



**TRANSPORT DEPTT  
ANNOUNCES REVISION  
IN RULES**  
pg02

**Commerce & Industries Department  
discusses ease of doing business**  
pg03

**PEMA'S GYM CELEBRATES CHILDREN'S  
DAY WITH CURLING CHAMPIONSHIP**  
pg02



# SummitTIMES

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O N T O P O F T H E N E W S

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**Gangtok on  
Tuesday,  
20 Nov**

**Temp:** 20°C/05°C  
**Forecast:** Mainly  
cloudy; a little  
morning rain, then a  
couple of showers

**Sunrise:** 5:59 AM  
**Sunset:** 4:43 PM

**Delhi's air  
quality was  
most deadly  
in 2016 in  
2 decades,  
reduced life  
expectancy by  
10 years: Study**

**NEW DELHI, NOV 19 (PTI):** During the past two decades, Delhi's air quality was the "most deadly" in 2016 as it reduced the life expectancy of a resident by more than 10 years, a new study said Monday, asserting that the national capital was the second among 50 most polluted areas of the country.

India is today the world's second most-polluted country, trailing only Nepal, it said and pointed out that loss of life expectancy was the highest in Asia, exceeding six years in many parts of India and China.

According to air quality life index and accompanying report produced by the Energy Policy Institute at the University of Chicago (EPIC), globally particulate pollution reduces average life expectancy by 1.8 years, making it the greatest global threat to human health. "By comparison, first-hand cigarette smoke leads to a reduction in global average life expectancy of about 1.6 years," it said.

"The impact of particulate pollution on life expectancy is comparable to that of smoking, twice that of alcohol and drug use, three times that of unsafe water, five times that of HIV/AIDS, and more than 25 times that of conflict and terrorism," it said.

## Youth must take advantage of foreign interest in Sikkim's organic produce: Agri Secy

**REBYNA RANA**

**GANGTOK, 19 Nov:**

Department of Food Security & Agriculture Development and Horticulture & Cash Crops called a press meet today here at the chamber of Agriculture Department Secretary, Khorlo Bhutia, to issue an appeal to farmers and youth of the State to enhance organic production for export.

Addressing the media today, the Agriculture Secretary said, "After Sikkim achieved fully organic status, many countries

have shown interest in exploring opportunities and have sought for co-operation with the State in organic farming. Mitsubishi cooperation of Japan has approached us for sourcing organic commodities from Sikkim. Another business house is also exploring the possibility of growing organic sticky rice."

The Secretary informed that a delegation from the Trade Office, Embassy of Republic of Korea recently visited Sikkim to source commodities especially veg-



etables from the State. They were interested in

sourcing raw materials for preparation of their

popular dish "kimchi" [fermented cabbage], he

### Speaker allows 2 MLAs more time to respond in disqualification case

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 19 Nov:**

Two of the seven sitting MLAs of Sikkim Democratic Front party, who are facing disqualification proceedings before the Speaker, were allowed more time to file their response as they are in mourning due to demise of family members.

While hearing the petitions filed by Pahal Man Subba, former MP, and Navin Kiran Pradhan & Others seeking disqualification of seven MLAs who had joined SDF in 2015, on anti-defection ground, the Speaker of Sikkim Legislative Assembly today accepted the reply filed by five MLAs and allowed the two MLAs to file their responses later.

Counsel, N Rai, for respondents sought time on the behalf of Rangpo-Pendam MLA, Gopal Baraily, who is in mourning after demise of his mother and Rhe-nock MLA, Hemendra Adhikari, who is also in mourning after demise of his grandmother.

In the meantime, two more applications were also filed before the SLA by Sikkim Krantikari Morcha and Independent MLA, Rup Narayan Chamling, seeking disqualification on the same grounds.

The Speaker allowed their applications and issued notice to the seven MLAs - Ugen Nedup Bhutia, Shyam Pradhan, Hemendra Adhikari, Pintso Chopel Lepcha, Dr. Mechung Bhutia, Gopal Baraily and Timothy William Basnett and directed them to file their responses by 07 Jan 2019.

The Sikkim High Court on 25 Aug. last year had struck down the Parliamentary Secretaries Appointment and Allowances Act, 2010 as unconstitutional after Pahalman Subba and others including the principal opposition party, Sikkim Krantikari Morcha, had petitioned the court.

Striking down the Sikkim Parliamentary Secretaries Appointment, Salaries, Allowances and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 2010, the divi-

sion bench had observed that Article 194 does not expressly authorise the State Legislature to create offices such as the one in question giving liberty to the petitioners to appropriate forum on the issues of disqualification and other related issues if advised so.

In light of the above judgment, Pahalman Subba, OP Bhandari and Navin Kiran Pradhan had petitioned the Governor seeking disqualification of 14 sitting legislators as Parliamentary Secretaries, Government Chief Whip, Chairman of Public Accounts Committee and Chairperson of Estimate Committee on grounds of holding 'office of profit' and availing other benefits.

Later, the then Governor Shrinivas Patil on the recommendation of the Election Commission of India [ECI] had ruled that they will not be disqualified for holding office of profit as the offices occupied by them are not offices under the government or fall under the exempted category.

### Governor releases Plastic Mulch Bulletin in Nepali at CAEPHT



**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 19 Nov:**

The Nepali Extension Bulletin on plastic mulch was released by Governor Ganga Prasad during the concluding session of 9th National Extension Education Congress 2018 in the presence of Professor M Premjit Singh [Vice-Chancellor, CAU, Imphal], Dr DR Singh [Director, ICAR-NRC Orchids, Pakyong], Professor PP Dabral [Dean, CAEPHT, Ranipool], Professor Jitendra K Chauhan [General Secretary, SEE, Agra], Professor MS Seveda [Local Organizing Secretary] and the authors of the Nepali technical bulletin, Dr Deepak Jhajharia [Associate Professor & PI, AICRP-PET, CAEPHT, Ranipool] and Dr Kh Lily Devi [JRS, AICRP-PET, CAEPHT] on 17 Nov, a press release informs.

The bulletin, titled "Plastic Mulchbaat Fasal Ko Utpaadan," is the first technical bulletin released in Nepali language at CAEPHT, Ranipool for the benefit of the local farmers of Sikkim.

The CAU Vice Chancellor informed the Governor that the CAU will also be publishing the CAU Farm Magazine in Nepali. He also informed that the CAU is organizing

turn to pg02

### Union Forest Ministry directs all States to ban use of plastic bags in raising seedlings

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 19 Nov:**

Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Government of India has directed all the State Forest Departments to ban the use of plastic bags in raising seedlings.

In the wake of Government of India's policy decision to make the country plastic free by 2022, the Minister of MoEF&CC directed the Ministry as well as all the offices under the Ministry to be made plastic free.

The directives further say that the nurseries under State Forest Departments use polythene bags of various sizes for raising seedlings of

plants for afforestation and other activities and directed to ensure that use of polythene bags in the nurseries in all the respected States is dispensed with and alternatives are explored for raising seedlings.

The ban on use of plastic bags in raising seedlings will come into force with immediate effect, the directive says, adding that all the nurseries in the State Forest Department are to be made plastic free by the next planting season.

Although the Sikkim Government banned the use of plastic in the Himalayan State since 2006, polythene bags are still used to raise seedlings.

## Defence Pension Adalat held for first time in Gangtok

**Gangtok, 19 Nov [IPR]:**

The 161 Defence Pension Adalat [DPA] kicked off today at Defence Auditorium organized by the Principal Controller of Defence Account [Pension], Allahabad in collaboration with Army Formation, Headquarter 17 Mountain Division, Gangtok, informs a press release.

The Additional Controller General of Defence Account [CGDA], Sanjiv Mittal who was the chief guest inaugurated the two-day 161 Defence Pension Adalat.

The Adalat is for spot settlement of pension related grievance of defence pensioners of Sikkim including defence civilians residing in the state. This is the first time the DPA for pensioners of Sikkim has been held in Gangtok. Earlier it was held in other North Eastern States.

Dignitaries present on the inaugural day of DPA, PCDA [pension] Praveen Kumar, PCDA of Border Road Organization (BRO), J. Lingdim, GOC of 17 Mountain Division, Major General, NS Raja Subramani, Deputy GOC 17 MTN Division, Brig Harshvardhan Singh, Secretary of Rajya Sainik Board, Col [Retd], DN Bhutia and other officials of various



rank Principal Controller of Defence Account [PCDA]

Sanjiv Mittal stated that Controller General of Defence Accounts [CGDA] already started Digital mode of practices like; e-PPOs [pension payment orders], e-payments and pensioners portal through which pensioners may seek clarification on their pension-related

issues when the Prime Minister is promoting the Digital India programme. He urged everyone to take advantage of digital mode of communication and outlined the various initiatives taken by DPA in the sanction and disbursement of Defence pension.

He appealed to all pensioners to make full use of the toll free number

1800-180-5321 at Pension Cell Allahabad and also link their PPO. Mittal also asked them to optimally utilize the facilities for redressal of all issues.

Earlier, Rajya Sainik Board Secretary in his address informed the gathering that the DPA received overwhelming response for spot settlement of pension related grievances from the Ex-servicemen of Sikkim. Around 52 cases were received on the inaugural day of the Adalat and most of the cases are likely to be settled during the course of Adalat and some more cases are expected to come up during these two days of the DPA.

It was informed that in Sikkim around 1500 ex-servicemen including widows are receiving pension from Ministry of Defence.

During the function, Pensioner Notice Brochure and Documentary CD on Defence Pension Info were also unveiled by the chief guest. The chief guest also handed over grant in aid cheque to 25 ex-servicemen and widows of the state.

GOC of 17 Mountain Division, Major General, NS Raja Subramani also addressed the gathering.



**CAREER COUNSELLING  
AND STUDY ABROAD WITH  
MINDSCAN EDUCATION, NOIDA**

**04-06 Dec, 2018**

**MindScan specialises in Career  
Counselling and offering Overseas  
Education guidance to students –  
and has helped more than 15,000  
students in the past 10 years. In  
addition, there is a range of online  
programmes, which can help  
college students develop skills  
which are required by industry.**

**WATCH THIS SPACE  
FOR UPDATES**

**An initiative of The Rilon Farm in  
association with SummitTimes**



## Governor wishes President Kovind on his birthday

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 19 NOV:**

Governor Ganga Prasad today greeted President Ram Nath Kovind on his 73rd birthday, informs a press communique received from Raj Bhavan.

In a telephonic conversation with the President, the Governor also conveyed good wishes on behalf of the people of Sikkim and wished the President a healthy and fulfilling life ahead.

## Six including one-yr-old killed in fatal road mishap

**BIKASH CHETTRI  
NAMCHI, 19 NOV:**

Six people were killed in a fatal road accident that took place at Lower Tarku in South Sikkim on 18 Nov evening.

Driver of the vehicle, Bhim Rai [30] along with Chandra Bahadur Gurung [48] and Nar Bahadur Gurung [58] died on the spot while Tilak Gurung [45], Nar Maya Gurung [45] succumbed to their injuries at Namchi District Hospital. One-year-old Joel Gurung died at Central Referral Hospital in Gangtok.

The vehicle [Mahindra Max] bearing registration number SK/01/J/0888 carrying 12 occupants reportedly tumbled 350 ft below the road near Mangley at Lower Tarku in South Sikkim. The vehicle was plying towards Yangang from Namthang after attending a marriage ceremony.

Other injured occupants are Nirman Gurung [37], Dil Rupa Gurung [28], Man Bahadur Gurung [30], Dawa Diki Gurung [22], Devi Lal Gurung [05], Aukshana Gurung [04] and Tanush Gurung. They are admitted at Singtam Hospital for treatment.

The case is registered Temi PS u/s 279, 338, 304 'A' IPC, against driver of the vehicle.

## Free eye-care camp held in Singtam

**YOGIN THATAL  
SINGTAM, 17 NOV:**

A team the eye unit of Drishyam Eye Care and Surgical Centre, Gangtok, conducted a free eye cataract camp here at the Community Hall of Singtam Nagar Panchayat on 16 Nov.

Led by Eye Specialist, Dr Arati Diyali, the team from Drishyam Centre, supported by staff from Remi Cure Clinic, Singtam, conducted glaucoma, oculoplasty, cataract and cornea operations while also providing free lenses and medicines.

More than 300 patients were attended to, with senior citizens topping the list.

# Transport Deptt announces revision in rules

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 19 NOV:**

The Transport Department has made various revisions to provide relief to transporters of the State. The department stated that by working in the interest of the people in the transport sector the government has made various revisions.

Addressing a press conference here today, Principal Secretary, SBS Bahaduria, informed that the annual fitness test of the vehicle has been revised to two years duration now for eight-year-old vehicles.

He added that there is no requirement of fitness test at the time of the registration of the new vehicles as now all vehicles manufacturers have already conducted the fitness tests.

He informed that the age of the luxury vehicle has been revised to 10



years from the existing nine years.

On the same, he added that new luxury vehicles will get 10 years now and existing luxury vehicles can apply for one year extension.

Mr Bahaduria mentioned that the third party insurance of three years is required for new

vehicles now onwards. He added that this decision was in the interest of vehicle owners and save their money from the annual insurance regime.

He added that the government was also planning to pool vehicle system for private vehicles to decrease traffic congestion. He added that the

department has been preparing plans and guidelines for the same.

The Principal Secretary informed that the department has revised taxi fares and that the same will be notified soon. He urged all to abide by the taxi fares notified by the government and if anyone has any grievance,

they can approach the department. He mentioned that rates have been revised 15% upwards on average. This, after a gap of three years.

He also informed that now goods in the goods carriers need to be covered properly by tarpaulin or should be inside containers.

## Pema's Gym celebrates Children's Day with Curling Championship



**SAGAR CHHETRI  
GANGTOK, 19 NOV:**

Pema's Gym Health Club at Martam in East Sikkim celebrated Children's Day with Two Hands Curling Championship 2018 at the club's premises on 18 Nov. Fourteen participants took part in this open championship.

The championship

had ex-headmaster Sonam Tshering Bhutia as the chief guest and was accompanied by Tshering Dawa Bhutia, a social worker, as the guest of honour. Pema Dorjee Bhutia was the chief referee who was assisted by Homnath Siwakoti and Kalzang Sangay Bhutia.

In the championship,

Thinley Wangdi Bhutia emerged as the champion. In the weight categories, Deo Kumar [50 Kg], Hissey Zangpo Bhutia [60 kg], Kunzang Chodak Bhutia [65 kg], Thinley Wangdi Bhutia [70 kg], Pural Laisam [75 kg], Kalzang Sangay Bhutia [90 kg] and Homnath Siwakoti in masters stood on the first positions.

## Minister Ghatani inaugurates six CMRHM houses in West



**GANGTOK, 19 Nov [IPR]:** Minister cum MLA Saghari Zoom Constituency, Arjun Kumar Ghatani, inaugurated five houses constructed under Chief Minister's Rural Housing Mission [Phase-1] at Samsing Pipaley and Baiguney Gelling Gram Panchayat Units and one house established under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna-Grameen in West Sikkim today.

The Minister began the series of house inaugurations from Pipaley [Ward No. 5] under Samsing Pipaley GPU where he handed over a

house to the beneficiary, Mat Parsing Rai.

Thereafter, he inaugurated two CMRHM houses at Sawaligaon [Ward No. 2] and handed over houses to the beneficiaries, Tila Rupa Sharma and Bindra Maya Kami, and a PMAY house to Nar Bahadur Kami in the same GPU.

Later, the Minister inaugurated two more CMRHM houses of beneficiaries, Arun Chandra Rai and Ram Bahadur Rai. The beneficiaries expressed their gratitude to the State Government for the house.

During the programme, the Minister also interacted with the people, listened to their grievances and also informed about the vision and pro-people policy of the State Government under the leadership of Chief Minister Pawan Chamling.

The Minister was accompanied by Block Development Officer, Chumbong BAC, CL Sharma, officials from Rural Management & Development Department, Panchayat president, Anil Rai, Panchayat members and youths.

### Singtam boy wins IPR Online Photography Competition

**SUMMIT REPORT  
SINGTAM, 19 NOV:**

General secretary of Photographic Society of Sikkim, Sanket Agarwal, from Singtam, has won the Online Photography Competition organized by IPR Department, Government of Sikkim.

Aggarwal was awarded a cash prize of Rs 30,000 and a certificate by Chief Minister Pawan Chamling during the Press Day function, few days back. Sanket Agarwal has thanked everyone who voted for him, his family, friends, his followers on Instagram and Facebook and members of PSS.

## The People's Studio launched in Gangtok

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 19 NOV:**

The People's Studio featuring various works on exhibit by artists from around North East India was launched in Gangtok on 18 Nov. The studio will be open from Monday to Friday for the public to experience art from the region, a press release informs.

Rida Gatphoh and Peter Marbanang from the artists collective "Rida & The Musical Folks" of Meghalaya who are working on a 360 music project "Reviving ancient instruments", gave an enriching performance to the audience.

"We feel a deep connection with a space like The People's Studio. It is a necessary initiative," Rida said.

The two musicians spoke of their philosophy and gave a talk on how

nature is integral to art.

Photographer, Kunga Tashi, exhibited Frontier's Pass, a series created with researcher, Anand Damodaran.

Tashi said, "The People's Studio gives an opportunity to artists to exhibit and showcase their works. It is a good platform to connect with artists and see works of other artists for inspiration. It is necessary for Sikkim."

Contemporary artist, Karma Tenrab, who exhibited three of his works, said, "The space is a dream for artists like me. Being an artist can be a lonely journey otherwise, without spaces like these."

Karma Tenrab's work is up for exhibit till 30 Nov. The works at The People's Studio is now open for public viewing, the release adds.

## Model ELC presents song on election awareness



**NAMCHI, 19 Nov [IPR]:** Government Girl's Senior Secondary School has been selected as the Model ELC [Electoral Literacy Club] School of South District by Election Department, Namchi. Under the SVEEP [Systematic Voter's Education and Electoral Participation] plan, the students of Model ELC School were asked to compose a theme based song.

This exercise was completed under the constant guidance and support by Campus Ambassador, Dzungri Lepcha and Nodal Officers [NO] of Model ELC School, Punam Rai and Assistant NO, Merina Lepcha.

It may be mentioned here that the participants had to use the medium of music to spread election awareness amongst people specially focusing on the women folk.

The theme based song encourages all to awaken and exercise their right to vote and to build a strong country. The song is an example of women empowerment wherein the girls sing and play the

instruments themselves. The students performed in two different schools on 19th Nov, i.e. in Perbing Senior Secondary School and Rateypani Senior Secondary School targeting young and future voters.

Campus Ambassador, Mr Lepcha addressed the gathering and informed them about Elections and its various aspects like Booth Level Officers [BLO], National Voters Service Portal, None of the Above and on other various kinds of Forms.

Nodal Officer Ms Merina then gave a brief about how the song came into being and that it focused on encouraging maximum women participation during elections. She also thanked Election Department, Namchi, for involving their students in such activities.

Through a very peppy song the members of Model ELC have been successful in putting across the message to all. Also present were Booth Level Officers of Namthang Rateypani Assembly Constituencies along with their BLO Supervisor.

## Lecturer Rinchen Doma Bhutia to be awarded PhD by SMU

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 19 NOV:**

Lecturer, Department of Biochemistry, Sikkim Manipal Institute of Medical Sciences [SMIMS], Rinchen Doma Bhutia, successfully defended her Ph.D. thesis on 12 Nov under the guidance of Head of the Department of Biochemistry, SMIMS, Professor [Dr] TA Singh, Chief Operating Officer, Professor [Dr] Mingma L Sherpa, and Head of Department of Medicine, SMIMS, Professor Bidita Khandelwal.

A press release issued by Sikkim Manipal University informs that Ms Bhutia's Ph.D. research topic was "Study of blood oxidation products of DNA, lipid and protein in and among individuals progressing towards Metabolic Syndrome" which was funded by the Indian Council of Medical Research [ICMR].

National Programme for Prevention and Control of Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Diseases [CVD] and Stroke has reported Sikkim to have the highest percent of Diabetes [DM] and Hypertension in the country in 2013.

Sikkim still leads in the prevalence of hypertension which increases the risk of heart disease and stroke. A common precursor of the duo [DM and HTN] has been termed the Metabolic Syndrome [MetS]. A person with MetS is twice as likely to die from and three times more likely to have a heart attack or stroke which is indeed an early warning sign.

MetS is diagnosed when a person has any three of the following

risk factors including a large waist circumference, elevated blood pressure, raised fasting blood sugar and dyslipidemia. It promotes cardiovascular risks by several mechanism including Oxidative stress [OS].

This study was conducted to understand the relative damages caused to DNA, lipid and protein molecule as a result of the reductive stress turned oxidative stress in patients [≥ 20 years of age] diagnosed with and without MetS. The study demonstrated that the occurrence of the syndrome increased with increasing age and was found more common in the female participants.

Daughter of Pema Choden Bhutia and Late Norgyal Bhutia from Sang, East Sikkim, Ms Bhutia did her schooling from Paljor Namgyal Girls Senior Secondary School, Gangtok and later her B.Sc. in Biochemistry from North Bengal University and M.Sc., Biochemistry from SMIMS.

She received 2nd Prize for an Oral presentation for the article titled "Oxidative Stress in MetS and DNA strand break" at Manipal Research Colloquium 2017, Manipal University, Udupii, Karnataka. She has a number of research papers and publications to her credit.

Ms Bhutia has been recommended for award of degree by the Board of Examiners of Sikkim Manipal University. The Doctor of Philosophy will be awarded to her during the forthcoming Convocation of Sikkim Manipal University [SMU].

### Governor releases Plastic...

three-month long skill development programme on Low-cost Greenhouse Technology in NEH region to strengthen the skill of the unemployed rural youth and school drop-outs belonging to the North Eastern region of India from 17 Sept to 15 Dec at CAEPHT, Ranipool.

The first author of the Nepali bulletin, Dr Jhajharia, said that the booklet provides information about the advantages and uses of plastic mulching for the benefits of the progressive farmers of Sikkim.

The booklet also contains the technical details of the portable manual plastic laying mulch machine developed by the AICRP-PET centre for use in hilly terrains along with photographs of plastic mulch being used in farmers' fields collected during field visits in different districts of Sikkim mainly Tashiding in West Sikkim which is the only aspiration district of Sikkim.

The booklet also includes photographs of field experiments conducted in naturally ventilated polyhouse of the AICRP-PET, CAEPHT, Gangtok Centre.

~ **SummitTIMES** ~  
**CLASSIFIEDS**

### IMMEDIATE REQUIREMENT FOR OMAN TICKET & VISA PROVIDED

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Commerce & Industries Department discusses ease of doing business

GANGTOK, 19 Nov [IPR]: A meeting to discuss Ease of Doing Business organized by the Department of Commerce and Industries was held at the Conference Hall of the Chief Secretary today at Manan Kendra. The meeting was chaired by Chief Secretary, AK Shrivastava. The welcome address was presented by Principal Secretary, Commerce and Industries Department, Thomas Chandy, who gave a brief background on earlier meetings where it had been decided that all the 13 departments involved in issuing permits for registration of new industries in the State would have their own web portal with details for permits and application download from potential applicants. He pointed out that due to software development issues, this has not been possible and thus has remained a big hindrance. The Principal Secretary suggested a single window integrated format where requirements of individual department needed from potential applicants for industries are collected and disseminated to the concerned departments. Websites and portals of Departments already existing can link it with Industries Department for easier access to forms, applications and various other details, he added. At the end of the deliberations, the Principal Secretary urged for active cooperation from all the departments and said that with active coordination cooperation the growth of industries in Sikkim can be placed on the roadmap of the country soon. Discussion and inputs from all the representatives of the line departments also took place whereby various suggestions were placed and discussed.

Gangtok MLA grants Rs 5 lac each to two Churches

SAGAR CHETTRI  
GANGTOK, 19 NOV: On behalf of the State Government, Gangtok MLA, Pintso Chopel Lepcha presented Rs 5 lakh grant each to St. Thomas Church Gangtok and Baptist Church Development area for the maintenance of the churches on 18 Nov. "State government is working proactively for the welfare of all religious institutions. We believe in equality in diversity and that is why all the religious communities are living peacefully and happily in the State", said Mr Lepcha.



OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT ENGINEER  
ROADS & BRIDGES DEPARTMENT  
SINGTAM SUB DIVISION

Memo No: 187/AES/R&B

Date: 16/11/2018

TENDER NOTICE

For and on behalf of the Governor of Sikkim, Assistant Engineer, Roads & Bridges Department, Singtam , invites sealed tenders under single bid system from the eligible contractors of **Class IV Grade** enlisted with Sikkim Public Works Department vide Notification No. 515/R&B/Secy, dated 12.06.2018 and notification no. 556/R&B PWD/Secy dated : 28.08.2018 for the construction of **fair weather roads**, through competitive bidding within the territorial jurisdiction of **Gram Panchayat ward of 19 Rhenock Constituency** where the work is to be executed.

The details of works and time schedule are as under:

SL. No .	Name of Work	Cost of Work put to tender (in Rs)	Earnest Money @ 2.50% (in Rs.)	Cost of Tender documents (in Rs.)	Completion Time.
1.	Construction of Road from Kaiyoun school to Kali Khola PWD road.	EAST PENDAM GPU			
	Km 1 <sup>st</sup>	42,38,496.00	1,05,962.00	Rs.1,500.00	12 months
	Km 2 <sup>nd</sup>	21,19,248.00	52,981.00	Rs.1,500.00	12 months
2.	Construction of Road from Aap dara road to Sazong.	BUDANG KAMAREY GPU			
	Km 1 <sup>st</sup>	Rs. 42,38,496.00	Rs. 1,05,962.00	Rs.1,500.00	12 months
	Km 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Rs. 42,38,496.00	Rs. 1,05,962.00	Rs.1,500.00	12 months
	Km 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Rs. 42,38,496.00	Rs. 1,05,962.00	Rs.1,500.00	12 months
	Km 4 <sup>th</sup>	Rs. 42,38,496.00	Rs. 1,05,962.00	Rs.1,500.00	12 months
3.	Construction of Road from Kazi turning PMGSY road to Gurung gaon and Pachak.	BUDANG KAMAREY GPU			
	Km 1 <sup>st</sup>	Rs. 42,38,496.00	Rs. 1,05,962.00	Rs.1,500.00	12 months
	Km 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Rs. 42,38,496.00	Rs. 1,05,962.00	Rs.1,500.00	12 months.

TIME SCHEDULE:-

1.	Date of submission of application with Bank receipt and TDR (as Earnest money) for issue of Tender Documents including Tender Form.	1 <sup>st</sup> December 2018 (10.00 am to 4.00 pm). at respective Gram Prashashan Kendra where work is to be executed.
2.	Last Date and Time for submission of Tender	3 <sup>rd</sup> December 2018 (10.00 am to 1.00 pm) at respective Gram Prashashan Kendra where work is to be executed.
3.	Date and Time for Opening of Tender	3 <sup>rd</sup> December 2018 (2.00 pm) at respective Gram Prashashan Kendra where work is to be executed.

CONDITIONS OF CONTRACT:-

1. Tender is open only to the eligible Contractors/Firms of appropriate Class/Area.
2. The intending tenders/contractors should apply in writing for issue of tender documents. The application would invariably be signed by the contractor himself/herself. The tender document will not be issued to any person other than the INTENDING TENDER. The application shall be submitted initially for each work listed above with all required documents.
3. The applicants should enclose attested copies of the a) Validated/Updated Contractor Enlistment Certificate along the application. It is mandatory to produce the Original validated/ Updated Enlistment Certificate during sale/issue of the Tender Document for verification.
4. The prescribed Non-Transferable Tender Documents (excluding the Tender Form) can be obtained during the period specified in (As above from the respective Gram Prashashan Kendra where work is to be executed, on production of requisite Bank Receipt towards the cost of Tender Documents (Non-Refundable) under the revenue head of "respective GPU's where work is to be executed.
5. Earnest money deposit @ 2.50% in State Bank of Sikkim shall be in the form of Deposit Receipt of Schedule Bank which includes deposits in the form of temporary deposit receipts(TDR) in favour of the Accounts Officer, Roads & Bridges Department, Niram Bhawan, Gangtok. Tender form shall be issued only on production of the deposit receipts of 2.50% earnest money.

6. The Tender documents, including the Tender Form with quoted offer should be placed in a sealed cover with the name of the tenderers and the name of the work superscripted on it. Supporting documents listed at Sl. No. 3(a) above should be enclosed with the offer.
7. Sealed tenders may be deposited in the Tender box in the respective Gram Prashashan Kendra/ Nagar Panchayat Office, where work is to be executed on the date and within the time indicated above.
8. Tenders shall be opened by a Tender Opening Committee as prescribed by the Government in the presence of the tenderness on the date and time indicated above.
9. The Tenderer should sign on every page of the tender documents as Acceptance of the general Direction and Conditions of the Contract and other laid down norms. The rate quoted should be both in figures and words and should be inclusive of GST and all other Taxes and Levies. Over writing and correction should be avoided and if made should be authenticated. Incomplete/Conditional tenders shall be rejected forthwith.
10. In case of any discrepancy in rate(s) printed in the Schedule of Rates and Quantities issued with the 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 Principal Chief Engineer-cum- Secretary/ Head of the Department will be final in this regard.
11. The work value, scope and quantum of work are subject to change, the contractor shall execute the work as per the directives of the Department. No claim on this account shall be entertained whatsoever. If any claim is made, it shall be as per the agreement rates.
12. The Department reserves the rights to with hold payments to the contractor unless test certificates are not produces by the contractor when called upon to do so.
13. Avoidable damages due to negligence of the contractor shall be at his own risk and cost. The Department shall not be liable for payment of such damages (if any), including accidents to labourer at site.
14. The offer shall remain valid for a period of 90 days. The work should commence within 15 days from the issue of work order.
15. All the conditions as mentioned in the NIT shall be deemed to a part of the agreement to be entered with the contractor. Security deposit shall be collected by deductions from the running bills of the contractor @ 5.00% of the value of work done.
16. The Department reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason thereof.
17. The recoveries of Royalties on Forest produces shall be as per 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 on the date of tender shall be acceptable.
18. Subletting of contract work is 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.
19. 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.
20. In case the man powers employed by the contractors are from outside the State or neighbouring countries, it shall be the responsibility of the contractors to get them registered with the labour department, Government of Sikkim as per the relevant Labour Laws.
21. Use of explosives shall be regulated as under:-

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

b) The rules and regulations issued by the Sikkim Public Works Department or any other competent authority shall strictly be adhered to with regard to transportation, storage; handling and use of explosives shall be maintained by the contractor.
22. The contractor shall also make arrangements to have photographs of the works taken at least at three stages of the construction period. i.e. beginning, middle and completion stage.
23. Damage to properties in and around the work site must be avoided at all cost. The contractor shall be held responsible for any acts of negligence and shall be made to make good the damages.
24. It is accepted to the tenderer to have inspected the site before submitting his/her bid. There may be possible site difficulties for which the tenderer should have their own correct assessment before submitting the bid.
25. The cost of stock materials supplied from the Department store will be deducted from the contractors' bills as per rules.
26. The bidders shall produce a Certificate of Residence from the concerned Gram Panchayat Ward where the work is to be executed.

Sd/-

R.O. No. 479/IPR/Pub/Classi/18-19  
Ddate:19.11.2018.

Assistant Engineer  
Roads & Bridges Deptt.  
Singtam Sub Division



# SummitTIMES

ON TOP OF THE NEWS

## Waste Does Not Understand Urban-Rural Boundaries

**...so why should the two zones have different garbage management plans?**

Readers would have noticed the occasional surfacing of news-reports on awareness sessions being held at the GPU and ward levels around Sikkim in pursuit of zero-waste status.

This is welcome and urgently required.

It was after all not fair that lavish budgets were expended on waste management limited to the urban sprawls at the cost of 75% of the population which resides in rural Sikkim. 4.55 lakh of Sikkim's population of 6.07 lakh resides in rural areas. This, as per the 'Provisional Population Totals' [paper 2, volume 2 of 2011] Rural-Urban Distribution of Population Sikkim [series 12] released by the Directorate of Census Operations, Sikkim. And this is after the urban spread was significantly expanded in Sikkim some years back. The point being made here is that the 75% population which resides in rural Sikkim lives more or less the same lifestyle as families in urban areas, following similar patterns of consumption, and hence generating similar waste. They should thus be provided matching organizational and infrastructural arrangements to manage their waste. The traditional modes of disposal will not deliver for the non-biodegradable and excessive nature of contemporary waste. Most village homes have a pit to dispose their waste. When this waste was organic in nature, the 'pit' approach worked well, but kids no longer buy loose balls of 'Anda' mithai wrapped in paper anymore and their sweets come in plastic wrappers and guests at social gatherings are no longer served in plates stitched from 'malatho' or banana leaves and even drink water from Styrofoam cups (sorry, scratch that since Styrofoam is now thankfully banned in the State, but plastic still abound) now.

The traditional waste management system, which focused only on household level disposal and had no need for segregation, collection and organized disposal, just won't do anymore. The rural areas generate the same waste as urban zones, hence it is necessary that they are extended matching systems of collection and disposal. This requirement becomes even more urgent as more areas start hosting tourists and village tourism becomes the new mantra for development here. Look around, most tourist spots even in the outskirts of Sikkim do not have any semblance of waste disposal or collection. Sure, they have their rabbit and panda bins, but those are but fig leaves when it comes to waste management. Look into the backyards, and a study on consumption patterns is laid out strewn along the slopes. Sikkim is now an organic state, inorganic waste encroaching into its fields and jhoras does not sit well with this status. It is no longer even about appearances. Proper waste disposal systems, and the once a week garbage truck runs to ship away waste is not even close to proper, are an urgent requirement in the bastis and at all tourists spots. The sooner the planners start working out sustainable plans and projects to deliver this, the better it will be for Sikkim and its environment.

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

## Iran: How US sanctions are strengthening China's global power

**TOM HARPER**  
*theconversation.com*

As the US begins to enforce what are possibly the strongest sanctions on Iran to date, headlines have been dominated by the bellicose rhetoric of the Trump administration and Tehran. This comes on the heels of Washington's withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) negotiated by Trump's predecessor, Barack Obama, alongside Britain, France, Russia and China.

The marked difference between the latest sanctions and previous rounds has been the criticism of them voiced by European states, who previously had accepted what had been imposed by Washington. So has US unilateralism gone too far?

While the most recent round of sanctions aims to put further pressure on Tehran for regime change and to support American regional allies, such as Israel and Saudi Arabia, they also have an indirect beneficiary in the form of the US's biggest global rival, China. And this has wider implications for the region.

### THE MIDDLE KINGDOM MEETS THE MIDDLE EAST

While European firms have explored ways to circumvent American sanctions or seek waivers, the threat of sanctions is likely to scare away many firms from doing business in the country. This will leave a void that China is likely to fill. As a result, Chinese firms will gain a near monopoly on Iranian oil and trade.

While Chinese imports of Iranian oil have initially experienced a slight decline, it is possible that this is one of Beijing's ploys to see wheth-

er deals serving China's interests are offered by an increasingly isolated Iran. For while Iran has been receptive to Chinese investment in the past, it has equally sought European investment to balance this out and to prevent China from playing too dominant a role in the country. The sanctions have now made China's dominance all the more likely.

China increasingly is building its influence in a region that has traditionally been dominated by the US. This may see Tehran become more amenable to Chinese global initiatives, such as the Belt and the Road Initiative (BRI) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).

The former is likely to see further Eurasian integration under China's watch, while the latter, as a loose military alliance, is likely to be attractive to Iran as a deterrent to regime change.

But while these moves follow the common pattern of Chinese foreign policy, most notably Beijing's willingness to take greater risks and conduct business in shunned nations, they have wider implications for the region and the wider world.

### THE WAY OF MAO

Beijing has long been adept at exploiting developments in the international system for its own benefit – and Iran is the latest example of this. In this case, it is filling the void left by European firms that have been scared off by the threat of sanctions.

This raises questions about the utility of sanctions at a time when they have become a cornerstone of the Trump administration's diplomatic arsenal. While there have been cases of sanctions being successful,



most notably in ending apartheid rule in South Africa, they have rarely succeeded in changing state behaviour in recent years.

But possibly the most significant implication is how sanctions have led to widespread de-dollarisation, whereby the dominant global status of the dollar has been challenged. Since sanctioned states are no longer attached to the established system, it is easier for them to adopt an alternative way of operating. An example is the Petro Yuan – whereby China's oil imports have been priced in yuan rather than in dollars – which has been adopted by oil-rich states targeted by sanctions, most notably Russia and Venezuela. The sanctions on Iran will only exacerbate this process.

The Petro Yuan is evidence that China is challenging the established US-centric system and seeks to provide an alternative. This is reminiscent of Mao Zedong's strategies for guerrilla warfare, where an insurgent seeks to make the government irrelevant over a long period of time before overthrowing it. By building ties with sanctioned nations and creating alternative international institutions, China is deploying a similar strategy on a global scale in an effort to bypass the the US.

As a result of this, there has also been wider Sino-Russian cooperation, such as in Syria. There, China is poised to play a role in rebuilding the country alongside Russia's military assistance to it, having found com-

mon ground in their concerns over Islamic militancy.

Russia and China were also signatories of the Iran deal and have been dissatisfied with Washington's abandonment of it. Trump's present strategies have often been described as a "reverse Nixon", seeking further ties with Russia to counter China. But the situation in Iran is more likely to see China and Russia jointly challenge the US.

By withdrawing from the deal, Trump has also split the Western world and while it is easy to turn Iran away from the table, it will be tougher to get it back there.

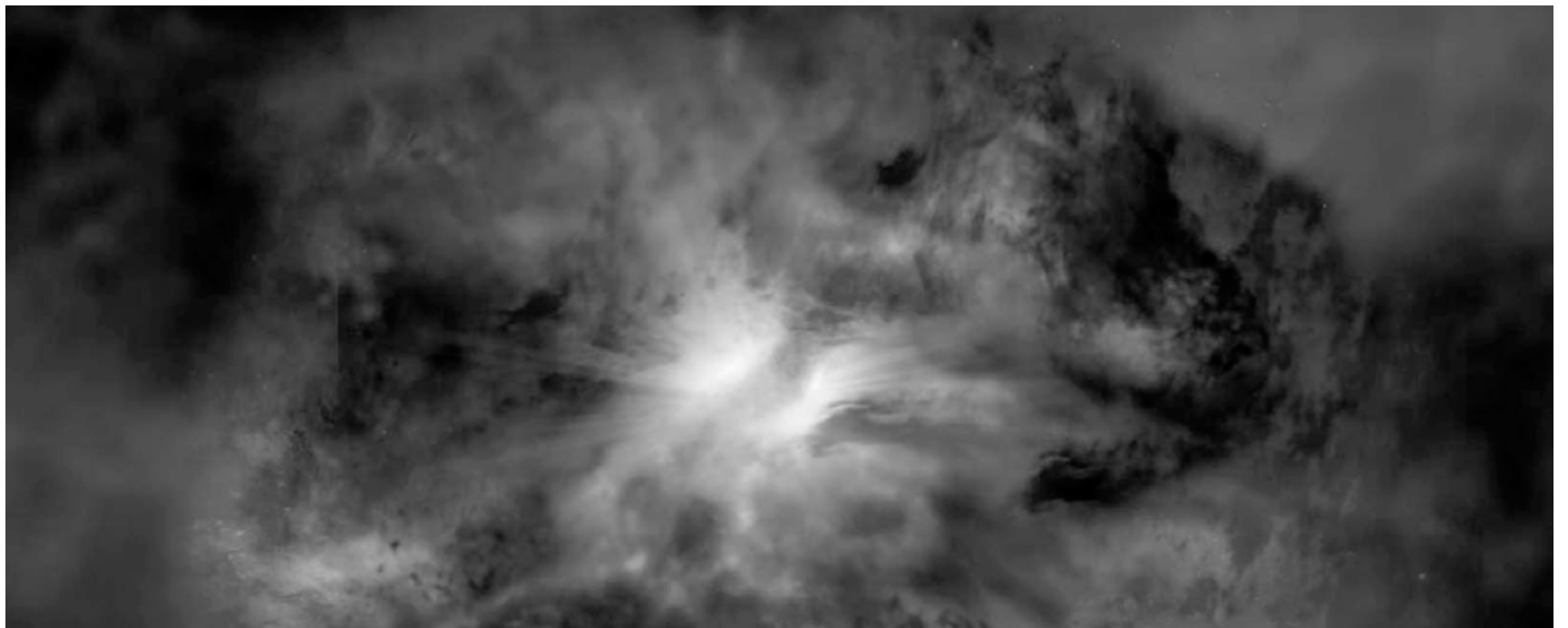
### WHAT NEXT?

As a result of these developments, China has become one of the wild cards of the Middle East, challenging and changing the established system there. This also questions the utility of sanctions in the long-term since nations under longstanding sanctions are more open to alternative systems.

By providing an alternative, China seeks to challenge the established system by making it irrelevant. While China has abandoned Mao's ideology, his strategies continue to be influential.

While the sanctions were seen as an attempt to preserve American dominance in the region, they will have consequences that will indirectly challenge this. This is one US play that could badly misfire.

*[the writer is Doctoral Researcher in Politics, University of Surrey]*



## Here's how the 'brightest' object in the universe formed

**ANDREW BLAIN**  
*theconversation.com*

Active galaxies are some of the most luminous and impressive objects in the sky. They tend to be massive, distant and emit extraordinary amounts of energy as material falls into the supermassive black hole that lurks at their centre. Astronomers have recently discovered that some of them are also hidden from plain view by huge amounts of gas and smoke-like dust. But it is unclear how these rare objects form and feed.

Now our team of astronomers has worked out more about the origin of the most luminous galaxy found in the universe: a "quasar" called W2246. Our findings, published in Science, show clear signs of W2246 forming by several galaxies merging.

W2246 was first discovered in the all-sky infrared survey made by the WISE spacecraft in 2010. But we don't see it as it looks today. When we look out into the universe we detect light that has taken some appreciable time to get to us. This galaxy is so far away that we see it as it was when the universe was only about 8% of its

present age.

The object is extremely bright – about 10,000 times more luminous than our galaxy, the Milky Way. Previous work using a range of cutting-edge telescopes – including the Atacama Large Millimetre Array (ALMA), and the Hubble and Herschel Space Telescopes – confirmed in 2016 that W2246 is the current holder of the record for the most luminous galaxy in the universe.

The bulk of the power from W2246 emanates from a relatively compact region in its centre, several times smaller than the Milky Way. The images also show that this region contains a remarkable cloud of hot, uniform, high-pressure gas, plausibly starting to expand out as a bubble in all directions.

### NEW OBSERVATIONS

The latest observations were carried out by my colleague Tanio Diaz Santos in Chile, and 11 other astronomers, using the ALMA and Jansky Very Large Array (JCLA) telescopes, at excellent sites in Chile and New Mexico respectively. The work has revealed the smog of gas and dust contained within W2246 in unprece-

dented detail.

The fact that W2246 could be so bright without feeding on nearby galaxies has long been a mystery to astronomers – potentially challenging our theories about galaxy formation. But our new results reveal that there are indeed a number of nearby companion galaxies that are in the process of being gobbled up by this object. This is evidenced by connecting dust bridges of carbon-rich solid material, similar to diesel soot. These trace the routes along which matter from the companion galaxies is being sucked in towards the supermassive black hole.

The presence of dust is important as it is made of elements that are only produced by nuclear reactions deep inside massive stars, and are then spread around the galaxy when these stars explode as supernovae. This indicates that the gas seen around W2246 has been cycled inside stars in the past – probably in the surrounding galaxies – prior to the start of the galaxy's current dramatic burst of activity. The new images therefore provide insight not only into the activity in the galaxy as we see it

today, but also into its history at even earlier times.

To be visible to ALMA, the bridging dust must be actively heated. This could be done by young stars that also occupy the bridges, or by the radiation from the hugely bright core of W2246. The conditions in the gas within the bridges suggest that even if W2246 is the primary heat source, the gas in the bridges can still collapse under its own gravity to form new stars in dense clouds, which would allow it to be gobbled up by the central black hole to fuel W2246.

From the relative speed and separation of the companion galaxies, it is possible to work out how much mass they contain. We can also estimate that the duration of the current interaction is about 200m years. Together, we used this to determine the rate at which gas must be fed into the black hole, uncovering that it is indeed sufficient to produce the dramatic energy output we see from the object.

However, the details of what happens within the bright compact core of the galaxy as this material rains in, and enters the the black

hole (that then heats and drives away material) can't be seen. Observations on finer scales will be needed to investigate what happens deep in the heart of W2246.

### OUT WITH A WHIMPER?

Luckily, further observations using ALMA and the forthcoming James Webb Space Telescope (JWST), scheduled for launch in 2021, will be able to reveal exactly how the gas and dust travels within and is distributed around the galaxies, gets converted into stars and is consumed by the black hole.

Not only will these observations give insight into this most extreme galaxy, it could also help us understand the processes that build more ordinary galaxies, and the conditions required to ignite all galaxies' most luminous phases.

It's been great watching W2246. In about 100m years, it will definitely have finished its meal of neighbouring galaxies. It will then lose its sparkle, and another object will take the crown of being the brightest galaxy in the universe. Nothing is forever.

[the writer is Professor of Observational Astronomy, University of Leicester]



## Khaleda Zia challenges 10-year prison term in orphanage graft case

**DHAKA, Nov 19 (PTI):** Bangladesh's former prime minister Khaleda Zia on Monday challenged the 10-year sentence handed out to her for embezzling funds meant for an orphanage trust in her late husband's name, claiming that she has been convicted in a "fabricated" case.

A bail petition was also submitted alongside the petition seeking stay order of the jail term, reported bdnews24.

On February 8, Dhaka Special Court convicted the former premier in the Zia Orphanage Trust graft case and sentenced her to five years of imprisonment for embezzling 21 million Bangladeshi Taka (USD 252,504) in foreign donations meant for the Trust. Five others accused - including her son and BNP senior vice-chairman Tarique Rahman - received 10 years' imprisonment each.

On October 30, the High Court doubled the jail term of Zia to 10 years. "Usually a sentence is reduced on appeal. But in Khaleda Zia's case it was increased. This is completely motivated by politics," the former premier's lawyer Kaysar Kamal was quoted as saying by the report. The BNP chairperson has been "sentenced in a false, fabricated and fake case," he added.

The petition to stay the verdict in the Zia Orphanage Trust graft case was filed a day after she challenged the trial court's verdict in the Zia Charitable Trust graft case in which she was sentenced to seven years in prison and fined Tk 1 million (USD 12,024).

Zia, 73, has been in custody since February 8, when she was handed jail term in the case related to embezzlement of funds in the orphanage trust named after her husband late president Ziaur Rahman. Zia was made vice-chairperson of the BNP in March 1983 after the assassination of her husband. She became chairperson of the party on May 10, 1984, a post she is holding till now.

In her 35 years of political career, Zia went to the jail several times. During the 2007-2008 tenure of the army-backed caretaker government, she was in jail for about a year on charges of corruption.

## Over 7,000 women, children saved from being trafficked in 5 yr in Nepal: Police

**SHIRISH B PRADHAN KATHMANDU, Nov 18 (PTI):** Over 7,000 women, girls and children have been saved from being trafficked to India and China through the porous Indo-Nepal borders in the last five years by the Nepal Police, a senior police official said on Sunday.

A total of 7,029 women, girls and children, of which 3,896 were under the age of 18 years, have been rescued from border points mainly on the Indo-Nepal border areas by the police, Nepal Police Spokesperson and

Senior Superintendent of Police Uttam Raj Subedi told reporters here.

They were mainly rescued from Jhapa, Ilam, Morang, Udaypur, Sankhuwasabha, Parsa, Sarlahi, Mohottari, Siraha, Chitwan, Makwanpur, Nuwakot, Sindhuli, Nawalparasi, Rupandehi, Kapilvastu, Gulmi, Dang, Banke, Bardiya, Jumla, Kailali and Kanchanpur districts while being trafficked India and China, he added.

SSP Subedi said that Nepali women and girls are vulnerable to trafficking due to the porous

border with India, and Nepal Police teams have been deployed in these areas to prevent trafficking of children, girls and women.

Also, Nepal Police has set up rehabilitation centres for survivors of human-trafficking in Jhapa, Kathmandu, Sindhupalchowk, Parsa, Chitwan, Kailali and Banke districts, he added.

Januka Dhakal, vice-chair of Samaj Uthan Mahila Manch, a non-government organisation which is working to prevent trafficking of girls and women, said

lack of awareness and poverty made women and girls more vulnerable to trafficking.

Traffickers target such women and girls with the promise of lucrative jobs in foreign countries. Most of such women end up in brothels in India, she said, adding that girls and women are trafficked mainly for prostitution, sex slavery and forced labour.

Nepal's anti-trafficking law stipulates maximum sentence of 20-year in jail and a fine up to Rs 2,00,000 for anyone found guilty of hu-

man-trafficking.

Nepal Police is also planning to establish a separate Human Trafficking Bureau to prevent human-trafficking in Nepal.

The Ministry of Home Affairs has approved a proposal submitted by IGP of Nepal Police Sarbendra Khanal seeking establishment of the Bureau and a Cyber Bureau, the spokesperson said.

"We hope that it will be more easier to prevent trafficking of girls and women once the bureaus are set up," SSP Subedi said.

## Online ticket sale for opening ceremony of Hockey World Cup from Nov 20

**BHUBANESWAR, Nov 19 (PTI):** The online ticket sale for the grand opening ceremony of Odisha Hockey Men's World Cup in Bhubaneswar will begin from November 20, according to Hockey India. The opening ceremony will be held at Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar on November 27 and the world cup celebrations event at Barabati Stadium in Cuttack on November 28.

Music maestro A R Rahman is slated to perform at both the venues, along with other Bollywood celebrities including ShahRukh Khan, sources said.

Hockey India on Sunday made the announcement about the online ticket sale from November 20 on its official Twitter handle. "Hockey India announces the online ticket sales will go live from November 20 at 12 pm for the grand opening ceremony for the Odisha

Hockey Men's World Cup Bhubaneswar 2018 to be held on November 27 and 28," it said.

Around 10,500 tickets are likely to be sold for the inaugural ceremony in Bhubaneswar and 30,000 tickets for the November 28 event, sources said.

The online redemption of the tickets for the opening ceremony in Bhubaneswar will be from 3 pm on November 22 at Gate 4 of Kalinga Athletics Stadium along with other locations throughout the city, Hockey India said in its website. Fans can choose redemption centres from multiple locations/counters in Cuttack while booking their tickets for the World Cup Celebrations event. The date for online redemption of the tickets for the World Cup Celebration event will be announced in due course, it said.

## Rahul, Shah to address election rallies in Mizoram Tuesday

**AIZAWL, Nov 19 (PTI):** Congress president Rahul Gandhi and his BJP counterpart Amit Shah would be in poll-bound Mizoram on Tuesday to boost their parties chance in the November 28 election.

BJP sources said Monday that Shah would arrive at the Lengpui airport near Aizawl and visit southernmost Mizoram's Lawngtlai, Myanmar-border Champhai and Assam border Vairengte by helicopter where he would address public rallies.

He would come to Aizawl from Vairengte and release the BJP's manifesto/vision document for the state before leaving for Delhi.

Congress leaders said Monday that Rahul Gandhi would land at the Lengpui airport by a special flight from where he would go to Champhai to address an election rally and return to Aizawl to address a public meeting later.

Police said that security was beefed up in view of the visit of the two leaders who are both classified as 'Z-plus category'.

Election to the 40-member Mizoram Assembly is scheduled for November 28.

Mizoram is the only state where Congress is in power in the North-East at present and hence its great challenge for the party to defend its fort.

## Mamata Banerjee's biography hits the shelves



**KOLKATA, Nov 19 (PTI):** A biography of West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee was released in bookstores across the country Monday, an official of publishers Penguin India said. The biography was penned down by journalist Shutapa Pal, keeping the national readers in mind, the official said.

The book, titled "Didi: The Untold Mamata Banerjee", brings out the unique position the Trinamool Congress supremo has occupied in Indian

politics and establishes her as a national figure.

Describing Banerjee as one of the country's toughest women, the book explores her unique style of politics, her struggles and achievements, starting from her days in college politics to defeating the formidable over-three decades-old Left Front government in West Bengal in 2011.

It also explores the role she is expected to play in the 2019 parliamentary polls.

## French consul general in Kolkata visits Chandannagar



**KOLKATA, Nov 19 (PTI):** The Consul General of France in Kolkata, Virginie Corteval, made a day-long visit to Chandannagar, a former French colony, as part of an effort to shape the people-to-people contact between France and Bengal. As a tourist, she had visited the town, 35 km from here, about 20 years ago.

In a statement issued Sunday, Corteval said she took great pride in announcing that "we are formalising our relationship and institutionalising our partnership, working as collaborators between the government, private sector and civil society."

During the day-long trip to the place on Saturday, the diplomat

also dropped in at some Jagaddhatri Puja pandals and learnt about their themes.

The Jagaddhatri Puja is a major festival of the heritage town that attracts crowds from all over West Bengal.

She thanked Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee for her commitment to develop "river tourism along the river Hooghly."

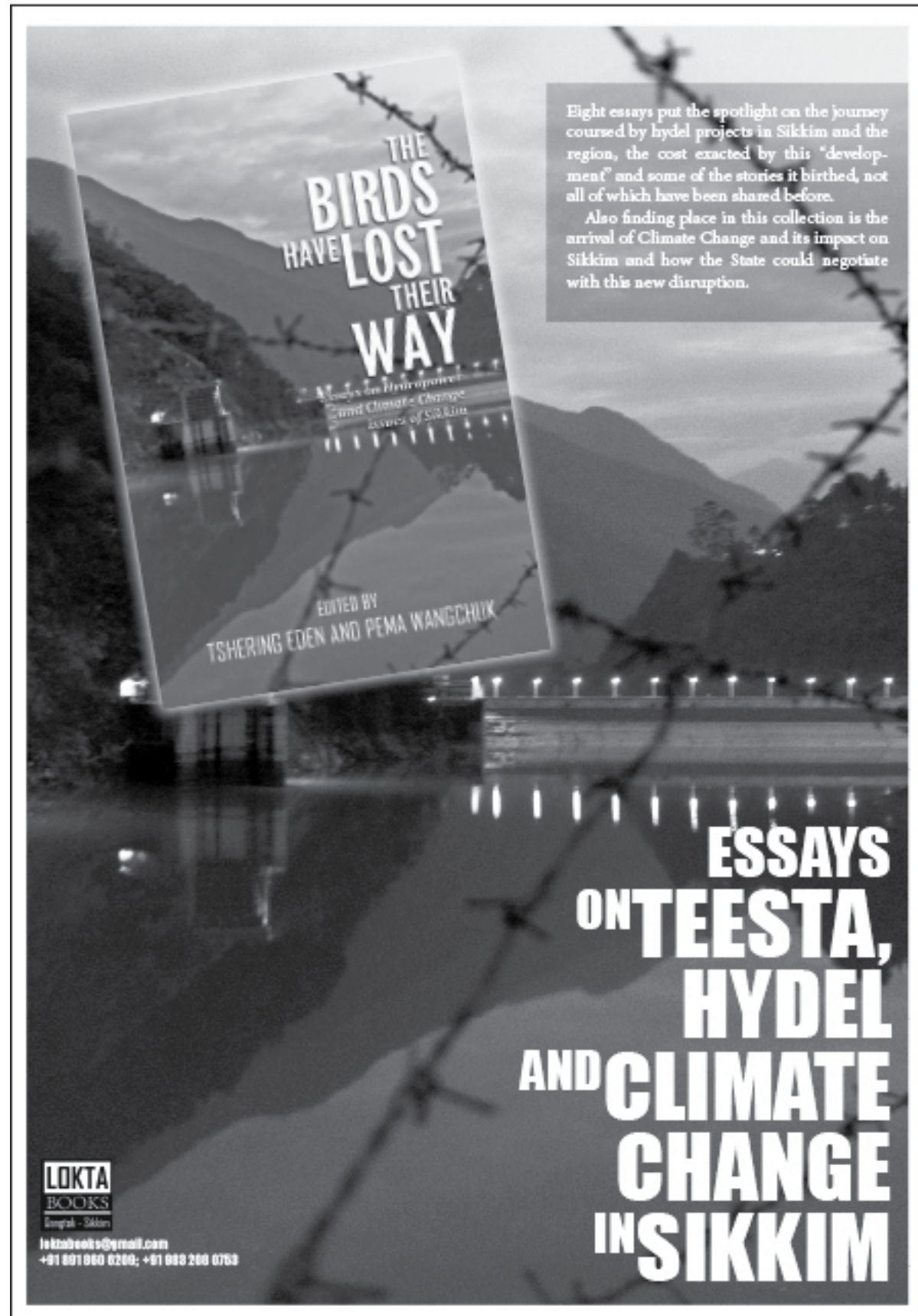
The diplomat referred to the 'Bonjour India' initiative of France and said the restoration and reuse of the Registry office building in Chandernagore has given impetus to a proposal to revitalise and redevelop the entire Strand area of the town.

Chandannagar, formerly spelt as Chandernagore, situated on the

banks of the Hooghly, became a French colony in 1673 when France wanted to set up a trading post.

The French lost the town to the British in 1757 and regained control of it in 1816. It remained a French territory in India till 1950.

"We are very grateful to the Government of West Bengal, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, the Minister of Tourism Goutam Deb, Minister of State for Information and Culture Indranil Sen..." for their endeavour to widen this initiative to not just restoring buildings but creating livelihood opportunities and economic development for the people of this town, the consul general said in the statement.



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# ‘Magnificent Mary’ in quarters, Sarita bows out

**PHILEM DIPAK SINGH**

**NEW DELHI, Nov 18 (PTI):** Five-time champion M C Mary Kom punched her way into the 48kg quarterfinals while another veteran Sarita Devi made an early exit after losing a hard-fought 60kg bout in the AIBA Women’s World Championships here on Sunday.

Chasing a historic sixth gold and first medal since 2010, the 35-year-old Mary Kom registered a convincing 5-0 win over Aigerim Kessenayeva of Kazakhstan in her opening bout of the tournament.

The 36-year-old Sarita, who won a gold in the 2006 edition when it was also held in the Capital city, lost to 2016 World Championships silver medallist Kellie Harrington of Ireland in a split 3-2 verdict.

Sarita, who got a standing count against her opponent in the third round, later said the decision was wrong. She, however, said that she will accept the decision as she does not want another ban.

The Manipuri was handed a one year ban by the world body AIBA for refusing to accept her bronze medal in protest during the victory ceremony at the 2014 Asian Games.

Besides Mary Kom, three other Indians -- Manisha Moun (54kg), Lovlina Borgohain (69kg) and Kachari Bhagyabati (81kg) -- also made it to the quarterfinals with 5-0, 5-0 and 4-1 wins on points in their respective pre-quarter-final bouts.

Five Indians took the field



on Sunday and only Sarita lost her bout. They are now just one step away from clinching a medal.

Mary Kom began with a watchful approach in the first round but she got to her rhythm with a left-right combination on her opponent in the second round. There were no many clear punches from both sides but the Manipuri, a mother of three, was clearly the better boxer with all the five judges giving their nod.

Four judges gave 30-27 each while one awarded 29-28 in favour of the Indian.

“It was a tough fight and there was a bit of pressure as it was my first bout of the tournament. I have been handling the pressure of expectation from the people of my country for the last 16 years and I am happy to face this pressure,” said the Olympic

bronze medallist.

Mary Kom next face Wu Yu of China in the quarterfinal on Tuesday.

“I think she is an intelligent boxer and fast also. I have to think about which technique I have to use,” she said.

A win on Tuesday will assure Mary Kom of at least a bronze medal which will be her first since 2010.

Sarita and Harrington traded a lot of punches in their lightweight pre-quarterfinal bout which was a fast and intense affair.

The veteran Indian, who also competed in the inaugural World Championships in 2001, expressed surprise when the Irishwoman was declared the winner.

“I am not happy with the decision (of the judges). The decision has gone ‘ultra’ (opposite), I thought I had the upper-

hand in all the three rounds. But what do I do, I was banned for one year after the 2014 Asian Games controversy. So, I cannot say anything now,” she said after her bout.

“I don’t know why these things happen to me only.”

About the standing count against her in the third round, she said, “It was not a standing count. My opponent was a southpaw and her legs got entangled in between mine and I slipped and fell.”

The day began on a happy note for India with Manisha sending reigning world champion Dina Zhalaman of Kazakhstan packing with yet another authoritative win in 54kg to place herself just a step away from grabbing a maiden medal.

The 20-year-old Manisha won a 5-0 unanimous verdict against her more experienced

rival in a pre-quarterfinal bout in her maiden World Championships. This was the second win of the Haryana girl against Zhalaman as she had defeated the Kazakh boxer in the Silesian Women’s Boxing championship in Poland earlier this year. In the quarterfinals, Manisha faces top seed and 2016 World Championships silver medallist Stoyka Petrova of Bulgaria.

“For me, once I am inside the ring it does not matter whether my opponent is a world champion or a silver medallist. So, my approach will be the same in my next bout also,” she said.

“Today, like on my first bout, I played from a distance but I played faster and more aggressive. It was a good bout.”

Borgohain, an Asian Championships bronze medallist last year, had a tougher fight against 2014 World Championships gold medallist Atheyna Bylon of Panama. It was a physical and aggressive fight and both the boxers fell on the floor on more than one occasion. The 21-year-old Assamese next faces Scott Kaye Frances of Australia in the quarterfinals on Tuesday.

For Bhagyabati, it was even tougher against a taller opponent Irina-Nicoletta Schonberger of Germany. But the Indian also turned out winner in her debut World Championships bout.

She now faces Paola Jessica Caicedo of Columbia in the quarterfinals on Tuesday.

## Djokovic sets sights on 2019 after ‘phenomenal season’

**LONDON, Nov 19 (AFP):** Novak Djokovic set his sights on the Australian Open after a painful defeat in the ATP Finals at the hands of Alexander Zverev took some of the gloss off an incredible season.

The Serbian world number one looked unbeatable heading into Sunday’s final, winning all four of his matches in London in straight sets and not dropping serve once. But his 21-year-old opponent showed no fear at a packed O2 Arena, trading heavy blows with his illustrious opponent from the back of the court and outlasting him in long rallies to win 6-4, 6-3.

A sanguine Djokovic was eager to put the defeat into context after a memorable second half of the season, during which he has clambered back to the top of the men’s game from the lowly ranking of 22 he found himself in as recently as June.

“Obviously no one likes to lose a tennis match,” he said. “You try your best. But at the same time, as I said on the court, you put things in a larger perspective, see things a bit differently. “When you get out of this feeling of a little bit disappointment that you lost, I mean, all the posi-



tive things that I have to reflect on and also take from this season, especially the last six months.”

The 31-year-old started his year with a miserable early exit at the Australian Open, followed by elbow surgery and a string of disappointing results on his return to the court.

But since Wimbledon started he has suffered just three defeats -- including Sunday’s against Zverev -- winning a fourth title at the All England club and following up by securing a third US Open crown to leave him on 14 Grand Slams -- three behind Rafael Nad-

al and six behind Federer.

“Overall it was a phenomenal season that I have to be definitely very proud of,” Djokovic said.

What is frightening for Djokovic’s rivals is that -- Sunday’s surprise defeat aside -- he appears to be getting better. Widely regarded as one of the greatest returners in the history of the game, it is his serving numbers that have been so striking during his run to the final in London.

Federer remains a threat and Nadal and Andy Murray are on the road back from injury while Zverev will start next season full of con-

fidence despite his poor record at Grand Slams.

But Djokovic will be the man to beat when the first major of next year comes round in Melbourne in January -- it is a venue where he has won six times.

“Having a Grand Slam so early in the season makes us train probably very hard and be kind of aware that we have to be at our best in the first week of the year,” he said.

“The first Slam is there in January. I’ve had most success in my life, in my career, in Australia out of all four Slams. Hopefully I can keep that going.

## IOC warns Taiwan against name-change that would rile Beijing

**TAIPEI, Nov 19 (AFP):**

The International Olympic Committee has warned Taiwan that it could lose its right to compete if it tries to change its name for the 2020 Games in Tokyo, ahead of a referendum that will incense Beijing.

Taiwan will vote Saturday on whether the island should compete as “Taiwan” and not “Chinese Taipei” in a controversial referendum alongside local elections.

China, which still claims sovereignty over self-ruling democratic Taiwan, is particularly sensitive to the island’s use of names, emblems and flags at international events.

These sensitivities -- backed up by Beijing’s clout on the world stage -- mean Taiwan is forced to compete as “Chinese Taipei” at the Olympics and other international sports competitions.

The IOC wrote to the Chinese Taipei Olympic Committee (CTOC) and the government Friday saying that any name change was “under its jurisdiction” and warned of consequences if it felt there was interference.

It outlined a point in the Olympic Charter which says the IOC has the right to suspend a national Olympic committee if its activities are “hampered” by regulations or acts of government. The local committee has already expressed concern that the island could lose its membership if it tries to push for the name change. “The IOC does not interfere with local procedures and fully

respects freedom of expression. However to avoid any unnecessary expectations or speculations, the IOC wishes to reiterate that this matter is under its jurisdiction, in accordance with the Olympics Charter,” the letter said.

It added that the IOC would see any attempts to pressurise the local committee as external interference that could lead to “protective measures”.

“The IOC is hoping that the interest of the Olympic Movement in Chinese Taipei will prevail over political considerations so as not to disrupt the CTOC delegation and the athletes,” it added.

Taiwan has never formally declared independence from China and Beijing has threatened to react with force if it ever did.

The Chinese Taipei name was agreed upon in 1981.

But since then there has been a growing sense of separate Taiwanese identity on the island.

The name-change campaign has already irked China, with Beijing’s Taiwan Affairs Office previously warning that Taiwan would “swallow its own bitter fruit” and sacrifice its athletes’ chances to compete in international games.

Its anger over the potential referendum was blamed for the cancellation of an international youth event due to be held in Taiwan next year.

The event was axed following a vote by the East Asian Olympic Committee in July.

## Switch Hit: Taekwondo’s loss is boxing’s gain as Bulgarian eyes more success

**NEW DELHI, Nov 18 (PTI):**

On Monday, when India’s Sonia takes the ring in the ongoing AIBA Women’s World Championships, she will be up against Bulgaria’s Stanimira Petrova, who switched from taekwondo to boxing in search of an Olympic medal.

One of the finest pugilists of her generation, Petrova discovered her boxing skills in 2012. Two years later in Jeju, South Korea, the 28-year-old was crowned world champion in 54kg, giving her country the first ever gold in the competition.

The gold catapulted the young pugilist into the limelight of world boxing. But her first love was taekwondo, which she had to leave as she felt she won’t be able to realise her Olympic dream.

“I was a taekwondo player earlier but I felt I won’t be able to win an Olympic medal. That is

why I took up boxing,” she told PTI here. Petrova entered the boxing ring at the age of 22, and within a year, she claimed her first title at the Bulgarian Women’s National Team Championships. That success was followed by her first full national title in early 2014, part of an excellent run that saw Petrova selected to the squad for the World Championships in Korea and winning the yellow metal on her maiden appearance in 2014.

She sealed her meteoric rise with a brilliant win against Italian veteran Marzia Davide in the summit clash. A year later, Petrova switched down to the flyweight (57kg) after the 2015 European Games.

Continuing her sublime form, the Bulgarian won gold at the European Women Championship earlier this year. She is one of the favourites to win gold here.

## Sonia enters quarterfinals, Saweety bows out in women’s world boxing

**Philem Dipak Singh**

**New Delhi, Nov 19 (PTI):** India’s Sonia Chahal (57kg) defeated former world champion Stanimira Petrova in a controversial bout to enter the quarterfinals but another local hope Saweety Boora (75kg) bowed out on a stormy day at the women’s World Boxing Championships here on Monday.

The 21-year-old Sonia, daughter of a farmer from Haryana, was trailing after the second round but recovered in the final round to win the close bout 3-2. All the five judges ruled in favour of the

Indian in the third round and that sealed the win for the local hope. Petrova, a gold medal winner in the 2014 edition in the 54kg, expressed her displeasure with the decision. The 27-year-old accused the judges of “corruption”. “I want to say only one thing, it is corruption by the judges. It is not a fair result,” she told reporters.

Her coach Petar Yosifov Lesov threw a water bottle inside the ring in protest and the International Boxing Association (AIBA) barred him from ringside and revoked his accreditation.

Sonia, on her part, said it was a fair

result. “How can all the five judges go wrong? It was a fair decision,” she said.

Soniawon a gold in the National Championships in 2016. Last year, she won a gold in the Serbia Cup. She fetched a bronze in the Ahmet Comert Boxing Tournament this year.

Sonia next faces Arias Castenada Yeni Marcela of Columbia in the quarterfinals on Tuesday.

India, however, suffered a jolt with former world silver-medallist Saweety (75kg) losing her opening bout to Elzbieta Wojcik of Poland in a unanimous

decision. The 23-year-old Saweety won a silver in the 2014 World Championships in 81kg category.

The Haryana boxer also faced a standing eighth count in the second round. Coach Shiv Singh later questioned it, saying Saweety was pulled down and was not punched by her opponent. “Saweety did not fall from a punch but was pulled down (by her opponent). I am not saying that the standing count resulted to Saweety’s loss but it puts pressure on the judges (to give points against the boxer who faced the count),” he told reporters.

## Tall Aussie bowlers have advantage but Indian batsmen ready for challenge: Rohit

**Brisbane, Nov 19 (PTI):** Australia’s towering pacers are at an advantage against the “not that tall” Indian batsmen, says visiting vice-captain Rohit Sharma but insisted that his team is ready to rewrite the script of the battle this time. India start the tour with the T20 Internationals from November 21 here and Rohit said Rohit said it would a tough task to counter the fast pitches.

“India have always played either at Perth (venue for second Test from December 14-18 this time) or Brisbane. These two conditions are challenging and the Australians have tall bowlers who exploit those conditions and use it to their advantage,” he said.

“Indian batsman are generally not that tall, so it is not easy for us but the guys are determined to change things this time, we are ready to accept the challenge,” he asserted. “It is challenging for our batsmen...But most of the guys have come to Australia before. So they understand the conditions. Of course their bowling attack will challenge us whichever format we play but as a batting unit, we are prepared,” Rohit said.

India will start with a three-match T20I series, followed by a four-match Test series and a three-game ODI Series. The visitors have never won a Test series in Australia, drawing three and losing eight of their 11 outings.

“Whenever we travel outside India there is always a special feeling and Australia is one place where we want to leave our mark and do well as a unit,” Rohit said after India’s practice session at The Gabba.

“Last time we played a Test series here, although we lost two

games and drew one, but I thought we played few close games, especially at Brisbane. “We want to make it count this time around, there is a real good feeling inside the group. The motive is to seize all the moments and win.”

Stressing on the significance of putting up a good performance in Australia ahead of the 2019 World Cup, Rohit said: “When you do well in Australia, you feel good as a team and thinking about the World Cup ahead, it can only give you confidence winning in places like Australia.”

Rohit said everybody in the team needs to step up against a formidable side like Australia.

“Australia in Australia will always be dangerous without a doubt. In places like Australia you want the whole unit to come together, that is our focus,” he said.

“We don’t want few individuals to step up, we want whole lot of guys to put their hands up and take up the challenge. So, we want everybody to step up and make it count. “We have some quality bowlers, in particular, spinners, so we will try to challenge them with our spinners. They still have a quality batting line-up, so let’s see how we go.”

Rohit said the idea behind landing up early here was to adapt to the conditions as much as possible. “The reason we came down a few days earlier is to get used to the bounce here. Brisbane, which if I may say so, probably is the fastest pitch. It has always challenged us as a batting unit. We are ready to accept that as a batting unit. “This time around, we want to change our fortunes and come out with some exceptional performances. It is not going to be easy but we have quality in our group.”



## Trump’s attacks on media “greatest threat” to democracy: says retd Navy SEAL who killed Osama

**WASHINGTON, Nov 19 (PTI):** US President Donald Trump’s attacks on the news media represent the “greatest threat” to democracy, the retired Navy SEAL, who oversaw the killing of Osama bin Laden and the capture of Saddam Hussein, has said. William McRaven’s remarks on Sunday came after Trump derided the retired Navy SEAL and Special Operations commander as a “Hillary Clinton fan” and an “Obama backer”.

Trump also suggested that the four-star admiral, who recently left his post as chancellor of the University of Texas amid a battle with chronic lymphocytic leukemia, should have caught bin Laden faster.

“Wouldn’t it have been nice if we got Osama bin Laden a lot sooner than that, wouldn’t it have been nice?” Trump told Fox news.

“I did not back Hillary Clinton or anyone else. I am a fan of President Obama and President George W Bush, both of whom I worked for. I admire all presidents, regardless of their political party, who uphold the



dignity of the office and who use that office to bring the nation together in challenging times,” McRaven said.

McRaven oversaw the May 2011 covert raid of the US Navy Seals which killed former Al-Qaeda leader bin Laden in a compound in Abbottabad in Pakistan. He also supervised the capture of former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein during his 37 years in the US military.

“I stand by my comment that the President’s attack on the media is the greatest threat to our democracy in my lifetime,” McRaven told CNN, referring to remarks he made

about Trump last year.

“When you undermine the people’s right to a free press and freedom of speech and expression, then you threaten the Constitution and all for which it stands,” he said. Trump coined the term ‘Fake News’ during his presidential campaign, targeting media houses and has been repeatedly using it for “biased” news coverage. The term is now popularly related to news one does not agree with.

He has also announced the ‘Fake News Awards’ for the “very corrupt and dishonest” press for “bad reporting”.

McRaven’s comments escalated a war of words

that began last year when McRaven called Trump’s description of the news media as the “enemy of the people” the greatest threat to American democracy he had ever seen. In August, McRaven issued a stunning rebuke of Trump in an op-ed published in the Washington Post, writing that through his actions, the US President “embarrassed us in the eyes of our children, humiliated us on the world stage and, worst of all, divided us as a nation”.

Former CIA deputy director Michael Morrell pointed out on Twitter that McRaven’s forces had nothing to do with

locating bin Laden.

Morrell said it was the CIA that did the “finding” and McRaven’s forces that did the “getting”, moving out within days of receiving the order.

The president’s remarks about McRaven came amid broader questions about Trump’s relationship with military matters.

During a recent trip to France, the president did not attend a ceremony commemorating the centenary of World War I because of the rain, with the White House saying his helicopter couldn’t fly in the inclement weather and a motorcade would have caused too much traffic. Trump also has been criticised by his political opponents for not visiting either Afghanistan or Iraq in the first two years of his presidency. He, however, said he was planning to visit the two countries.

“I think you will see that happen. There are things that are being planned. We don’t want to talk about it because of - obviously because of security reasons and everything else,” he said in an interview.

## Most Asian markets rise as investors weigh China-US trade row

**HONG KONG, Nov 19 (AFP):** Asian markets mostly rose Monday but investors were keeping a close eye on the China-US trade row after Donald Trump’s optimistic comments on a possible deal were offset by a war of words between his vice president and Xi Jinping. The mood across the region was a little calmer at the start of the week, providing some much-needed support after the volatility of seven days ago, with oil stabilising and the Federal Reserve tempering fears about its plans for interest rate hikes.

US markets provided a positive lead after Trump said Friday that Beijing had made overtures toward resolving their trade war, meaning he might hold off imposing another round of tariffs. The president’s comments followed an indication from one of his top economics advisers that talks were under way ahead of a planned meeting at the G20 in Argentina at the end of this month.

However, hopes for an early agreement were jolted by a spat at the weekend APEC meeting between Mike Pence and Xi over China’s economic and regional ambitions, with the US vice president mocking Beijing’s “constricting belt” and a “one-way road” initiative.

Xi defended his

scheme and hit out at Trump’s “America First” protectionist agenda, saying it was a “short-sighted approach” that was “doomed to failure”.

The stark differences between the two sides meant the APEC gathering ended without a final communique for the first time in its history.

Still, investors in Asia were in a buying mood Monday as they picked up bargains.

In early trade Hong Kong was up 0.5 per cent and Shanghai added 0.4 per cent while Tokyo ended the morning 0.4 per cent higher.

Seoul gained 0.3 per cent and Taipei added 0.1 per cent with Manila jumping more than one per cent.

However, Sydney dropped 0.6 per cent, Singapore was off 0.4 per cent and Wellington eased 0.2 per cent.

There was also some support from comments by top Fed officials last week hinting at concerns about the global economic outlook, indicating they see signs of slowing that could affect their plans for raising borrowing costs.

Expectations the US central bank would press ahead with a series of hikes well into next year, making debts more expensive for investors, have helped send global markets down this year.

But while the pros-

pect of slower rate hikes would be cause for celebration, Stephen Innes, head of Asia-Pacific trade at OANDA, sounded a note of caution.

“A Fed pause during a hiking cycle is a very strong ‘canary in a coal mine’ type of signal and could eventually lead a more profound correction lower in US equity markets if the US economy does sputter,” he said.

Oil prices rose more than one per cent, extending gains from the end of last week after major producer Saudi Arabia said it plans to cut output and called on other producers to follow suit. “Hope is building on OPEC Plus (countries) to curb output as oil prices have entered into a bear market, falling over 20 per cent from the peak in early October when Brent was at USD 86 per barrel,” Margaret Yang Yan, market analyst at CMC Markets Singapore.

However, the commodity remains under pressure from concerns about global demand and rising output as well as the China-US trade war.

On currency markets the pound managed to hold off falling further as attention turns to British Prime Minister Theresa May’s attempts to win over enough members of her party to push through her Brexit deal.

### Taiwan president defends pro-independence film award winner

Beijing, Nov 19 (AP): Taiwan’s president has expressed her support for the prestigious Golden Horse film awards after a pro-Taiwan independence director’s speech ignited controversy in mainland China. President Tsai Ing-wen said in a Facebook post Sunday that “we have never accepted the term ‘Chinese Taiwan’ ... Taiwan is just Taiwan.”

She added that the Golden Horse Awards, akin to a Chinese-language Oscars, highlighted the freedoms that set Taiwan apart from China.

Director Fu Yue said during her acceptance speech Saturday that her biggest hope was for “our country” to be regarded as an “independent entity.” Her film “Our Youth in Taiwan” won best documentary.

Taiwan split from mainland China amid civil war in 1949, but Beijing considers the self-ruled island part of its territory.

## Lanka parties agree to form select committee to conduct parliamentary affairs amidst crisis

**Colombo, Nov 19 (PTI):** Political parties in Sri Lanka decided on Monday to form a select committee to conduct parliamentary affairs following amidst a power struggle set off by President Maithripala Sirisena’s controversial decision to remove prime minister Ranil Wickremesinghe last month.

The decision came a day after an all-party meeting called by President Sirisena to resolve the crisis ended inconclusively. The crisis erupted when President Sirisena suddenly announced on October 26 that he had sacked prime minister Wickremesinghe and installed ex-strongman Mahinda Rajapaksa in his place.

Sirisena later dissolved Parliament, almost 20 months before its term was to end, and ordered snap election. The Supreme Court on

Tuesday overturned President Sirisena’s decision to dissolve Parliament and halted the preparations for snap polls on January 5.

The House till now has passed two no-confidence motions against Rajapaksa and his government by a voice vote.

The House was convened Monday morning to conduct a third floor test. Ten minutes later, the House was adjourned till November 23.

When the House was convened, Deputy Speaker Ananda Kumarasiri said the party leaders who met in earlier in the day resolved that a select committee would be appointed to conduct the parliamentary business.

The leaders from Wickremesinghe’s United National Front, Tamil National Alliance and the JVP or the People’s Liberation Front discussed the proposal by Sirise-

na made at the all party meeting to have a floor test by name or electronic vote for the third motion of no trust against Rajapaksa. Mano Ganesan, one of the leaders who attended the meeting, said the United People’s Freedom Alliance (UPFA of Sirisena and Rajapaksa) “flatly refused and backtracked” on the proposal.

During Monday’s session, Dinesh Gunawardena on behalf of the disputed government of Rajapaksa asked the deputy speaker that since they were the government they should have the majority in the select committee. JVP leader Anura Kumara Disسانayake argued that since the Rajapaksa government had not proved their majority the select committee should have a majority of members from the group that commands majority.

Monday’s session was conducted peacefully.

Last week Sri Lanka’s parliament witnessed unprecedented violence as lawmakers threw furniture and chilli powder at each other.

On Monday, the public and VIP gallery were shut for diplomats on a request by Rajapaksa’s United People’s Freedom Alliance (UPFA). The security was also tightened to prevent any incident, officials said.

Last week, the apex court issued a temporary order against Sirisena’s sacking of parliament with hearing of the case fixed for early December.

After the temporary order, Speaker Karu Jayasuriya reconvened parliament the sittings of which had been suspended by Sirisena till November 14.

Jayasuriya’s decision not to recognise Rajapaksa as the prime minister until a floor test is held has angered Sirisena.

## China completes deployment of BeiDou navigation system; adds two new satellites

**KJM VARMA**

**BEIJING, Nov 19 (PTI):** China has completed the deployment of its home grown BeiDou Navigation Satellite System (BDS) constellation with the successful launch of two more satellites and will start providing services to countries participating in the Belt and Road Initiative by next month, the state media reported on Monday.

The BDS, which will rival US’ Global Positioning System (GPS), will provide high-precision, reliable positioning, navigation and timing services anywhere in the world by the end of 2020, Xinhua news agency reported.

The BeiDou system, named after the Chinese term for the Big Dipper constellation, added two more satellites to its BeiDou Navigation Satellite System (BDS) on Sunday night.

The satellites were launched into space on a Long March-3B carrier rocket from the Xichang Satellite Launch Centre in Sichuan Province.

The satellites entered a medium earth orbit more than three hours later and will work with 17 other BDS-3 satellites already in space, the report said.

With the launch of two new BDS-3 satellites on Monday, China will complete the basic navigation system and start to provide services for countries participating in the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) by the end of this year, the report said.

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), a pet project of Chinese President Xi Jinping, is an ambitious effort to improve regional cooperation and connectivity on a trans-continental scale.

The initiative aims to strengthen infrastructure, trade, and investment links between China and some 65 other countries. It is also expected to boost Beijing’s influence in these countries.

“This is a key step for BDS developing from a domestic Chinese system to a regional and then a global navigation sys-

tem,” said Yang Changfeng, chief designer of the BeiDou system.

China plans to launch another 11 BDS-3 satellites in the coming two years. By the end of 2020, the BeiDou system, named after the Chinese term for the Big Dipper constellation, will become global, and provide high-precision, reliable positioning, navigation and timing services anywhere in the world, the report said.

“China developed BDS through a unique technological approach, contributing Chinese wisdom to the theory and construction of international satellite navigation systems,” said Xie Jun, deputy chief designer of the Beidou system.

Altogether 18 BDS satellites have been sent into space from the Xichang Satellite Launch Center in southwest China’s Sichuan Province in 2018.

Chi Jun, head of the BDS-3 satellite team from the China Academy of Space Technology (CAST), said this year has seen

the most intensive launch of the BDS satellites.

“We improved our work efficiency by reforming the management process. The number of satellite staff at the launch center has been reduced by nearly half, and the testing time before launch has been shortened by nearly a third,” said Chi.

In the CAST production base in Beijing, several BDS satellites are being manufactured at the same time, the report said.

“We try to improve intelligent manufacturing capability, and cut down production times. Construction of the BDS-3 system has accelerated,” Chi said.

Once the BDS is fully deployed, it will be the fourth global satellite navigation system after the US GPS system, Russia’s GLONASS and the European Union’s Galileo.

India too is building its navigational system called the Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System (IRNSS), with an operational name of NAVIC.

**CHICO (US), Nov 19 (AP):** Authorities say one more set of human remains has been found, bringing the total number killed in a devastating California wildfire to 77.

A state incident report released Sunday evening says the flames destroyed more than 10,500 homes.

Over a thousand names remain on a list of those unaccounted for after the so-called Camp Fire swept through the rural town of Paradise on November 8. Authorities stressed that many of those may be safe and unaware they have been reported missing.

Hundreds of volunteers are sifting through ash and debris, searching for human remains before expected rains complicate their efforts. The predicted downpours could wash away telltale fragments of bone, or turn loose, dry ash into a thick paste that would frustrate the search.

The fire was 65 per cent contained Sunday.

Crews searching for remains of people after the devastating Northern California wildfire are stepping up their efforts ahead of rains forecast for later this week that could complicate their work.

A team of 10 volunteers along with a cadaver dog were examining burned houses Sunday in a Paradise neighbourhood looking for victims.

They’re focusing on vehicles, bathtubs and mattress springs that would indicate a charred bed.

If no remains are found, the team leaves a note in orange spray paint near the home.

Rain would help suppress the fire but could also complicate the search and recovery effort. Officials say ash that is now dry and easy to dust off would turn into paste, making it harder to uncover remains.

The National Park Service says all but one of 13 mountain lions being tracked in Southern California mountains have been accounted for following a devastating wildfire.

As of Friday, the only missing mountain lion was one dubbed P-74, a young male born last year.

In addition, all four bobcats that the agency monitors via GPS have been located in the Santa Monica Mountains northwest of Los Angeles.

Officials have again increased the number of homes and other structures burned by a huge Southern California wildfire.

The figure rose Sunday to 1,130 buildings destroyed - many of them homes - and 300 damaged. The tally is continuing.

through communities west of Los Angeles from Thousand Oaks to Malibu.

More evacuees have been allowed back in their homes and the 151-square-mile (391-square-kilometer) blaze is now 88 percent contained.

California’s governor is expressing optimism that President Donald Trump will support the state as it deals with raging wildfires.

Democratic Governor Jerry Brown said in an interview on CBS’ “Face the Nation” airing Sunday that the Republican president has “got our back” and has pledged to continue to help. Trump initially blamed state officials for poor forest management in exacerbating the fires and threatened to cut off federal funding. He’s since signed an emergency declaration and toured the devastated areas Saturday with Brown and Governor-elect Gavin Newsom. Brown also suggested in the CBS interview that the wildfires will make believers of even the most ardent climate change skeptics “in less than five years” and that those living near forests might need to build underground shelters to protect them from wildfires going forward.

Pope Francis has prayed for victims of California’s wildfires and freezing weather on the US East Coast.





**EN-DEER-ING:** Actress and BAMB! award winner, Penelope Cruz won the carpet in an asymmetrical black ruffled flamenco dress.

## ‘Stones & Wounds’ about Kashmiri people stuck between two extremes: co-director Aditya Raj Somani

**NEW DELHI, NOV 19 (PTI):** Short film “Stones & Wounds” uses the premise of stone pelting to tell the story of common people of Kashmir, who are stuck between two different ideologies, says co-director Aditya Raj Somani.

Somani, who runs Hera Pheri Films and has co-directed the film with Sachin Malvi, said though the film is just 15-minutes in length, they went through each dialogue and scene meticulously to project the real picture of the conflict-affected state.

“The film is not about stone pelting incident or takes any stand on that. Rather it uses stone pelting as a premise to get into the mindset of common Kashmiri people.

“It positions them differently from Indian nationalists and Kashmir separatists to bring out the tragedy of common people stuck between two extreme ideologies,” Somani, who has produced the film through, told PTI.

It revolves around a Kashmiri girl (played

by Snower Sania Vasudev), who wants to pursue a career in medical science but below standard academia in her state forces her to leave for Delhi but here she is faced with another ideological extreme.

Somani says he may not be from Kashmir but they have tried to stay as realistic and convincing as possible in the portrayal of the conflict.

“It took us a year to write and direct the short film,” he said, crediting his producers Epilouge Press in Jammu, for supporting in the research.

“This short film is a part of one big story we developed during research. We are waiting for the right people to collaborate and fund the project. But still there are a lot of other short films already in preparation, covering various issues ranging from Kashmiri Pandits, Kashmiri Muslims, Armed forces, Police forces, Gurjar Bakarwals and many more,” he added.

**MUMBAI, NOV 19 (PTI):** Disney is set to release “Mary Poppins Returns” in India on January 4.

The new sequel to Disney’s 1964 film “Mary Poppins” has Emily Blunt stepping into the shoes of veteran actor Julie Andrews as the prim and proper nanny with magical skills.

The film, directed by Rob Marshall, is based in 1930s Depression-era London 24 years after the original was set.

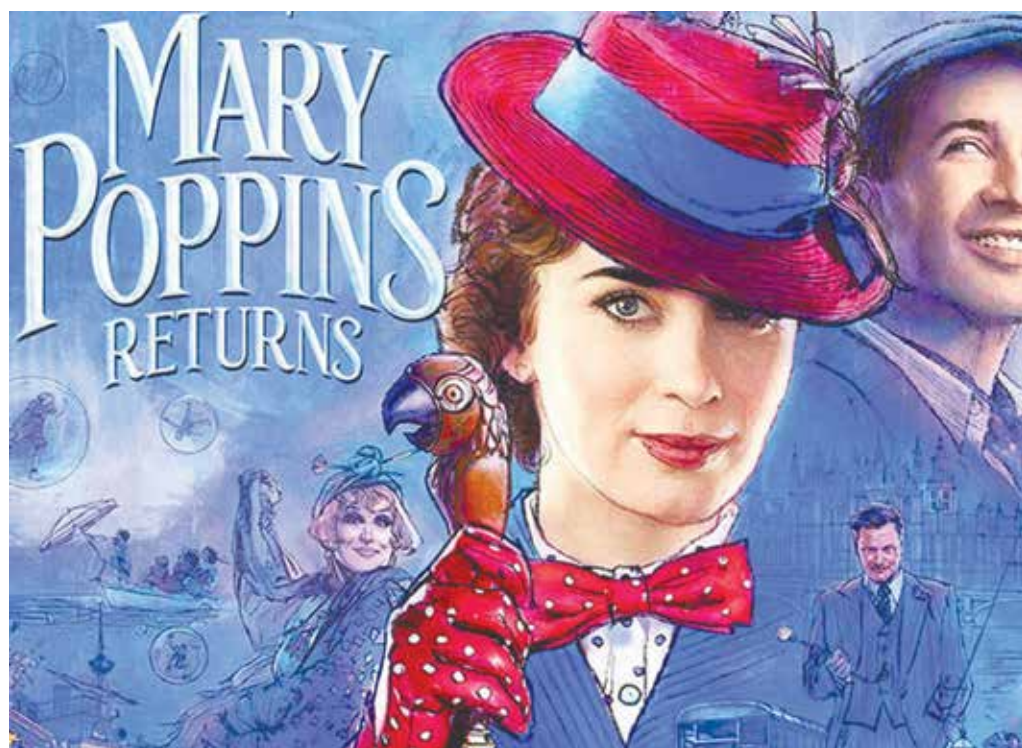
When the family suffers a personal loss, Mary Poppins magically re-enters their lives and with Jack’s (Lin-Manuel Miranda) help, brings joy and wonder back into their home.

The director said he feels honoured to be approached by Disney to direct the sequel.

“This is a brand new original film musical from top to bottom, which is very rare, and it is a wonderful opportunity to create something specifically for the screen.

“‘Mary Poppins’ was the first film I saw as a child and it opened my mind up to movies and to the love of musicals and adventure and fantasy in film. But this film isn’t just for children... It’s for the child in all of us,” Marshall said in a statement.

Ben Whishaw stars as Michael Banks and Emily Mortimer as Jane Banks - the eldest children of the Banks family.



The film, which introduces three new Banks children, played by Pixie Davies, Nathanael Saleh and newcomer Joel Dawson, also features Dick Van Dyke and Angela Lansbury. Van Dyke is the only actor from the original to return, portraying the son of one of his original characters.

The film is produced by Marshall, John DeLuca and Marc Platt.

The screenplay is by David Magee based on “The Mary Poppins Stories” by PL Travers with Marc Shaiman and Scott Wittman writing all new songs and Shaiman composing an original score.

## There’s still time: Alia on getting married



**MUMBAI, NOV 19 (PTI):** Alia Bhatt might be in news for her professional success and her relationship with Ranbir Kapoor but the actor says people will have to “keep waiting” as there is still time before she ties the knot.

Recently, Bollywood couple Deepika Padukone and Ranveer Singh got hitched in a private ceremony in Italy. Reports suggest Priyanka Chopra is set to tie the knot with her fiancé Nick Jonas in Jodhpur on December 1.

When asked about Priyanka’s wedding, Alia told reporters, “I am very happy and excited. I am very excited to see PC in her wedding attire. I am very fond of her and I have a lot of love and warmth for her.

“I wish she has a beautiful wedding and I am sure she will make for a beautiful bride and she should have a beautiful life.”

The “Raazi” actor was asked about her marriage plans, to which she replied, “Keep waiting. There’s time for that.” Alia was speaking at the Lux Golden Rose Award, Sunday night.

## Barack Obama Compares Himself to Jay-Z

*Yes he can make quite the entrance.*

**O**n Saturday, former President Barack Obama surprised his wife Michelle Obama in Washington, D.C. at her book



tour event for her new memoir, Becoming. Valerie Jarrett, who served as a se-

nior adviser to President Obama, interviewed Michelle for the discussion.

At one moment in the event, cheers erupted when the 44th president walked onstage holding a gorgeous bouquet of flowers. The married couple embraced after Obama gave Jarrett a hug and remained by Michelle’s side for some time.

According to CNN, Obama compared himself to another very famous married couple who also happen to be their friends: Jay-Z and Beyoncé. “This is like - you know when Jay-Z comes out during the Beyoncé concert? ... Like, Crazy in Love?” he said. “It’s the same thing. It’s just a little

sample to enhance the concert.”

No, chivalry is not dead.

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**ARIES:** A partner for life or a brief encounter, which will it be? This is today’s question. Why not choose both? Can you imagine being your partner’s lover while keeping your independence? Don’t be influenced by old models that force you to choose between these two ideas. Don’t forget that in our modern world, your choices aren’t as limited as you might think!

**TAURUS:** You can never be anyone other than who you are, Taurus! That’s the way it is and you can’t change it. Other members of your family may have dreamed of getting free of a duty or a moral lesson, but these dreams don’t apply to you. Your dreams of being someone else are like phantoms that have come back to haunt you. Simply brush them

away!

**GEMINI:** The day ahead may bring a storm of individualism and independence. You usually tolerate the quirks and minor shortcomings of your friends or family members, but today they present real obstacles to your relationships. The only way to remedy the situation is to go on vacation. Spending some time alone will keep you out of trouble.

**CANCER:** If you want to make the best of the day ahead, Cancer, try to convince your team or family to work together. This is tricky to do, what with everyone’s schedule being so demanding right now. Hard as it is to coordinate their efforts and orchestrate harmony, the strength of your character and your team spirit will make it all work out.

**LEO:** The day ahead won’t be easy, Leo. A glimpse at your love life reveals that you will be bridling at certain inhibitions. You long for peace and stability, and at the moment everything is in suspense. Use the day ahead to gain some perspective on the situation. Until the ice melts and the flow of events resumes, why not devote your energy to some other endeavor?

**VIRGO:** Lately, you’ve been nursing a feeling that your partner is inattentive. The tension has been building up and today, Virgo, you’re likely to boil over with the rage that comes from one too many doubts and suspicions. The forecast for love is stormy, without a doubt. But making up after the quarrel promises to be lots of fun.

**LIBRA:** Some days it’s better to be on vacation! That’s what

you’re liable to think today. All your projects are mired in quicksand, and you feel like you’re spinning your wheels. But even if things are momentarily stuck, don’t lose faith. Your inner self is gaining stability. When the time is right, it will be strong and reliable.

**SCORPIO:** Deep inside, don’t you have an urge to breathe new spirit into your love life? Of course, some things are more easily said than done. Currently, you don’t have much time to devote to yourself, much less your partner. Affection could thrive if given half a chance. The day suggests that you commit yourself to making some decisions that will help bring you and your mate closer.

**SAGITTARIUS:** It’s time to get what you need, Sagittarius. Your desires don’t always go

in a direction that does you the most good, and this can cause tension. You feel as though it’s impossible to combine your desires with what is good for you, notably in your love life. You wrestle with whether you should remain in your “creative” cave or share your life with someone. It doesn’t have to be one or the other.

**CAPRICORN:** Take cover, Capricorn, because today promises to be an emotional roller coaster! Something seems to be askew with your relationships, and you feel torn in opposite directions. One force is pushing you to enrich your inner universe and another force is pushing you into the arms of someone you’ve recently met. Stay busy to avoid confrontation.

**AQUARIUS:** People are go-

ing to think you’re a star today, Aquarius! Although you may not feel that way about yourself. What’s gotten into you lately? Have you lost confidence in yourself? Are you now compensating for it? Do you feel a need for more success in your life? All this is possible, but you will have to take some risks if you’re going to progress.

**PISCES:** Stop asking if you’re gifted, Pisces. This definitely isn’t the time for such questions. Now is the time to work on something concrete. You will need the help of others if you’re to succeed, so get to work convincing them to ally with you. You may have to reveal more of yourself than you normally do in order to sway people to your side. It’s time to get out of your hole and take action!