers.

Nearly 48,000 employees had begun an indefinite strike from October 5 across Telangana on a call by the Joint Action Council of TSRTC employees' unions, demanding merger of RTC with the government, pay revision, recruitment to various posts, among others, resulting in buses staying off roads.

Rao had earlier said that under no circumstances would the RTC be merged with the government and termed the stir as illegal as they caused immense inconvenience to public.

The RTC management said alternate arrangements had been made and the services of temporary drivers and conductors engaged to operate buses to ensure passengers do not face problems.

## Depression over Bay of Bengal may intensify into cyclonic storm: MeT

**BHUBANESWAR, Nov 5 (PTI):** A fresh low pressure area formed over the Bay of Bengal intensified into a depression on Tuesday, the Meteorological Centre here said.

It is likely to further intensify into a cyclonic storm on Wednesday, the MeT Centre said.

"The depression lay centred over east-central and adjoining south-eastern Bay of Bengal and north Andaman Sea, about 950 km south-south-east of Paradip in Odisha," Director of Bhubaneswar MeT Centre, H R Biswas said.

It is likely to intensify into a deep depres-

sion shortly and then into a cyclonic storm on Wednesday, Biswas said. "The cyclonic storm may move west-north-westwards initially and then north-northwestwards, towards Odisha-West Bengal coasts," he said.

The likelihood of a cyclonic storm over Odisha comes barely six months after the cyclone Fani devastated coastal areas of the state on May 3, claiming around 64 lives and leaving many without a shelter.

The warning comes a fortnight after six people were killed in rain that battered the state under the impact of a low pres-

sure area.

Under the impact of the fresh depression, several parts of coastal Odisha are expected to receive rain from November 8 which is likely to intensify, the MeT Centre said.

"We are constantly monitoring the movement and direction of the depression. At present, a clear picture about its possible impact is yet to emerge," a MeT official said.

As sea conditions will be rough and there will be high velocity winds, fishermen have been advised not to venture into deep seas till further notice.

## Odisha puts 15 districts on alert for heavy rain



**BHUBANESWAR, Nov 5 (PTI):** With the IMD predicting widespread rainfall from Thursday due to a depression in the Bay of Bengal, Odisha government on Tuesday put 15 districts of the state on alert to deal with possible flood and waterlogging situations, official sources said.

Special Relief Commissioner (SRC) and Secretary Revenue and Disaster Management, PK Jena in a letter to the district collectors said: "Administrative machinery to remain alert to meet the flood/waterlogging situation that may arise in the event of extremely/heavy rainfall. The situation may be closely watched."

The districts which were put on alert were: Balasore, Bhadrak, Kendrapara, Jagatsinghpur, Ganjam, Puri, Gajapati, Koraput, Rayagada, Nabarangpur, Kalahandi, Kandhamal, Boudh, Nua-pada and Malkangiri.

"We have put 15 of the states 30 districts on alert in view of the possible heavy rain," Jena told reporters.

Quoting the IMD report, Jena said north Andhra Pradesh and coastal Odisha is likely to experience widespread rainfall from November 9 onward, squally wind of 40-50 kmph with gusting to 60 kmph is very likely to prevail over the coast on Saturday and increase thereafter.

The SRC also said the fishermen are advised not to venture into the

sea along and off Odisha coast and north Bay of Bengal from Friday onwards. He also suggested the fishermen to return to coast from deep sea by Friday.

Replying to a question on possible cyclone in the state as reported in a section of media, SRC said: "The IMD has not given any such information. The IMD had correctly forecast cyclones like Hudhud and Fani. We will go by its forecast of widespread rainfall as predicted by IMD and do the needful."

Cyclone Fani which hit the state on May 3 this year claimed lives of 64 people and caused massive damage to infrastructure in the coastal districts of the state.

## Pillai takes oath as new Governor of Mizoram

**AIZAWL, Nov 5 (PTI):** PS Sreedharan Pillai was sworn-in as the new Governor of Mizoram at the Raj Bhavan here on Tuesday.

The oath of office was administered by Chief Justice of Gauhati High Court Justice Ajai Lamba.

Mizoram Chief Minister Zoramthangam his cabinet colleagues,

legislators, former chief minister Lal Thanhawla and senior officials attended the swearing-in ceremony.

Pillai, a former BJP Kerala unit president, told media persons that he would render all help possible to the democratically elected state government in getting assistance from the Centre.

## Police on the streets a 'new low', says Congress

**NEW DELHI, Nov 5 (PTI):** The Congress on Tuesday said the police protesting on the roads in the national capital is a "new low" for India since independence.

Congress chief spokesperson Ran-deep Singh Surjewala asked whether this is BJP's 'New India' and wondered where the ruling party is taking the country to.

"A new low in 72 years - Police on protest in 'National Capital of Delhi'.

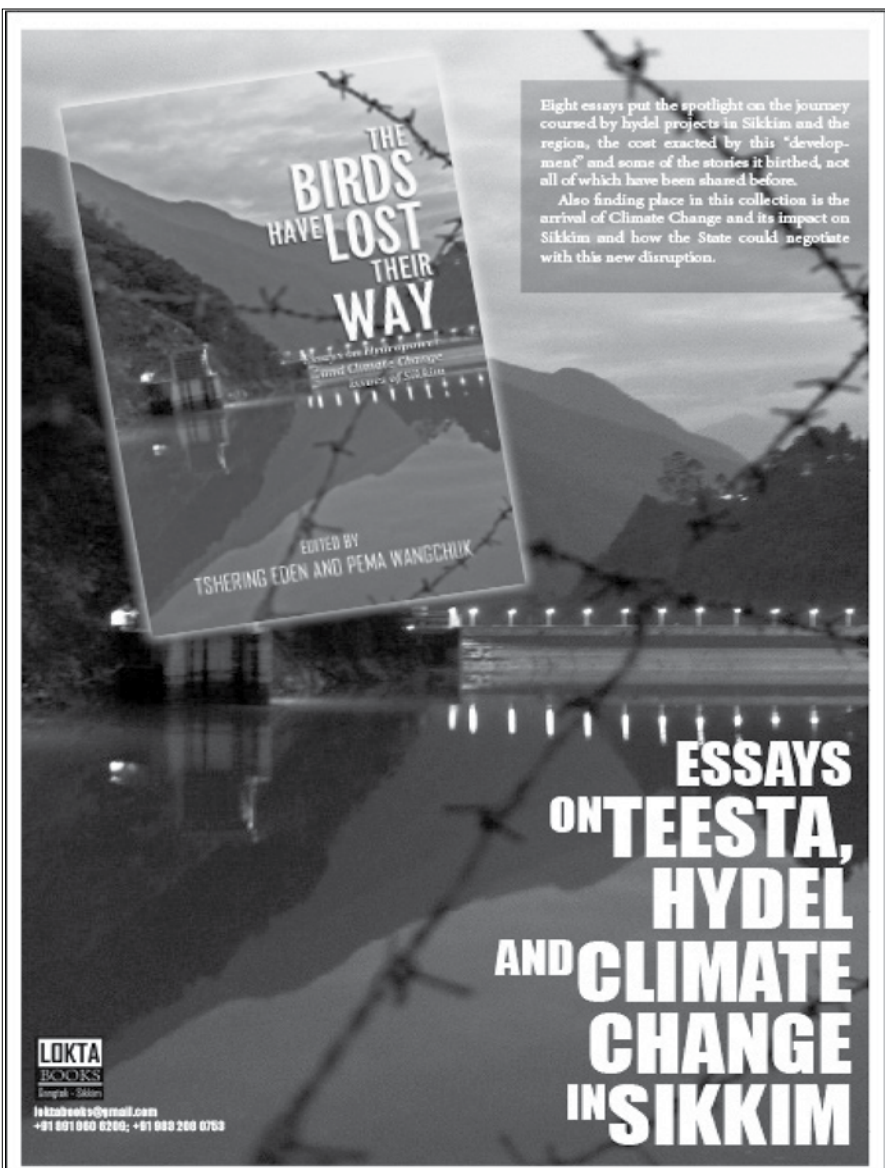
"Is this BJP's 'New India'? Where will BJP take the country? Where is India's HM, Sh. Amit Shah," he posted on Twitter. The

party's spokesman RPN Singh said, "This is unprecedented. If law enforcement agencies are on the streets, what will happen to the common man?" He alleged that such things take place whenever the BJP is in power.

Hundreds of police personnel gathered outside the police headquarters here on Tuesday to protest the assault on policemen following a clash with lawyers.

At least 20 police personnel and several lawyers were injured while many vehicles vandalised or set on fire during the clash at the Tis Hazari Court complex here on Saturday.

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## England snatch defeat from jaws of victory in third New Zealand T20



ALI MARTIN  
*theGuardian*

Eoin Morgan is not the type of captain to throw his players under the bus. But after England collapsed to a 14-run defeat under sunny skies in Nelson, one wondered whether a touch of exasperation sat beneath the surface as regards one or two.

Set 181 to win the third Twenty20 with New Zealand following an improved performance in the field – led by the Curran brothers, Tom and Sam – the tourists looked to be cruising, needing 44 from the final 34 deliveries with eight wickets in hand.

A 34-ball 55 from Dawid Malan had handed England the ideal platform and with James Vince and Morgan himself then set at the crease, just one calm head was required to take a 2-1 lead with two matches remaining.

Morgan holing out for 18 when attempting a third six off Mitch Santner's final over began a cascade of five English wickets in 19 balls. New Zealand, who earlier posted 180 for six through Colin de Grandhomme's broad-shouldered 55 from 35, applied the squeeze superbly.

"We didn't do the simple things right, we didn't establish a partnership, we didn't hit with the wind – things that the Black Caps did throughout," said Morgan after his side limped to 166 for seven by the end. "The lack of experience may have cost us. It's great how competitive the series is so far and integrating everyone into the squad. But we feel that's one that got away."

It is true that the XI on show was light by way of caps. Jonny Bairstow was stood down so that Tom Banton could make his much-anticipated debut. The 20-year-old Somerset opener crackled, briefly, with 18 from 10 including an eye-popping whipped six off Lockie Ferguson, and there is a raft of first-teamers only just setting down in New Zealand to begin preparations for the Test series.

But given four of the top five batsmen are 28 or older, the excuse doesn't stack up entirely either. Malan had spoke of "feeding on scraps" as regards England opportunities, and a desire to be the man who finishes off matches. Here, he looked in full control en route to a fifth half-century in eight games – only to stick a full toss from Ish Sodhi down deep midwicket's throat.

Morgan had been tucking into Santner and so was probably within his rights to attempt his shot, only for the left-armner to cannily hold it back a touch. But Vince was still at the crease approaching a second half-century of the series and was joined by Sam Billings, a player with 39 white-ball caps and vice-captain on tour.

Within the blink of an eye, both men had been vapourised. Billings was run out by Colin Munro from point turning back from a single that never was. Vince, owner of a World Cup winner's medal and a county captain, gave the recalled Blair Tickner his second for the innings by chipping softly to mid-off.

With Ferguson signing off from the series to start his own Test tune-up by knocking over Lewis Gregory and Sam Curran in the space of three balls, the 5,000 or so home supporters who lined the grass banks, and took in the spectacular backdrop of Mount Richmond Forest Park, were in clover.

They had earlier seen De Grandhomme at his belligerent best, following a 17-ball 33 from Martin Guptill with five fours and three sixes that showed just how good conditions were. But England, handed Matt Parkinson his first cap along with Banton, pegged the hosts back at regular intervals, such that the highest total of the series was still only par.

Tom Curran, recalled in place of Chris Jordan, held a fine swirling catch off Guptill as the opener was fooled by a knuckle-ball from his Worcestershire team-mate, Pat Brown. The right-armner was the pick of the attack with two wickets, including de Grandhomme, who was caught in the deep to end a stand of 66 with Ross Taylor.

Parkinson, in for Adil Rashid, bowled just two tidy overs due to the wind picking up later on when New Zealand had two left-handers at the crease. The leg-spinner did claim his maiden international scalp, No 3 Tim Seifert bowled through his legs playing a reverse slog sweep, and looked confident on debut.

It was a trickier day for his fellow Lancastrian, Saqib Mahmood, who struggled with his radar, was manhandled by de Grandhomme while leading 49 runs overall, but at least trapped Taylor lbw in his final over.

Sam Curran doused a quickfire 22 from Jimmy Neesham and after three matches is looking the pick of the newcomers with the ball. The all-rounder looked too high coming in at No 6 later on, however, once the full-time – dare we say experienced – batsmen had blown it.

JACOB STEINBERG  
*theGuardian*

It will probably come as a surprise to Maurizio Sarri to learn that Chelsea's fans have chants in celebration of Jorginho and Mateo Kovacic these days. That never happened during the Italian's solitary year at Stamford Bridge. Jorginho was often written off as everything wrong with Sarri-ball and there was little excitement when Chelsea made Kovacic's loan from Real Madrid permanent last summer.

Kovacic was a bland presence last season. The midfielder's passing was too safe, he offered nothing in the way of a goal threat and he often looked choked on the left of Sarri's midfield three. Everything was too predictable and it hardly helped that the Croat seemed to be in a job-share with Ross Barkley. No substitution was more predictable than Barkley for Kovacic. Other, that is, than Kovacic for Barkley.

It made for a monotonous turgid but Jorginho and Kovacic have both been liberated since Frank Lampard's appointment by Chelsea, who can take a big step towards the last 16 of the Champions League by beating Ajax at Stamford Bridge on Tuesday evening. The pair have stepped up in the absence of N'Golo Kanté, who is back in the squad after shaking off a groin injury, and combined beautifully during the



2-1 victory at Watford on Saturday.

Their crisp, inventive passing was a joy to behold, they matched Watford in the physical duels and, as a measure of how the mood has changed under Lampard, nothing sums it up better than Jorginho and Kovacic being serenaded by Chelsea's away support on a wet November evening in Hertfordshire.

Lampard must have enjoyed those chants at Vicarage Road. He has urged Jorginho and Kovacic to take more risks and was delighted when the former conjured a stunning assist for Tammy Abraham's opener on

Saturday. "I'm very happy for them to be quite fluid," Chelsea's manager said. "I also want them to be positive in their play and play forward passes, go by people if that's one of your attributes, as Mateo has, to travel with the ball at pace."

Jorginho and Kovacic were vital to Chelsea maintaining their poise on the ball when they were under relentless pressure during the early stages of their 1-0 victory over Ajax in Amsterdam two weeks ago. "It's hugely important in how I want the team to play," Lampard said. "We are trying to be fluid in our movement of the ball

and, of course, that really does mean moving in through central areas a lot. You've got to be able to take balls in tight area.

"You should be willing to accept the ball and be comfortable to at this level of football. Look at the first game against Ajax, the pace and speed of the game. If you are not ready to accept it, then it will find you out very quickly."

Chelsea have coped surprisingly well with Kanté's fitness problems this season. The French midfielder has been out for a month and Lampard is desperate to have him available on a regular basis. Yet with Kanté out

for the first Ajax game, Jorginho and Kovacic found the tactical discipline to frustrate the dangerous Dutch midfielder Donny van de Beek.

They are intelligent players, smart positionally and with their distribution, and they have played a part in Chelsea's recent defensive improvement in open play.

Jorginho, who will serve a one-match ban when Crystal Palace visit Stamford Bridge on Saturday, has emerged as a popular leader and Kovacic looks settled now he is no longer at the club on loan.

Nobody questions what Kovacic does now. Instead, it has become

clear why the 24-year-old is a former Internazionale and Madrid player and part of the Croatia side that reached the 2018 World Cup final. He knows what to do in midfield and his smooth understanding with Jorginho has given Mason Mount the freedom to support the forwards.

"They have been brilliant," Mount said. "You can see how they have been performing recently, keeping the team together, keeping the ball moving and that is what we need. Players like that keep us ticking, and when we get higher up the pitch we are the ones who need to put the ball in the back of the net. They keep us so strong together."

That strength will be tested again by Ajax, even though Erik ten Hag's side could be without Edson Álvarez, Lisandro Martínez and Van de Beek. The Dutch champions, having beaten Feyenoord 4-0 and PEC Zwolle 4-2 since losing to Chelsea two weeks ago, are top and unbeaten in the Eredivisie and will pose problems in attack.

Yet Chelsea will back themselves. The mood is light and Lampard is not even fretting about how to fit Kanté into the starting lineup. He wants competition for places in every position and Jorginho and Kovacic have given him what he calls "a nice problem". They have come a long way since last season's travails.

## Dijon defeat PSG and savour the sweet taste of redemption

ADAM WHITE & ERIC DEVIN  
*theGuardian*

Dijon surprised everyone by beating PSG on Friday night. They were bottom of Ligue 1 when the game kicked off, but goals from Mounir Chouair and Jhonder Cádiz gave them a 2-1 win over the league leaders. PSG had won their last six matches in a row, scoring 19 goals in the process, but they found Dijon hard to crack at the Stade Gaston-Gérard.

Dijon have defended fairly well so far this season. Summer signings Bruno Ecuele-Manga and Alfred Gomis have been impressive, as has the young Moroccan Nayef Aguerd. Since Stéphane Jobard took over as manager in the summer, the team has developed a hard-nosed defence, something that was sorely lacking under previous boss Olivier Dall'Oglio, whose attacking philosophy neglected the value of a bit of solidity at the back.

Scoring goals has been Dijon's problem this season. Prior to their victory over the champions, Dijon had played 11 league matches and scored just five goals, the joint-worst record in Europe's top five leagues. To make matters worse for fans, the club sold attacking players in the transfer window this summer and turned a €20m profit. Kwon Chang-Hoon and Naim Sliti departed, leaving Dijon short of experience up front.

The young attacking players they signed in the summer have struggled to hit the ground running and the one player they could rely on for goals – club captain Júlio Tavares – has missed a month of the season through injury. Dijon played three games while Tavares was injured and did not score in any of them. Despite that absence, he is still their top scorer this season. In



fact, he is the only player in the squad to have scored more than one goal this season.

The 2-1 win over PSG was only the second time this season that Dijon have managed to find the net more than once in a single fixture. They have been shut out more often than they have scored. But, if Jobard's young strikers need a story of redemption to inspire them, they should look no further than their manager.

This is not Jobard's first spell at the club. He captained Dijon as a player before working his way up the coaching staff at the club, taking charge of the reserves and then becoming an assistant to Olivier Dall'Oglio. When Jobard left Dijon in 2018 and took over as Rudi Garcia's assistant at Marseille, it looked as if he was just advancing his own career prospects.

However, it was revealed last month that there was more to Jobard's departure than first assumed. He was forced out of the club for stealing money from another member of staff. There were regular poker matches between staff and the club's physio, Nicolas Didry, often cleaned up. Didry kept his pok-

er money in his locker but, as the weeks went by, he realised someone was stealing a portion of his winnings. He informed a security guard, who quickly discovered with his own eyes that the culprit was none other than Jobard, who was the assistant manager at the time.

The players – many of whom viewed Jobard as a big brother, serving as a bulwark between them and the manager – were stupefied by his actions and quickly took the side of the physio. When confronted with CCTV evidence of Jobard's theft, club president Olivier Delcourt was left with no choice but to release the assistant manager.

The situation was complicated by Jobard's status at the club. He had played for Cercle Dijon, one of two clubs that merged to form Dijon FCO in 1998, and was a legend with fans. With this in mind, Delcourt ushered Jobard out the door quietly, so as to protect his reputation – especially as no criminal proceedings had been brought against him. Marseille's interest came at the right time for everyone to save face.

When Dijon were searching for a new manager to replace Antoine Kombouaré in the

summer, they considered former Lyon boss Bruno Génésio but, in the end, chose to give Jobard another chance. "His love for the club prevailed," said Delcourt. When the news about the theft emerged last month, the president addressed the issue, saying: "That is in the past. I am not denying the claims but I will not get into details. It all pertains to the club. Stéphane lost his head. He apologised to his colleagues, the players and to me too. In life, we all have the right to make mistakes."

It was a bold decision by the president and one that looked unwise after the first few weeks of the season. Dijon lost their first four games of the campaign and were still without a win after seven matches. Things have turned around of late, though. The defence has held firm and the attack has shown flashes of improvement. Chouair, who became the club's second most expensive when he joined this summer, has looked particularly sharp. They rode their luck in a goalless draw against Lyon, but showed reasons for optimism in their wins against Reims and Strasbourg. Their next two fixtures pit them against the rickety defences of Monaco and Rennes, which gives more grounds for hope.

Their prospects are not exactly rosy though. Despite only losing one of their last six league matches, they are just one point above bottom side Nîmes, who have a game in hand after their trip to Rennes was rained off on Saturday. However, after scraping survival in recent seasons, there is at last a bit of optimism around the Stade Gaston-Gérard. As Jobard's story shows, people can change when given a chance to redeem themselves. A lesson for us all.

## Past Olympic hurdles champ Harper Nelson aims for Tokyo

**WASHINGTON, Nov 5 (AFP):** American 100m hurdler Dawn Harper Nelson, the 2008 Olympic champion and 2012 Olympic runner-up who retired to have a baby, said she is training for next year's Tokyo Olympics. The 35-year-old from suburban St. Louis was second to Australia's Sally Pearson at the 2017 World Championships but missed this year's meet after giving birth to a baby girl last April.

Harper Nelson stepped away from the sport in September 2018 but worked out during her pregnancy and returned to the track a month after giving birth.

"I still think I have it and I can kill it," Harper Nelson said in a posting on the US Olympic website. "All the women in my life had said when they were moms they stopped their dream. Once I had my daughter, I looked at her and I remember thinking, 'I still have this yearn to run.'"

"And I refuse for her to say, when she looked at my career, 'My mom always said she wanted to keep running, but she stopped because she had me.'" Harper Nelson overtook teammate Lolo Jones late to capture gold in Beijing 11 years ago and settled for silver in London behind Pearson four years later.



# Hong Kong's economic woes deepen with plunging business outlook

**HONG KONG, Nov 5 (AFP):** Hong Kong's economic woes showed no sign of easing Wednesday after a key measure of business confidence fell to its lowest level in more than a decade as the city reels from the global trade war and violent democracy protests.

The Purchasing Managers Index -- which measures the health of the private sector -- dropped to 39.3 in October, its worst reading since 2008 during the global financial crisis, heaping fresh misery on the unrest-plagued city.

The international finance has been plunged into a recession by the fallout from the China-US trade war and five months of seething pro-democracy protests that Beijing has taken a hardline approach against.

IHS Markit, which surveys around 400 private companies to build the PMI dataset, said business activity was now falling at its fastest rate on record. The latest reading is well below the 50 level that separates growth from contraction and is also sharply down from the 41.5 seen in September.

"The ongoing politi-



cal unrest and impact of trade tensions saw business activity fall at the sharpest pace since the survey started over 21 years ago," Bernard Aw, principal economist at IHS Markit, wrote.

"Anecdotal evidence revealed that the retail and tourism sectors remained particularly affected," Aw added the city was experiencing a record decline in demand from mainland China.

Hong Kong's economy was already facing strong headwinds at the start of 2019 as it was hit by the trade war, battering a city that is hugely

reliant on the world's two largest economies.

In the first quarter the city was growing at a lacklustre 0.6 per cent. But the protests that erupted in June only made matters worse.

Figures released by the government last week showed gross domestic product shrank 3.2 per cent in the third quarter compared with the previous three months, when it saw a 0.4 per cent drop. That means the city is experiencing a technical recession, with two back-to-back periods of contraction.

It is the first time the

city has witnessed a recession since early 2009 at the height of the financial crisis.

Last month Financial Secretary Paul Chan warned it was "very likely" the city would end the year in a full-blown recession. Overseas visitors have fallen by as much as 40 per cent, especially from mainland China, which accounts for 80 percent of the city's tourists.

Retail figures have tumbled around a fifth for August and September. This summer's protests were initially sparked by a now-abandoned plan to

allow extraditions to the mainland with millions hitting the streets.

As Beijing and local leaders dug in the protests snowballed into a wider movement calling for greater democracy and police accountability with violence by both protesters and police increasing with each passing month.

Beijing appears determined to wait out protests, despite 22 consecutive weeks of rallies, and has signalled it plans to assert more control over the restless city rather than give concessions.

# At least nine American Mormon community members killed in Mexico

At least three women and six children from an American Mormon community based in northern Mexico have been killed in an ambush, a relative of the victims said on Monday.

Julian Lebaron said his cousin was on her way to the airport when she was attacked and shot in her car along with her four children in Rancho de la Mora, an area notorious for drug traffickers and bandits of all kinds.

"It was a massacre," Lebaron, an activist who has denounced criminal groups in the area, told Formula Radio.

Lebaron said his relatives located the vehicle, which had been set on fire with the bodies

of the victims inside. Two other vehicles were found several hours later, containing the bodies of two more women and two children.

At least five other children, one of whom was shot and wounded, managed to escape and walk home, and one girl was reported missing after having run into the woods to hide, Lebaron added.

The Chihuahua state attorney general, Cesar Augusto Peniche, said the number of victims remains "confused". The attack took place on the border between the states of Chihuahua and Sonora near the border with the United States.

Julian Lebaron's brother, Benjamin Lebaron,

founder of a crime-fighting group called SOS Chihuahua, was assassinated in 2009.

The affected community is made up of descendants of Mormons who fled the United States in the nineteenth century, after being persecuted for their traditions, including polygamy.

Many Mormons in Mexico enjoy dual Mexican and American citizenship.

Mexico has registered more than 250,000 murders since the government controversially deployed the army to fight drug trafficking in 2006.

Many experts blame the "drug war" for spiraling violence, as fragmented cartels battle each other and the army.

# Iran says to resume enrichment at underground plant



President Hassan Rouhani said Tuesday that Iran would resume uranium enrichment at an underground plant south of Tehran in its latest step back from a troubled 2015 agreement with major powers.

The suspension of all enrichment at the Fordow plant in the mountains near the Shiite holy city of Qom was one of the restrictions on its nuclear activities that Iran accepted in return for the lifting of international sanctions.

But Washington's abandonment of the deal in May last year followed by its reimposition of crippling sanctions prompted Iran to begin a phased suspension of its own commitments in May this year.

Rouhani recalled that under the terms of the agreement Iran had retained more than 1,000 centrifuges at the plant

which had been running empty since it went into effect. "Starting from tomorrow (Wednesday), we will begin injecting (uranium hexafluoride) gas at Fordo," Rouhani said in a speech broadcast by state television.

Iran said the whole process would be carried out transparently witnessed by inspectors from the UN nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency. The move is the fourth announced by Iran since it began responding to Washington's abandonment of its commitments.

Iran has repeatedly warned the remaining parties to the deal -- Britain, China, France, Germany and Russia -- that the agreement can only be rescued if they help it circumvent US sanctions.

European governments have strived to come up with a mechanism that would allow

foreign firms to continue to do business with Iran without incurring US penalties. But to Iran's mounting frustration, their efforts have so far failed to have any significant impact.

The European Union warned Monday that its continued support for the deal depended on Tehran fulfilling its commitments. Maja Kocijancic, spokeswoman for EU diplomatic chief Federica Mogherini, said the bloc "remains committed" to the nuclear deal.

"We have continued to urge Iran to reverse such steps without delay and to refrain from other measures that would undermine the nuclear deal," Kocijancic told reporters in Brussels.

"But we have also been consistent in saying that our commitment to the nuclear deal depends on full compliance by Iran."

# Pak PM Imran agrees to all of Opposition's demands except his resignation: Report



**BY SAJJAD HUSSAIN ISLAMABAD, NOV 5 (PTI):** Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan on Tuesday said that he was ready to accept all "valid" demands of the 'Azadi March' protesters, led by firebrand cleric-cum-politician Maulana Fazlur Rehman, except their call for his resignation.

Prime minister Khan reportedly made the remarks in a meeting with Defence Minister Pervez Khattak-led team tasked to negotiate with the opposition parties taking part in the massive march comprising thousands of protesters in Islamabad.

"The government is ready to accept all valid demands except the demand for resignation," The Express Tribune quoted Khan as saying.

Last night, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government sent a second delegation to firebrand cleric-cum-politician Rehman's residence to break the impasse in the wake of the Opposition's bid to oust Khan.

The right-wing Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Fazl (JUI-F) leader is leading the massive protest, which entered the fifth day on Tuesday. Dubbed as 'Azadi March', the protesters demand Khan's resignation, accusing him of "rigging" the 2018 general elections.

The Opposition parties, including the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and the

Pakistan People Party (PPP), have also thrown their weight behind the anti-government rally.

A delegation led by former prime minister Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain met the cleric on Monday night, hours after the government's negotiating team led by Defence Minister Khattak held talks with the Opposition's Rehbar Committee headed by JUI-F leader Akram Khan Durrani and discussed their demands, the report said.

In its list of demands, the Rehbar Committee has sought the premier's resignation and fresh elections in the country without the supervision of the armed forces.

The government, on the other hand, has demanded that the committee end the sit-in.

Khattak and the Rehbar Committee will resume the talks on Tuesday.

Rehman on Monday asked his supporters to continue their anti-government protest with "perseverance" and "courage", as the 48-hour deadline set by him for Prime Minister Khan's resignation expired.

He said the movement to oust the prime minister "will continue to move ahead and will never be on the back foot".

Rehman on Friday gave Khan a two-day ultimatum to resign, saying the "Gorbachev of Pakistan" must step down without testing

the patience of peaceful protestors. The 66-year-old cleric said the protest would continue until Khan steps down.

Meanwhile, amid the continuing protest, PPP chief Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari has vowed to form the government at all costs.

Addressing a PPP workers' convention at Uch Sharif in Punjab province on Monday, Bilawal termed Khan as an "inefficient" prime minister and said his party

"would form a national government at all costs", the Dawn newspaper reported. Criticising the federal budget, he said it has made the lives of the people "hell".

Bilawal also criticised the government's policies, particularly the prime minister's announcement of construction of five million houses, the report stated.

The PPP leader alleged the government's housing policy had rendered thousands of poor people homeless.

Extending his support to the farming community, Bilawal said the PTI government of Khan had inflicted economic damage on the farmers.

He also criticised the government's media policy, saying the press was not free in Pakistan and the ruling party has silenced the people's voice.

Referring to the 'Azadi' march, he said, "We have supported him (Rehman).

# Mali president says stability at stake after deadly army base attack

**Bamako, Nov 5 (AFP):** Mali's President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita has appealed for citizens to unite behind the country's army, after the latest deadly militant strike killed more than 40 soldiers.

The president has declared three days of mourning after Friday's attack on an army base in Indelimane, the north-east of the country near the border with Niger.

"In these particularly serious circumstances where the stability and existence of our country are at stake, our only response must be national unity, the sacred union around our national army," he said in a statement Monday night.

He added that the support of foreign forces, including from France, Africa and the United Nations, is "necessary more than ever".

Friday's assault was the latest to target Mali's military, which is struggling to contain an Islamist insurgency that began in the north and spread to the centre of the country. At least 40 troops were killed a month ago in a double attack near the Burkina Faso border.

Islamic State-allied militants claimed responsibility for the Indelimane strike during which gunmen on motorbikes attacked the base in three different groups, according to Malian army sources and a UN document seen by AFP. Au-

thorities say at least 49 soldiers were killed.

Over the weekend two more Malian soldiers were also killed by a roadside bomb and a French soldier was also killed when his vehicle hit an improvised explosive device. Northern Mali fell into the hands of jihadists in 2012 before the militants were forced out by a French-led military intervention. But the jihadists have regrouped to carry out hit-and-run strikes in violence that has spread to central Mali.

France still has around 4,500 troops in the country as part of its Barkhane operation and is looking to hand more responsibility to local forces. French Armed Forces Minister, Florence Parly, on an official visit to the Sahel called for "patience" in the battle against the militants. "This is a fight where we have to have patience," she said on a visit to Barkhane operations in the Chad capital N'Djamena.

"We still need time for the local forces to build up their resilience."

Neighbouring Burkina Faso and Niger have also been infiltrated by insurgents, at the cost of hundreds of lives.

The G5 Sahel, a five-nation joint taskforce set up in 2014 to tackle the jihadist threat, is also active in the region. It comprises troops from Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Chad.

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# Cinema only spreads love and connects people: Majumder

**GUWAHATI, Nov 5 (PTI):** The ruling class, irrespective of political affiliations, is always scared of cinema despite the fact that it "only spreads love and connects people", renowned film critic and curator Premendra Majumder wondered.

He rued that nowadays most of the film festivals have just become a "business platform" to sell movies.

"I don't know why all fear cinema. It is a boundary less art and spreads only love and emotions. It connects people. It never affects anybody," he told PTI on Tuesday at the ongoing 3rd Guwahati International Film Festival (GIFF) here.

Whether it is the Congress or the BJP government, the ruling class irrespective of their political affiliations has always imposed censorship and banned films critical to the establishment and social norms, he alleged.

"Cinema is the most important form of art and it has tremendous strength. The government fear good cinema probably because it is a very powerful medium," said Majumder, an author of a number of books on cinema and culture.

He further alleged the powers that be always influence in the selection of films in the festivals and there are innumerable examples of critical cinema being rejected from screening in such places.

"Film festivals depend on the government in power. Free festivals are very rare. This despite the fact that government does not have any policy regarding holding film festivals or selection of movies there," Majumder, who hails from West Bengal, told PTI.

Not only the government-funded festivals, but even the private ones are buoyed by the ruling class in selection

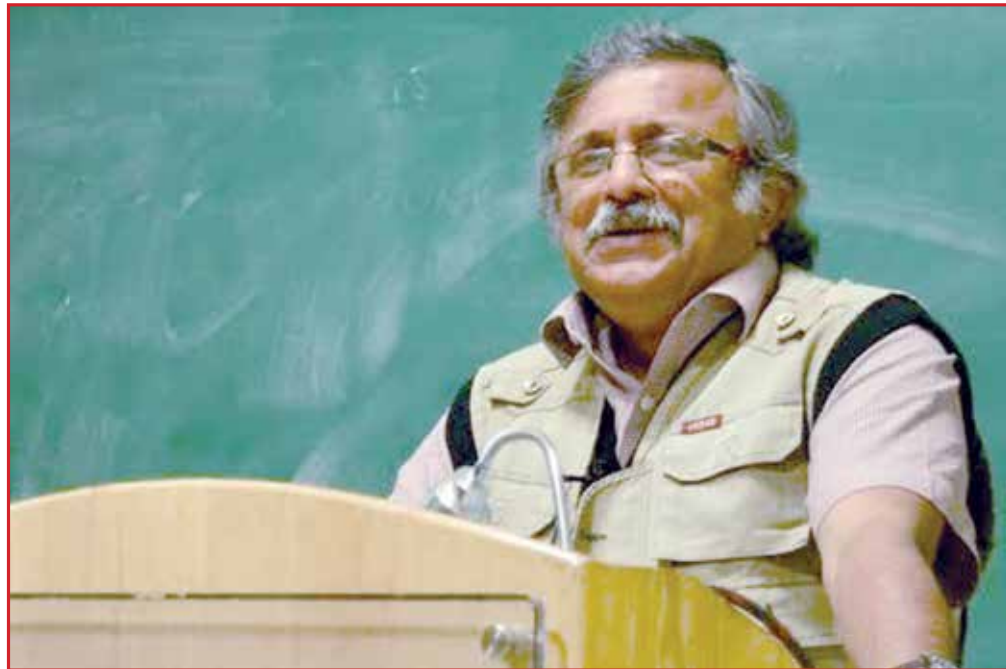
of films as well as artistes, he asserted.

Majumder, who has been in the jury of over a dozen prestigious film festivals across the globe, said nowadays the film festivals are losing its sheen due to various factors.

"Most festivals have become a business platform to sell films by the mak-

organiser of the 3rd GIFF, which is being held from October 31 to November 6 with a platter of 100 acclaimed films from 65 countries, in association with Dr Bhupen Hazarika Regional Government Film and Television Institute.

The festival began with streaming of the Iranian film 'Charcoal' (Komur)



**HAPPY TWIRLS!** The actress, Lindsay Lohan gets excited at the Channel 10 Marquee on Melbourne Cup Day in Melbourne, Australia.

## If you're trapped with a bad actor in comedy films, you're gone: Anil Kapoor

BY JUSTIN RAO

**MUMBAI, Nov 5 (PTI):** Comedy can turn into a nightmare if an actor is around a bad co-star, believes Anil Kapoor and the actor says it's important to get the right team to nail the genre. The veteran actor has featured in several blockbuster comedies, including "Biwi No 1", "Welcome", "No Entry" and most recently "Total Dhamaal". "An actor doing comedy must remember to always work with good co-actors, a director who has good comic sense, a writer who writes good comedy screenplay... Once you choose a script, you've to make sure that the character looks new."

"You have to work hard to add freshness to it. When you are surrounded by great actors, there is a jugalbandi (rhythm) which leads to correct timing. In comedy if you're trapped with a bad actor, you're gone," Kapoor told PTI. The actor said casting is crucial in comedy films, which often doesn't depend on an artiste's timing.

"Sometimes you cast a correct face for the role - the actor can be a bit here and there on timing and acting but he suits the role, so you add him in the mix with others. Then the public thinks what

great work he has done. But he can't do that in the next film." The 62-year-old actor will be next seen in Anees Bazmee's multistarrer comedy, "Pagalpanti". Kapoor believes one doesn't have to be a funny person to do comedy.

"Anees is a serious person, but internally, there's a funny bone in him. A lot of people are funny in real life but that can't be translated into comedy," he added. However, what irks him is the "comedy is a serious business" statement used by many artistes.

"I think that also has become a cliché now. Everything is a serious business if you're in this profession. If you don't love your work, you're not serious. When to do a scene seriously and when in the comic way, that's your craft. The dialogue delivery and its pitch and tone, you have to understand that," he said.

The problem for Kapoor arises, he says, when he has to juggle different genres.

This year, he featured in "Ek Ladki Ko Dekha Toh Aisa Laga", a romantic-drama and followed it up with the madcap entertainer, "Total Dhamaal". The actor almost shot "Pagalpanti" and Mohit Suri's serious drama "Malang" almost back to back.

## Keanu Reeves reportedly dating Alexandra Grant

**LOS ANGELES, Nov 5 (PTI):** Internet can rest now as Keanu Reeves has found love in business partner Alexandra Grant.

The 55-year-old actor recently stepped out with Grant for Los Angeles County Museum of Art's (LACMA) Art + Film Gala.

The rumoured couple were all smiles while holding hands as they made their way down the carpet. They happily posed for the shutterbugs.

For the occasion, Reeves opted for an all-black suit, while Grant, 46, looked resplendent in a navy blue gown with a plunging neckline.

Reeves and Grant have known each other for quite some time.

In 2011, the two collaborated for Reeves' book "Ode to Happiness", that the actor had penned while the illustration was done by Grant. Five years later, they again worked together on Keanu's follow-up book "Shadows" and later launched the publishing house X Artists' Books.

Reeves has mostly been coy about his pri-

vate life and has never addressed or talked about his relationships in the press.

The actor had emerged as Internet's favourite boyfriend early in 2019 with his Ste-



phen Colbert's appearance where his profound response on death left the TV host and the social media stumped.

Colbert had asked, "What do you think happens when we die, Keanu Reeves?"

To which the actor had replied, "I know that the ones who love us will miss us."

Reeves has stayed as a pop culture darling and something that he successfully parodied in Ali Wong's "Always Be My Maybe".

## Jessica Chastain tapped for 'Losing Clementine' film adaptation

**LOS ANGELES, Nov 5 (PTI):** Jessica Chastain is set to star in the comedy-drama "Losing Clementine", based on Ashley Ream's acclaimed novel of the same name. According to Variety, award-winning Argentine filmmaker Lucia Puenzo is attached to direct. "Better Call Saul" writer Ann Cherkis is working on the script.

The plot revolves around world famous artist Clementine Pritchard (Chastain) who, after flushing away her medicines, gives herself 31 days to tie up loose ends before committing suicide. While checking off her bucket list, she uncovers secrets about her family and the tragedy that befell her mother and sister.

Renee Tab will produce with her partner Christopher Tuffin alongside Freckle Films' Chastain and Kelly Carmichael. Miller Way's Michael and Jeeny Miller will executive produce alongside Sentient's Jake Martin and Maryam Lieberman, and Cherkis.

**ARIES:** If the feelings are mutual, the effort will be equal. Focus on building a relationship that is based on mutual respect and understanding. The cards are asking you to be more kind and generous with each other as you continue to maintain the balance of give and take in this connection.

Tip: Maintain a balance between giving and receiving.

**TAURUS:** There's an almost magnetic force that's bringing you together. What's interesting about this cosmic dance is that your withdrawal makes you more alluring to them. But is this a healthy place to be? How long do you see yourself playing games with each other? Those are the questions you want to ponder upon today. What the Universe wants you to make space for: a greater degree of love, trust and respect in your relationships.

Tip: Make space for healthy relationships.

**GEMINI:** "Some goodbyes are not endings but releases." Let these words by Beau Taplin give you the strength you need to survive the changes. Getting through the heart-break is never easy. But holding onto what is

no longer yours will only complicate things further. If there are things within you that need to be released, communicate. Sit down with your partner and have a conversation about how you feel.

Tip: Endings can be beginnings too.

**CANCER:** Watch the self-sabotaging patterns, Cancer. Letting what's gone have a tight grip on you could be preventing you from stepping into the bright future. In the words of Robin Sharma, "Stop being a prisoner of your past. Become the architect of your future instead." Some of you could holding back from letting your most authentic self be seen and heard.

Tip: The trap is an illusion created by your mind.

**LEO:** "It matters not who you love, where you love, why you love, when you love or how you love; it matters only that you love."

A John Lennon classic that describes the transcendental love you are experiencing right now. Let kindness, compassion, mutual understanding and forgiveness be the secret sauce in your relationships. Leos who haven't admitted their feelings to 'the one', the

winds of change are headed your way. Allow yourself to be transformed.

Tip: This is the season to love.

**VIRGO:** You can chance upon somebody with major potential and still not be moved by their presence. The thing about potential is that it's subjective. If you find yourself yearning for more, admit your true feelings to yourself. Allow your needs and wants to be heard. Who knows, maybe there's room for evolution. Coupled Virgos could feel like their relationship is becoming lacklustre.

Tip: Be honest with yourself about what you desire.

**LIBRA:** The quality of our lives is not determined by how much money we make or the position we hold. It's quantified by how much you've loved, how much compassion we've exercised, and the manner in which we've our wounds into wisdom. If you've been looking for an affirmation, you are on the right path, Libra. Continue to be a warrior of light and love.

Tip: You age exactly where you need to be.

**SCORPIO:** Words of wisdom courtesy Jerry Corsten: "There is a difference between

judging yourself and observing yourself. The former leads to self-doubt, the latter to self-improvement." It is human to make mistakes, Scorpio. Wouldn't you forgive another if they erred in the same way that you did?

Tip: Be as kind to yourself as you are to others.

**SAGITTARIUS:** Nothing can stop your destiny from being fulfilled. Once you understand this, letting go of the past will come easier. A major change is coming your way, Sagittarius, the kind that has the ability to shake things up for the better. For many of you, this could signify a change in your relationship status, or movement to the next level. For some, a serendipitous encounter with the one could be on the cards too.

Tip: Be prepared for your world to be changed.

**CAPRICORN:** Healing does not mean that the damage did not exist, it just means that it no longer controls your life. You are on a path of healing right now, Capricorn. It is alright to revisit the past in your head, just as long as you remember that it is now over and will not be repeated. Trust that you are opening the door to harmonious relationships. Keep the chan-

nels of communication open so that you can continue to move forward together.

Tip: To feel is to heal.

**AQUARIUS:** "Nothing ever goes away until it has taught us what we need to know." Let these words by Pema Chodron remind you of why you are here, Aquarius. This heartbreak was necessary for you to understand that there are some people who just don't belong in your future. Do not hold on to the negative emotions. Instead, surrender to the will of the Universe. You are finally moving towards what was meant to be yours.

Tip: You are on the path of healing.

**PISCES:** "What does not contain love must contain an illusion." A quote that helps articulate where you are at in your journey, Pisces. This phase of your life demands that you take the blindfolds off and see your relationship for what it is. Some of you could be aware of the truth on a subconscious level. What you're being asked to work on at this moment: accepting it consciously. Remember, holding on becomes more painful than letting go sometimes.

Tip: See your relationship for what it is.