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Summit TIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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Sikkim felicitates BB Muringla on Padma Shri conferment

**NITESH R PRADHAN
GANGTOK, 30 JUL:**

BB Muringla, the torchbearer of the preservation of Limboo language and script, was felicitated today at a state-level program hosted at Chintan Bhawan on his being conferred the Padma Shri earlier this year.

Hailing from Lingchom in West Sikkim, the iconic language crusader was born to Lalman Subba and Sancha Rani Subba in 1943.

While congratulating Mr Muringla, Chief Minister Pawan Chamling, who was present for the programme as the chief guest, described the writer as a multifaceted personality and underlined that he richly deserved the honour bestowed to him for his contributions in various fields, especially



in Limboo language and culture.

The Padma Shri, it may be recalled, is the fourth highest civilian

award of the country.

In his address, the CM also pointed out that it was only after the SDF government took

office in Sikkim that personalities from the State started receiving civilian awards at the national level. He explained that

these awards are decided by the Centre based on the recommendations from the respective state governments.

He further remarked that it has now been 50 years since Limboo language has been taught in Sikkim and of how it was now taught up to the University level.

Further, appealing to all stakeholders to work in earnest for the construction of the Limboo Study Center in West Sikkim which has been delayed for a long time, the CM highlighted that such centres would help preserve the culture and heritage of the community for future generations.

The CM also delved on the LT seat issue in his address and contended that "everything was now ready" for the two

communities to get seat reservation and that all that is now awaited is for it to be brought to the Union Cabinet and then the Parliament.

The Chief Minister also informed that a new rule which will be drafted under which land belonging to the Limboo-Tamang communities will not be protected against alienation to other communities.

Congratulating the respected writer on his Padma Shri, the CM remarked that such awards were important for the emotional integration of the Sikkimese people to the Indian Union.

Mr Muringla, in turn, while thanking the government, briefed the audience about his own journey in literature.

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Sushil Ghaley shoots Gold at Kumar Surendra Singh Shooting c'ship

**SAURABH RAI
SILIGURI, 30 JUL:**

Darjeeling born international shooter, Sushil Ghaley has added another feather to his decorated career as he shot his way to a Gold medal at the recently concluded 17th Kumar Surendra Singh Shooting Championship held in New Delhi on Saturday. He had participated in his favorite event - 50 Meters Rifle Prone. Sushil was representing the Indian Army team.

Sanjeev Rajput (Haryana) and Swapnil Kushale (Railways) won Silver and Bronze medals respectively. The championship was held at Dr Karni Singh Shooting Range.

"I am really happy with my performance in the championship. There is a trial on 07 and 08 Aug and this performance will help me do well. In

October the selection for Commonwealth Shooting Championship will be done considering the performance in this event," said Ghaley.

He added that he needs the blessings of his people to go on and win a berth and then a medal at the Commonwealth Shooting Championship.

Sushil is a seven-time national champion in 50 meters rifle and has around 15 international medals and over 100 national level medals to his name. He has held the national record for three times in his career so far.

A person who had no idea about shooting as a sport while growing up in Darjeeling was introduced to it after joining the 2/1 Gorkha Regiment and now he has become one of the most notable shooters in the country in his category.

Mehbooba welcomes Dalai Lama to Leh

Leh (J&K), Jul 30 (PTI): Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti today welcomed Tibetan spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, who is currently on a visit to Leh in connection with an annual Buddhist festival.

At gathering here, the chief minister highlighted the pluralistic ethos of Jammu and Kashmir and described it as the abode of different faiths and cultures.

She said people living in amity and brotherhood is the hallmark of the state and underlined the need for strengthening the bonds among various sections of the society.

Mehbooba praised the Dalai Lama for his recent statement criticising those who labeled Muslims as terrorists.

She said the statement from the "towering personality" was the need of the hour and hoped he would continue to visit the state in future and bless its people.

The Chief Minister also said it is her government's intention to attract more tourists to Ladakh.

She said she has proposed to have the annual Kailash Mansarovar Yatra move through Leh, which would increase the tourist footfall in the region by a great measure.

The Dalai Lama in his address expressed gratitude to the chief minister for her visit.

He said he believes that she can get the state out of its difficulties with her sincerity, dedication and zeal.

Organic Haat begins in Mangan

**SUMMIT REPORT
MANGAN, 30 JULY:**

A weekly 'Organic Haat' got underway from today onwards here at the Mangan Lall Bazaar as part of the Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana, with assistance from Ringhim-Nampatam ward panchayat, zilla members, organic farmers club and District Horticulture Department. As part of this initiative, organic produce from all over the district will be available for sale at the haat every Sunday.

The 'haat' has been started under the Sikkim Organic Mission by the farmers of SAGY initiative of the State Government.

The district administration has requested other GPUs to participate in the haat. The administration has assured to provide farmers with adequate space to sell their produce at the bazaar.



Maniram-Bhanjyang PHSC, Daragaon ICDS and Lingmoo Sr Sec School adjudged best in South district

NAMCHI, 30 JUL (IPR): South District Administration, through a press release issued today, has announced the winners of Best Primary Health Sub Center (PHSC), Best Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Center and Best School to be felicitated on 15 Aug at the 71st Independence Day celebration in Namchi.

Under the guidance of South District Collector, Raj Yadav, the selection committee members have been visiting and inspect-

ing schools, PHSCs and ICDS centers for proper evaluation.

Among the 21 nominations received for the Best PHSC award from various Block Development Officers and Medical Officers at Block Administrative Center level, the selection committee has picked Maniram-Bhanjyang PHSC in Namchi, Lingmoo PHSC in Yangang and Tingley PHSC in Tokal-Bermiok as the top three PHSCs of the district.

The PHSCs will receive ci-

tation and cash prize of Rs 20,000, Rs 15,000 and Rs 10,000 respectively.

In the Best ICDS centers category, Daragaon ICDS in Jorethang, Lower Samrok ICDS in Yangang and Panchgharey ICDS in Melli were selected to be the top three ICDS centers of the district. They will also receive citation and cash prize of Rs 20,000, Rs 15,000 and Rs 10,000 respectively.

Lastly, the selection committee decided to name Lingmoo Se-

nior Secondary School as the best school of the district followed by Phong Secondary School and Temi Senior Secondary School in the second and third position. The schools will be provided with citation and cash prize of Rs 31,000, Rs 21,000 and Rs 11,000 respectively.

The prize winners of the Best Junior High School and Best Primary School Award will be announced soon after the verification process is completed by the concerned team.

Nim Dorjee, a bundle of emotion as he preps for ISL debut



**REBYNA RANA
GANGTOK, 30 JUL:**

The upcoming fourth season of the Indian Super League is all set to witness the spectacular debut (in the tournament) of Sikkim-born defender, Nim Dorjee Tamang who has been recently signed by FC Pune City to play in the fourth season of the popular franchise league, Indian Super League 2017.

"I am very excited as well as nervous. I have been waiting my entire career for an opportunity like this, and finally when the moment has arrived, I am having all sorts of emotions all at once. I am happy, excited,

and nervous and at the same time pumped up about this," shares Nim Dorjee.

When asked about whether he had seen it coming, he says that he had a 'feeling' that it would happen this season.

"After my I-League performance I think I hit the right chord. There was appreciation pouring in from everywhere but to be signed to represent a hugely respected club as this is phenomenal," the pumped up defender adds.

Nim Dorjee has come a long way since his debut I-League appearance for Lajong FC in 2015 against Royal Wahingdoh. In to-

tal, Nim Dorjee has won 37 I-League caps and the last few matches have seen the youngster lead the team as captain, winning several games and establishing a stellar record.

The 2017/18 Indian Super League season is the fourth season of the popular franchise league since its establishment in 2014. Bengaluru FC and Jamshedpur FC are the new teams that have joined the league in its expansion. This makes it the first edition of the ISL where more than eight teams will be participating.

ISL is schedule to kick off on 01 Oct.

Clashes in Jaigaon between Gorkhaland supporters, police

DARJEELING/ALIPURDUAR (WB), JUL 30 (PTI): Clashes between the police and Gorkhaland supporters today resulted in injuries to several persons on both sides at Jaigaon in Alipurduar district, bordering Bhutan.

The Gorkha Janmukti Morcha (GJM) and the

other hill parties took out a rally at Jaigaon on the 46th day of an indefinite strike called by the GJM in the hills.

According to the police, clashes broke out between the securitymen and the Gorkhaland supporters after the participants in the rally, car-

turn to pg03

RBI likely to cut rate on Aug 2 as inflation hits record low

NEW DELHI, JUL 30 (PTI): With retail inflation receding to record low levels, the Reserve Bank is likely to cut the benchmark lending rate by at least 0.25 per cent in its third bi-monthly monetary policy review on Wednesday, say experts and bankers.

Encouraged by significant price improvement, bankers expect RBI, which has kept rates on hold at 6.25 per cent for the fourth straight time citing risk to inflation, to change its monetary stance and may even go for an aggressive rate cut. "The expectation is of rate cut of a minimum 25 basis points as inflation has eased and also as industrial growth continues to remain weak. A rate cut will give a push to credit growth which has been sluggish from last many quarters," Bank of Maharashtra Managing Director R P Marathe said.

Echoing similar views, Indian Bank Managing Director Kishor Kharat said there is an expectation that there could be 0.25 per cent rate cut by RBI this time.

The RBI may not touch Cash Reserve Ratio or Statutory Liquidity Ratio as there is adequate liquidity in the market, Kharat added.

The six-member monetary policy committee (MPC) of the RBI headed by RBI Governor Urjit Patel will announce the outcome of the meeting on August 2 afternoon. According to HDFC Bank Managing Director Aditya Puri, there is always a case, but there are a number of members on the committee who will examine it.

"Yes, inflation has come down, but will it remain at this level? We all know that given the base effect change, it will go up to some extent. Is there still a case for a decline in interest rates? I think most people think so. What will happen, I do not have a clue," Puri said.



Mangalbaria Senior Secondary wins West Sikkim leg of STNM@100 quiz competition

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 30 JUL:

Continuing the district wise inter-school quiz competitions as part of the centenary celebrations of Sir Thutob Namgyal Memorial Hospital, the hospital organized a quiz contest at Gyalshing Community Hall on 29 July for West district, a press release informs.

17 senior secondary schools from the district participated

in the competition of whom six made it to the final round.

Soreng Senior Secondary School, Pelling Senior Secondary School, Dentam Senior Secondary School, Mangalbaria Senior Secondary School, Sakyong Senior Secondary School and Tharpu Senior Secondary School competed to win the competition and represent the district at the State-level quiz competition.

Mangalbaria Senior Secondary clinched the first place in the finals in the last tie breaker question, while Tharpu Senior Secondary School and Soreng Senior Secondary School took the second and third places respectively.

Yangthang MLA, Chandra Maya Subba, who attended the event as the chief guest, in her address, appreciated the efforts of the organizers and congratulated the hospital administration

on completing 100 years of providing healthcare to the state.

The hospital has been organizing district level quiz competitions over the last few weeks. Mangan Senior Secondary School and Holy Cross School will be representing North and East districts respectively at the finals. Mangalbaria Senior Secondary School on the other hand will represent West district.



DIG-ITBP visits Pegong camp

SUMMIT REPORT

CHUNGTHANG, 30 JUL: Deputy Inspector General of Indo Tibetan Border Police, Dinesh Kumar Yadav, paid a visit to the 11th Battalion camp at Pegong near Chungthang

in North Sikkim on 29 July.

During his visit, the DIG interacted with the officers and unit personnel and passed directions for better operation of the camp.

DIG Yadav, along with Camp Com-

mander Rajesh Kumar Tomar, met with the troops and distributed sweets. He then congratulated the troops for their service and wished them a bright future in the ITBP force.

Badminton tourney concludes in Pelling



GYALSHING, 30 JUL [IPR]: The final day of the 1st Kanchanjunga Open Badminton Tournament was played today at the Indoor Sports Hall of Pelling Senior Secondary School. Organised by the Pandim Shuttlers in association with the Pelling Government SSS alumni, the tournament had begun on 28 July.

The tournament received the participation of different associations and clubs like Gangtok Badminton Club, Badminton Association of Namchi, Badminton Association of Jorethang, Badminton Association of Geyzing, Badminton

Association of Soreng, Badminton Association of Rangpo, Badminton Association of Gangtok, Young Shuttlers of Sikkim, Darap Club, Badminton Association of Sombaria, Hee-Yangthang Club, Yuksam Club, Kechuperi Club, Rongli, Ravangla, Mangalbaria and the host team Pandim Shuttlers.

A total of 186 participants competed in 12 categories.

Health Minister AK Ghatani was present as chief guest today accompanied by Parliamentary Secretary Sonam Dadul Bhutia as a guest of honour.

Sikkim felicitates BB Muringla on Padma Shri conferment

contd from pg01

He informed that Limboo language was introduced as an optional language in Sikkim schools in 1966, fifty-one years ago.

He admitted that some concerns about the continuation of the same came up with the merger, and added: "However now the language is taught in university".

He credited the government for its efforts towards conservation and preservation of the language. He also stressed that no community can flourish in isolation and hence there should be convergence and cooperation from all.

He further appealed the young to not be dependent upon the gov-

ernment and start pursuing their interests.

Minister RB Subba also addressed the felicitation programme.

MLA and chairperson of the felicitation committee, Chandra Maya Subba, while delivering her welcome address, held up Mr BB Muringla as a source of constant inspiration for all and also thanked the State government for recommending such names for prestigious civilian awards of the country.

The program was also attended by the Deputy Speaker, Cabinet Ministers, MLAs, Advisors, Chairpersons, bureaucrats, other Padma Shri winners from the state, teachers and students.



KYI-DE-KHANG HOSTS FLIGHT TO FANTASY COMPTT

GANGTOK, 30 JUL: The Interact Club of Kyi-de-Khang Secondary School organised an interschool competition, 'Flight to Fantasy', on Saturday. Around 300 students from 12 schools from in and around the capital participated in the event which included competitions in group singing, quizzing and painting. The club has thanked everyone for supported in the success of the event.

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Gangtok on Monday, 31 July
 Temp: 27°C / 18°C
 Forecast: Rather cloudy; a thunder-shower in spots in the evening followed by a couple of thunder showers late.
 Sunrise: 04:58 AM
 Sunset: 06:25 PM

Bojoghari Interactors celebrate completion of Summer Service Drive

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 30 JUL:
 Interact Club of Bojoghari held a felicitation and installation program today at Infinity Cafe, Tadong with Rotary Club of Gangtok's Dr RN Deokota as the chief guest, a press release informs. The programme was also attended by Dr Reenu Verma and the members of Interact Club of Gangtok.

The felicitation programme was held to honor the club members who had participated in the club's Summer Service Drive held in June and July this year.

The service drive was held to educate the unlettered elderly of Gangtok.

During the drive period, the members gathered a group of elderly and engaged them in various activities from social to learning skills.

Dr Deokota in his address congratulated the interactors of Bojoghari for successfully planning the service drive and executing them with dedication.

HAVE A STORY TO SHARE?

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A Sunday of Unity Marches for Gorkhaland

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 30 JUL:

Gangtok today joined the 'Global Gorkhaland Unity March' in the support of the demand for a separate state of Gorkhaland. Similarly marches were coordinated across the globe today wherever Gorkhas are residing, and in Gangtok, the initiative was co-ordinated by Ganatantrik Janandolan Samarthan Samiti.

The march started off from Titanic Park to Hospital Dara and concluded at the Fish Pond area near Paljor Stadium.

Representatives of different political parties and social organisations and lay Gorkhaland supporters joined the march carrying placards and banners of support.

Also today in Gangtok, a procession on the same theme was taken out by the Sikkim branch of the Gorkha Janmukti Morcha from 5th Mile and walked along NH-10 and concluded at Zero Point.

Later in the evening, Sikkim University students took out a unity march from Titanic Park to Bhanu Park.

Similar marches were taken out at other parts of the State as well in the support of the Gorkhaland demand.



Leadership development and public speaking training in Dzongu

WANGCHUK BHUTIA
DIKCHU, 30 JUL:

The five-day long training on Leadership Development and Public Speaking concluded today at Tingvong in Upper Dzongu, North Sikkim.

The training was organized by the State Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Rural Management & Development Department and had begun on 24 Jul. The valedictory func-

tion had Deputy Speaker Sonam Gyatso Lepcha, who is also the area MLA, present as the chief guest accompanied by Sub Divisional Magistrate, Tshering Dorjee Lepcha, Block Development Offi-

cer, KR Limbo, along with the panchayats and local residents. 55 women attended the training. The chief guest in his address spoke about women's empower-

ment and the opportunities provided by the government for women in Sikkim. He further urged all the trainees to make good use of the knowledge gained at the training.

Mega electronic system design & manufacturing cluster in Assam

GUWAHATI, JUL 30 (PTI): The Centre today announced to set up a 220-acre mega electronic systems design and manufacturing cluster in Assam.

According to an official release, Union Information Technology Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad announced to introduce a slew of measures within next few months in the state to boost digital expansion in Assam.

During a discussion with Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal, Prasad advocated a mega vision for inclusion of North-east in digital movement of the country and informed that the IT Ministry is in the process of launching North East Digital Vision - 2022.

A roadmap for this vision will be prepared by the Central Ministry in consultation with the state governments and other stakeholders, the Union Minister said.

Stating that North-east is a priority, Prasad said: "The Ministry of Electronics & IT, Government of India, will set up a comprehensive mega Electronic Systems Design & Manufacturing cluster as one stop destination for IT and manufacturing industries investing in Assam.

"This cluster would be set up in Guwahati at a sprawling campus spanning around 200 acres, for which land would be provided by the Assam Government.

"The Union Minister requested the state government to submit a structured proposal to Government of India in this regard," the statement said.

Besides, the Union IT Ministry will lend its support in making the State Data Centre functional within next four months, the minister informed.

Prasad also announced starting e-hospital project in major hospitals in Assam -- three in Guwahati and one each in Dibrugarh, Silchar, Barpeta, Tezpur and Jorhat.

For creating new job opportunities, three call centres will be set up -- one each in Nagaon, Jorhat and Majuli.

Extolling the vast potential of Assam and North-east in the BPO sector, Prasad requested Assam Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal to hold a conference of IT professionals for a collective move in this regard.

The IT minister announced that Government of India will cover all the uncovered gaon panchayats by expanding the network of Common Service Centres in a bid to strengthen the movement of digital delivery of government services.

Moreover, Prasad informed that to boost cyber security initiatives, the IT ministry would extend technical support for setting up Mobile Forensic Laboratory in Assam and train 1,000 more police personnel on cyber security.

Prasad, who is also the Union Law Minister, said the Centre will introduce 'Nyai Mitra' (Friend of Justice) in 17 districts of Assam, where many cases are pending for a period of 10 years and above, to help in the priority disposal of cases and reducing pendency.



Clashes in Jaigaon between Gorkhaland supporters..

contd from pg01

rying khukuris hurled stones and petrol bombs at the police personnel.

The police tried to convince the GJM supporters to refrain from attacking, but the agitators remained defiant and broke the first two barricades. They kept hurling stones at the police, who then resorted to using water cannons and firing tear gas shells, besides using batons to disperse the crowd.

At this, the protesters turned violent and set a few vehicles, including those of the police,

afire.

Several police personnel and Gorkhaland supporters were injured in the clashes, the police said.

The GJM claimed that the police resorted to indiscriminate firing. The police, however, denied the allegation.

Similar processions were taken out at Kalchini.

GJM supporters took out rallies at the Chowkbazar area of the hills, carrying black flags as a mark of protest against police action on Gorkhaland supporters.

Shouting slogans against the

West Bengal government, they demanded an immediate intervention by the Centre.

A pro-Gorkhaland rally had tried to enter Siliguri yesterday, demanding that the town be included into the separate state of Gorkhaland.

Meanwhile, in the Naxalbari area of Darjeeling, the locals took out a rally against the GJM and their demand for Gorkhaland and set tyres on fire as a mark of protest against the ongoing agitation in the hills.

In the Sukna area of the hills, which is close to Siliguri, the rul-

ing Trinamool Congress (TMC) in the state took out an anti-GJM rally.

The GJM and the other hill parties held an 'Anna Dan' (rice donation) rally during the day as a mark of protest against vehicles, carrying food supplies to the hills, being stopped in Siliguri.

Each participant in the rally carried a handful of rice and other grains and donated it in a box, which will be handed over to the district administration and, in turn, will be sent to the West Bengal secretariat as a mark of protest.

Kalimpong joins Global Gorkhaland Unity March

SUMMIT REPORT
KALIMPONG, 30 JUL:

Gorkhaland supporters in 150 cities across the world marched today in the "Global Gorkhaland Unity Rally" as an expression of solidarity to the Gorkhaland demand. In Kalimpong, this rally started from Dambar Chowk, circled around from 10th Mile and concluded with a sombre programme

organised by the volunteers at Motor Stand.

The rally included a contingent marching under the 'Kalimpong Bangali Sampradai' banner.

Pahal, a unit formed by Kalimpong-based artists, presented a skit at motor stand themed around what they perceive as 'the reality of government's policy.'

Northeast Career Guide
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GENERAL ENGLISH 85M	GENERAL AWARENESS 35M	BASIC COMPUTER KNOWLEDGE 15M	VIVA! 15M
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Indifference Imperils the Future

A society that does not engage will not get responsible citizens in the future

If police investigation into the recent attempted murder of a Gangtok businessman is close to the truth, then the two "local" youth were "hired" to carry out the hit for as little as Rs 2 lakhs. This is a worrying development; perhaps the first recorded attempt at "supari" killing in the State. And no, it cannot be blamed on outsiders or outside influences alone. This is born from homegrown conditions.

That, Sikkim has by and large failed in its responsibilities towards its young is no secret. Sure, it provides the schools and the occasional teachers, sometimes even trained and inspired ones, and the textbooks and the uniforms; in fact, it is actually quite good at acquiring the tangibles, things that can be billed and procured. It is in the intangibles that the babus and the leaders falter. The empathy required to prioritise children over work orders remains in short supply. When schools spend their entire academic sessions without the required staff-strength, students see themselves stuck in a dead-end school. To them, teachers do not want to report to a "punishment posting". What sense of belonging can be expected from someone who went through his/her entire schooling without a happy, fully staffed staff-room? We make too many demands from the young when we expect them to show up smart and excited to schools which, apart from missing teachers, also house disgustingly filthy toilets, no water in the taps and classrooms which are hot in summers, noisy in monsoons and freezing in winters. And then we wonder why substances of abuse are becoming popular among the young. But what the young must also be wondering is how the society remains so oblivious to their condition. It must initially bother them that societal indifference continues even though the very young are acquiring addictions, even though years too young to have acquired any real sorrows are ending at self-tied nooses, even though their parks and playgrounds are being requisitioned for site allotments, "development", roads and/or factories and no safe places are being created for them.

The initial botheration will eventually harden into despondence, and from that is born a general disregard for the immediate community, then societal norms and then the state or any sense of service. How can a generation groomed in an environment lacking interest or concern be expected to deliver "responsible citizens"? When a society refuses to engage, the young grow up not only selfish, but also hostile, and while in most cases they will become antisocial, in worst-case scenarios they will end up criminally antisocial. Several self-serving politicians have cried wolf that growing unemployment and lack of engagement will lead to a "Kashmir-like" situation in Sikkim in the future. That is unlikely to happen because extremism requires a very strong sense of belonging and deep commitment to ideology. We are not grooming the young on those lines. Instead, the detached disdain that is being projected and instilled makes them easy putty for criminal deviations. Warning signs are aplenty to suggest that this is a possible trajectory that many are finding easy to take. This has become a very clear and present danger, and before it becomes a full blown law & order issue, a societal reboot should be attempted, priorities rewired and a future rescued.

Premchand still alive: Anniversary to mark relevance

TRISHA MUKHERJEE

NEW DELHI, JUL 30 (PTI): Munshi Premchand's Hori was not very different from Mariya Barela, a 50-year-old farmer from Madhya Pradesh. Hori, the peasant protagonist from the Hindi writer's widely read novel 'Godaan', died grappling a burden of debt, like the MP farmer, who took his life last month besieged by loans he could not repay.

On the occasion of the much-loved author's 137th birth anniversary tomorrow, Premchand aficionados recall how the themes of his work, as traditional as they were contemporary, continue to resonate 80 years after his death.

"Premchand will be relevant as long as human attitude, which is universal, remains the same," said Jameel Gulrays, founder of Katha

Katha, an initiative that seeks to celebrate regional literature.

To mark the anniversary, the organisation will host dramatised readings of his works here.

One of the foremost Hindustani writers of the early 20th century, Premchand authored over 300 short stories, 14 novels and several essays, letters and plays.

Highly influenced by Rabindranath Tagore, who underscored the common man, Premchand took the tradition forward by turning what could have been support-

ing characters into heroes. Every story that he wrote was a reflection of society, and researchers hold that his characters were all based on people he had met.

His stories such as 'Bair



turn to pg05

The healing power of hip hop

ALEXANDER CROOKE & RAPHAEL TRAVIS JR.
theconversation.com

Last year, New York's then police commissioner William Bratton was quick to blame rap music and the culture around it for a fatal backstage shooting at a concert by the rapper T.I. Ignoring wider issues of gun control, Bratton pointed at "the crazy world of the so-called rap artists" that "basically celebrates the violence".

Hip Hop culture and rap (a method of vocal delivery popularised through hip hop music) have for more than four decades been bundled with a range of negative connotations, leading many like Bratton to equate them only with profanity, misogyny, violence and crime. Prosecutors in the US have labelled rap lyrics a criminal threat, and numerous studies have been undertaken on the harmful influence of hip hop on kids.

There's no denying that the lyrical content of hip hop is confronting, and in many instances, it includes the glorification of violence, substance use, and gender discrimination. But while many people struggle to look past the profanity, materialism, and high-risk messages often celebrated within mainstream rap music, hip hop culture at its core, is built on values of social justice, peace, respect, self-worth, community, and having fun. And because of these values, it's increasingly being used as a therapeutic tool when working with young people.

School counsellors, psychologists, and social workers have helped to normalise the option of integrating hip hop within mental health strategies. Indeed it has become central to the work of one group of psychiatrists at Cambridge University, who under the banner of "hip hop psych", use it as a tool in promoting mental health. Some have even called rap "the perfect form for music therapy."

Born in New York City, hip hop culture is now a worldwide phenomenon. You'd be hard-pressed to find any country that doesn't have some kind of hip hop scene. This new reality is driven by two factors. One is the commercialisation of the culture as a commodity, which has made it one of the most influential industries in the world with its own Forbes rich list.

The other is that hip hop remains accessible and grassroots. At its simplest, you can make a beat with your mouth - beatboxing - or on a school desk, and create or recite lyrics about

anything without singing. The proliferation of cost-friendly, music-creating software and hardware puts more involved participation in reach, and allows flexibility in creativity and even pathways to entrepreneurship.

Marginalised communities the world over resonate with the ethos of resisting exclusion or discrimination and fighting for equity and justice. Others just love the beats and lyrical flow. Beyond beats and rhymes, there's also something for everyone: B-Girls and B-Boys dance, DJ's scratch and mix, and graffiti artists draw and write. Combined with emceeing, or rapping, these are the four basic elements of hip hop, with the fifth being Knowledge of Self: the drive for self-awareness and social-consciousness.

This accessibility and inclusivity makes hip hop such an effective therapeutic tool for working with young people. It's a style most feel comfortable with and it provides a way to build rapport between client and therapist. The lyrical content is a vehicle for building self reflection, learning, and growth. Whether analysing existing songs, or creating new content, the vast array of themes found in hip-hop songs enable therapists to access topics that may otherwise be hard to talk about.

The repetitive, predictable nature of hip hop beats is also said to provide a sense of safety, particularly during song writing, and lyrical and musical improvisation. Therapists suggest this provides a sense of dependability for those with little regularity or safety in their everyday lives; something supported by research linking music engagement and self-regulation.

In his US-based research, Dr Travis has shown that, despite negative associations, many who listen to hip hop find it a strong source of both self and community empowerment. More specifically, the benefits to individual mental health, in areas of coping, emotions, identity and personal growth, can help promote resilience in communities.

In Australian school settings, Dr Crooke has found hip hop to be a positive way for students of diverse backgrounds to engage with their wider community, learning tasks, and schools more generally. In a recent (yet to be published) study, he also explored the benefits of a short-term intensive hip hop and beat making program for young peo-

ple labelled oppositional, seriously disengaged or at-risk of exclusion.

Results showed students were not only highly engaged in learning through the program, but exhibited positive self-expression, built significant rapport with facilitators, and strengthened social connection amongst each other.

EXPRESSING YOURSELF

Hip hop emerged as a reaction to the gang culture and violence of the South Bronx in the 1970s, and daily experiences of poverty, racism, exclusion, crime, violence, and neglect. It necessarily embodies and values resilience, understanding, community and social justice.

Yet, the hip hop project is not yet free from these difficult circumstances. Many communities around the world still battle the effects of discrimination, segregation, and injustice. Hip hop is often a potent voice to these lived experiences. One of its original, primary strengths was that it allowed young, creative Black and Latino youth to create art that reflected the reality of their lives, of the neighbourhoods around them, and of the wider social circumstances in which they found themselves. In the words of US artists N.W.A. they were making the most out of their basic human right to "Express Yourself."

We may be several decades on, but there are plenty of young people that still need to do the same.

Hip hop is neither a panacea nor a cure all. It is not perfect, but its promise is undeniable. It is a culture with complicated social and historical roots. And it should not be appropriated without acknowledging, respecting and addressing these, because it is precisely these origins that make it so important. Its complicated history enables us to critically reflect on our society, and forces us to face issues of race, privilege, class, and cultural appropriation.

Given the urgency of our need for equity, justice, tolerance and critical civic engagement in today's society, we need to challenge our preconceptions about hip hop culture. It is perhaps one of the most important and generous movements in our world today.

[Alexander Crooke is Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Music Therapy, University of Melbourne; Raphael Travis Jr. is Associate Professor of Social Work, Texas State University]

As Thailand restricts internet freedom, cyber activists work to keep an open web

JANJIRA SOMBATPOONSIRI
theconversation.com

On June 9 2017, a Thai man was sentenced to 35 years in jail for sharing Facebook posts. The crime: he allegedly defamed the king.

This harsh sentence is just one example of Thailand's increasing repression in the digital sphere. Since the 2014 coup, the Thai military junta has taken a hard stance toward online critics and dissidence.

In May, authorities threatened to shut down Facebook if the company failed to remove content deemed "inappropriate". Facebook, which did not comply, has not been shut down. At least, not yet.

CYBER REPRESSION IN THAILAND Thailand's cyber repression seems to be linked to its troubled history of military coups.

At the advent of the 2006 military coup, the Computer Crime Act was passed, authorising state agencies to block internet content deemed a threat to national security. It encouraged "netizens" (web users, many of them young) to monitor and report transgressive internet behaviours.

This early effort emerged from alarm about the fact that the country's two main factions, the red shirts and the yellow shirts, had taken their fight to cyberspace, with the red shirts vocally opposing the coup and questioning the country's monarchy.

Internet control increased tremendously after the May 2014 coup, staged to facilitate royal secession and preserve elite status quo in Thailand.

Hundreds of websites were blocked during May 2014 alone, and working groups were set up to monitor and analyse internet content.

This heightened control was accompanied by a dramatic increase in *lèse majesté* charges against critics, dissidents and ordinary citizens. Non-criminal acts such as sharing or "liking" a Facebook post or chat message that insulted the monarchy became punishable by long jail sentences. And in 2015, the Single Gateway

proposal sought to monitor internet content by reducing the existing 12 internet gateways to a single, state-controlled portal.

THE SINGLE GATEWAY POLICY UNDER ATTACK

Against these continuing encroachments on digital privacy, Thai pro-democracy activists and civic groups have waged a courageous battle.

Opposition to the Single Gateway plan cleverly centred not on digital rights and freedom of expression (though those concerns were evident in the debate), but on more universal issues, such as e-commerce and the economy.

Some business groups, concerned that the proposal would slow internet connectivity in Thailand, raised alarm that the Single Gateway would discourage foreign investment in the country. Ordinary people, too, resented the attempt to limit internet access.

Thailand's internet-penetration rate is 42%, and over 29 million citizens go online for entertainment, communication, public transport and food delivery. Online game players and techies were worried that the policy would affect the speed of online games and expose their personal data.

Amid these diverse concerns, three forms of activism emerged.

The Internet Foundation for the Development of Thailand and the Thai Netizen Network created a Change.org petition online to gather signatures against Single Gateway, providing information to citizens about the effects of the proposed legislation.

Alternative discussion forums also cropped up on Facebook and elsewhere. In groups like The Single Gateway: Thailand Internet Firewall, Anti Single Gateway, and OpSingle-Gateway, people from across Thai society braved criminalisation to join the debate on internet control.

An anonymous group calling itself the Thailand F5 Cyber Army utilised a so-called "distributed denial of services" (DDoS) system to wage cyber war on the Thai government. It demanded that the junta completely

cancel its Single Gateway policy.

They encouraged netizens to visit official websites (among them the Ministry of Defense, the National Legislative Assembly and the Internal Security Operation Centre) and to repeatedly press the F5 key, which causes the webpage to refresh constantly, overwhelming servers.

The attacks caused many government web pages to shut down temporarily, in part because the sites were technologically outdated.

Coupled with other forms of resistance, this virtual civil disobedience worked. On October 15 2015, the junta announced that it had scrapped the plan.

THE COMPUTER CRIME ACT CAMPAIGN

But the victory was short-lived. In April 2016, the junta proposed to modify the 2007 Computer Crime Act to better tackle cyber threats to national security, claiming it would help develop Thailand's digital economy.

Activists again geared up for a fight. This time, given the law-and-order frame of the proposed amendment, public criticism of it took a different shape.

The business sector abandoned its concern over the economic effects of internet control to focus on the proposed law's broad threat of legal sanction against violators, anticipating that fear would lead to self-censorship online.

Netizens used online forums to discuss the impacts of the cyber law, including the fact that it was gearing toward increasing sentences against loosely-defined cyber law "offenders", whose crimes could merely be sharing a Facebook post deemed a threat to the nation's moral integrity or considered distorted information.

Rights groups such as iLaw and Thai Network of Netizens took to Twitter and engaged with progressive online magazines to raise public awareness of the issue. They also worked with environmental activists who had already experienced local authorities' abuse of the Computer

Crime Act.

Meanwhile, the F5 Cyber Army continued its attacks on government websites, providing manuals so ordinary citizens could wage cyberwar. And an online petition, which received more than 300,000 signatures, was submitted to members of the National Legislative Assembly.

This time, though, popular discontent went unheeded. On December 16 2016, the revised Computer Crime Act passed in the Assembly.

CYBER ACTIVISM AND POLITICAL MESSAGES

There are lessons to be learned from the very different outcomes of these two similar campaigns against internet regulation.

Opposition to the Single Gateway plan concentrated on its likelihood to slow internet speed. The consequences for the economy and everyday conveniences were obvious, even to apolitical citizens and junta sympathisers.

This was a critical breakthrough, because these are vulnerable policy areas for the junta. Thailand's military leadership derives its legitimacy partly from Bangkok's middle class, whose livelihood and everyday convenience depends on the country's continued economic growth and global connection.

The junta had more success in its second attempt to limit internet freedom by changing its framing of the issue. By invoking a law-and-order rationale, which has constituted the junta's source of legitimacy since its seizure of power, the government could argue that the impact of the proposed law would be finely honed: only "wrongdoers", not regular netizens, would be punished.

This sleight of hand ultimately enabled the government to criminalise an array of online activities, handing privacy-rights advocates a major defeat. Next time the junta seeks to obfuscate its agenda with a law-and-order rhetoric, Thai activists will be better prepared.

[The writer is Assistant Professor, Thammasat University]

Cong parades MLAs, alleges BJP bid to poach them

BENGALURU, JUL 30 (PTI): The Congress today paraded all its legislators from Gujarat, who have been lodged in a resort near here, before the media, in an effort to quell speculation of dissension in the party ranks.

Congress spokesperson Shaktisinh Gohil claimed the BJP tried to "buy" 22 of its MLAs by offering Rs 15 crore for cross-voting during the elections to Rajya Sabha from Gujarat, to be held on August 8.

"Our legislators have not come here to enjoy. We brought them here to save democracy as they were being poached by BJP, using money and muscle power," Gohil told reporters at the resort, as 44 Gujarat MLAs sat behind him.

Of the initial strength of 57 in Gujarat, six MLAs resigned from the party in the last two days. Three of them joined the BJP on July 28.

Seven other MLAs are not part of the group in the resort near Bengaluru but Gohil hoped they would listen to their "inner voice" and not vote against the Congress.

Tourist inflow to Meghalaya has doubled in last 10-years

SHILLONG, JULY 30 (PTI): Tourists inflow to Meghalaya has doubled in the past 10-years and the number is increasing at a rapid rate, officials said.

The primary reason for this increase was the improved internal security within the state and the free publicity of the exotic and pristine spots on social networks and in the public domain, they said.

Tourist inflow, both domestic and international, has increased from 4.04 lakh in 2006 to 8.39 lakh till last year, according to statistics from the Tourism department.

In 2006, a little over 4 lakh domestic tourists visited the state while in 2016, there were 8.3 lakh domestic footfalls whereas during the same period, the foreign tourist visits has increased from a little over four



thousand to nearly 8500 footfalls till December last year.

There was a steady increase of about 50,000 more footfalls every year and going by the current rate, the number of tourists visiting the state will double in the next 7-8 years.

The state government has

also increased investment under the Tourism mission and implemented several schemes, which include construction of tourist lodges, guest houses, roadside amenities and restaurants to promote tourism, according to Chief Minister Mukul Sangma

With the inflow increas-

ing, management experts warned that it could cause serious damage on fragile ecological spots like the double-decked rootbridges in Sohra (erstwhile Cherrapunji), the sacred groves at Mawphlang (both in East Khasi Hills) or the limestone caves in East Jaintia Hills.

Sanjib Kakoty who teaches at the IIM-Shillong, said while inflow of tourists is good, preference should be given to attract quality tourists and not just quantity or the bulk visitors who could cause serious damage to the ecology of the area.

"The double-decked bridge or the sacred groves cannot take in certain number of people at a given time. Proper regulation of visitors by the concerned authorities is a must given the present conditions," he said.

In fact recently, there were massive traffic jams for over 30 km along the Guwahati - Shillong Sohra highway. This is particular witnessed during weekends when thousands of cars from neighbouring Assam flock the state.

Cautioning the 100 per cent increase of tourists inflow into

the state, founding chairman of the Meghalaya Tourism Development Forum and a former minister, R G Lyngdoh said, "Many things could go wrong if we depend management of tourism on the government. The public at large should take ownership and should look for solutions for itself."

"Village durbars should ensure proper management of a particular area and to also take stock of the ecology and to ensure that culture and local habits are intact," he said.

The tourist inflow has also witnessed an increase of beds even in far flung villages.

The state government has identified over 40 tourist spots and East Khasi Hills district, in which Sohra, the wettest place on earth is located, attracts the bulk of tourists, a senior government official said.

Gangtok group distributes essential supplies in Darj



**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 30 JUL:**

A group of businessmen from the capital comprising of printers and artists distributed essential food items at Dootharia Munshi Gaon Tea Estate in Darjeeling on Saturday.

The group distributed rice, wheat, sugar, pulses, refined oils, biscuits, noodles, juices, tooth pastes, soaps and other essential items.

The group has decided to visit the area again on 15 August with other

essential materials for further distribution to other remote parts of Darjeeling hills.

The group was led by Bishnu Dutraj of Friends Press and accompanied by Prasansha Press, Ramesh

Subba of Genesis Press, Samir Moktan of Printek Press, Phuchung Ghimirey of Aparna Press, Bhupen Lamichaney of Prism Press, Bijay Sunar of Pema Restaurant, artist, Timothy Rai and social worker, Subash Rai.

Bengal flood situation improves further, toll mounts to 34

KOLKATA, JUL 30 (PTI): The flood situation in West Bengal improved further today as water has started to recede in majority of the rivers in the worst-hit Howrah, Hooghly and West Midnapore districts.

The toll, however, rose to 34 since July 21 following the death three more persons in the state, officials said.

A senior official in the state's Disaster Management Department said that nearly 25 lakh people were affected at about 170 villages in 11 flood-hit districts.

The flood was mainly caused by heavy rains earlier this week, triggered by a huge low pressure trough, and water released by the Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC) through its dams along the course of the Damodar river in Bihar and Bengal.

Nearly 68,000 people have taken shelter in 221 relief camps set up in the flood-hit districts, he said, adding that the past few days, the upper catchment areas have received little rainfall.

West Bengal Irrigation Minister, Rajib Banerjee, told PTI that wa-

ter had started receding in majority of the rivers in the worst-hit Howrah, Hooghly and West Midnapore districts.

"The total release of water by the entire DVC system was 50,000 cusecs today. There is no report of any fresh inundation," he said, adding steps had been taken to distribute relief materials in the flood-hit areas.

He, however, struck a note of caution, saying that the situation might worsen anytime if it rained again and more water was consequently released by the DVC system.

"Many people have been rescued from affected areas like Ghatal in West Midnapore district, Pursura, Arambagh and Khanakool in Hooghly district and Amta and Udainarayanpur in Howrah district," he said.

Yesterday, an Indian Air Force helicopter was deployed to rescue flood-affected people at Ghatal in West Midnapore district, he said.

The state government is yet to estimate loss incurred by farmers as over 2.5 lakh hectares of agricultural land lies submerged.

Premchand still alive: Anniversary to mark relevance

Contd from pg04

ka Anth', 'Sadgati' and 'Bade Ghar ki Beti' -- explored subjects such as family disputes, relationships and the deeply entrenched caste system, issues that are as relevant today as they were when the works were penned.

Not surprisingly, director-actor M K Raina called Premchand an "Alive writer".

While his style of writing belonged to an earlier era, his themes were much ahead of his time, Raina said.

"His analysis of situations was almost as if a humanist and political scientist combined into one was looking at the situation in rural India," he told PTI.

Hori is considered one of the best literary representations of rural India, a recurrent theme in the writings of Premchand, whose real name was Dhanpat Rai.

"The sad part is that rural India is where it was," the theatre director said. "What has the Indian peasant got after Independence? Nothing. Farmers are still dying, committing suicide," he said.

Raina, who had previously adapted Premchand's 'Kafan' for a play, is currently working on a production where he is "juicing together" the much acclaimed story with a Kashmiri work, 'Kafan Chor', to create a "human predicament and experience".

But Mujeeb Khan of the Mumbai-based theatre group Ideal Drama and Entertainment Academy (IDEA) rues the popular practice of limiting the "Upanyas Samrat" -- or Novel King -- to

a handful of his better known writings.

"We know him as a dark writer, a rural writer. But little do people know that he talked about cleanliness in 'Udesh' long before the government came up with its Swachh Bharat Abhiyan. He was the one who preached that cleanliness should begin at home," Khan said.

He was also known for his comedy. "His 'Rasik Sampadak' is hilarious. So it is unfair to call Premchand an orthodox or a sad writer," Khan added.

Stories such as "Miss Padma" discussed live-in relationships, an issue that is still frowned upon in modern times. 'Jwalamukhi', written in 1914, introduced zombies to the Indian reader, years before Hollywood made its first film on the living dead in the 1950s.

"Had our filmmakers read Premchand, we would have probably been the first ones to make something on zombies," Khan added.

Khan and his theatre group have adapted 313 of Premchand's 315 short stories.

Besides his contribution to Hindi and Urdu literature, Raina also recalled the author's role in the Progressive Writers' Association. A speech in 1936, he said, marked a "poignant moment in India's literary history".

"What one must remember today is his message to keep the intellectual integrity of the creative class - writers and artists - together. When we are threatened, we must not cow down. Premchand was the bearer of that message," he said.

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India amass 24 medals at Jordan Open TT

AMMAN (JORDAN), JULY 30 (PTI): India bagged a rich haul of 24 medals, including seven gold, at the Jordan Junior and Cadet Open here.

India bagged seven gold medals, seven silver and 10 bronze to complete a sweep of sorts, making the trip to Amman successful.

But for Hsu p-Hsuan, who stopped the Indian surge, Payas Jain would have added one more to the gold tally but had to be satisfied with the silver after going down to the Taipei boy 4-11, 6-11, 6-11 in the cadet singles final.

Even the team title was denied to India in the cadet section when Payas, Yashansh Malik and Chinmaya Somaia found the going tough against Hsu Po-Hsuan, Lin Yen-Cun and Peng Chih who claimed team gold, leaving India the second best finishers.

However, the Indian girls, following the footsteps of the boys' team, ensured team title besides the hopes boys and hopes girls (cadet) adding to the golden kitty on the concluding day.

Payas overcame Iran's Mohammad Amin Samadi to win the boys singles title with a 11-5, 11-9, 12-10 triumph while Anargya Manjunath grabbed the singles crown when she scored a 11-7, 6-11, 11-5, 12-10 victory over Taipei's Cheng Pu-Syuan in a needle final contest.

Following their impressive junior boys crown, Jeet Chandra, Manush Shah and Parth-Virman, the A team India beat their counterparts in B 3-1 to finish 1-2 in that order.

Team B consisted of Snehit Suravajjala, Anukram Jain, Shivaji Roy and Mudit Dani.

Shiva, Manoj strike gold at Czech boxing tourney

NEW DELHI, JUL 30 (PTI): Indian boxers packed quite a heavy punch at the 48th Grand Prix Usti Nad Labem, clinching five gold, two silver and one bronze medal at the event in the Czech Republic.

World Championships bronze-medallist Shiva Thapa (60kg), former Commonwealth Games gold-medallist Manoj Kumar (69kg), Amit Phangal (52kg), Gaurav Bidhuri (56kg) and Satish Kumar (+91kg) claimed gold medals after winning their respective summit clashes last night.

Kavinder Bisht (52kg) and Manish Panwar (81kg), on the other hand, settled for silver medals. Earlier, Sumit



Sangwan (91kg) had claimed a bronze after going down in the semifinals.

Amit and Kavinder opened the proceedings for the country in an all-Indian final. Of the two, Amit is a light flyweight (49kg) boxer

but competed in the flyweight division in this event. He defeated Kavinder 3-2 to claim the top position.

Next up was Gaurav against Poland's Iwanow Jaroslaw and the Indian had no trouble notching up a 5-0 win.



Shiva, who recently won a silver medal at the Asian Championships, also clinched a dominant 5-0 victory over Slovakia's Filip Meszaros to record another morale-boosting triumph ahead of next month's World Champion-

ships in Hamburg, Germany.

Another Hamburg-bound boxer, Manoj, too claimed a 5-0 verdict against local favourite David Kotrc. However, Satish Kumar had to stave off a stiff challenge from German Max Keller for his gold.

Manish, on the other hand, lost to Germany's Ibragim Bazuev to settle for a silver medal.

The tournament marked the end of a fortnight-long training-cum-competition trip for the Indian boxers ahead of the world showpiece scheduled from August 25 to September 2.

Of the boxers competing in this tournament, Amit, Kavinder, Gaurav, Shiva, Manoj, Sumit and Satish will be competing in the World Championships.

The eighth Indian boxer in the fray at Hamburg will be Vikas Krishan (75kg) but he did not accompany the team on this trip, preferring to train in Pune.

500-year stepwell: secrets of love and conserving water

NIVEDITA SINGH GANDHINAGAR, JUL 30 (PTI): In these days of global water stress and the urgent need to harvest water, a 15th century stepwell in Gujarat offers some tips on how to conserve the precious resource.

Built in 1498, the Adalaj Ni Vav stepwell in Adalaj village in Gandhinagar district, about 10 km from here, can, in fact, be a lesson in architecture for the modern times.

The five-storey stepwell, made of locally available sandstone, has various small gullies and channels all around so that no water is spilled when a bucket is carried up. Any spillover is either directed back to the well or towards a garden nearby. This ensures that the water is used and not wasted.

"It is designed in such a way that not a single drop is wasted while one takes water from it. There are two ways to take water from this well - go down with steps and get the water or pull it up



with a rope pulley. Either way, the designer has ensured that water is not wasted," Bhailal, a local tour guide working in the area, told PTI.

Stepwells, also known as bawri or baoli in Hindi and vav in Gujarati, are found across the country and were constructed mainly to cope with seasonal fluctuations in wa-

ter availability.

The intricately carved Adalaj Ni Vav is special in other ways as well. It is also central in the love story of Mohammed Begha and Rani Roopba, carved on an inside wall in Sanskrit and Pali. It was a forbidden love, of a Muslim ruler for the Hindu wife of the local king.

"The area, then known as Dandai Desh, was ruled by Hindu ruler Rana Veer Singh of Vaghela dynasty. His kingdom was attacked by Mohammed Begda, a Muslim ruler of a neighbouring kingdom. Singh was killed in the attack and Begda wished to marry Singh's wife Rani Roopba," recounted archaeologist and museologist Sarveena Pathan.

"The queen agreed to marry Begda on the condition that he would complete the construction of the stepwell started by her husband. Deeply enamoured with the queen's beauty, Begda agreed. After the construction was completed, he again approached the queen. She inspected the structure, offered prayers and threw herself into the depths of the well," Pathan told PTI.

In keeping with the composite nature of the love legend, the structure has a unique blend of Hindu and Islamic art styles - started by a Hindu king and completed by a Muslim ruler. There are carvings of Hindu, Islamic and Jain symbols.

The six masons involved in the construction of the structure were buried in the upper part of the well. It is believed that Begda asked them if they could build a similar structure. When they agreed, he killed them.

The Adalaj Ni Vav, also famous as Rudabai Stepwell or Rudabai Ni Vav, was a favourite resting destination for traders and caravans crossing the area. It provided not just water but also refuge from harsh summers, being up to six degrees cooler than outside. The beautifully preserved five-storey well allows air and light to enter.

What was true then, is true even today, say locals. The octagonal structure is not just cultural and utilitarian, but also a spiritual refuge. The water is considered holy and used on special occasions by locals.

"We come here to worship and consider the water holy," said Jagdeep, a villager who runs a shop outside the stepwell.

Woman's braid chopped off 'mysteriously' in Gurgaon

GURGAON (HAR), JUL 30 (PTI): At least 15 incidents of women's braids being mysteriously chopped off have been reported from the villages of the Mewat region in last two weeks, police said today.

These bizarre happenings have left the villagers in panic mode. Most women claimed to have fallen unconscious when their braids were chopped off leading to the villagers blaming godmen, ghosts, witches and "cat-like" creatures.

Police, however, dismissed these claims and said it was the handiwork of anti-social elements. Yesterday, one such incident was reported from Gurgaon.

Sunita Devi, a resident of Ashok Vihar phase-III area, approached the police, claiming that on the night of July 28 she was attacked by a strange-looking man, in his 60s, when she was alone in her house.

"While I was preparing dinner in the kitchen, I saw a thin man in a red and yellow outfit on the main entrance of my house. When I went to enquire, I saw he was

carrying a trident. I told him to go away. He went away and disappeared only to reappear," she claimed.

Sunita said before she could comprehend anything she fell unconscious.

"When I regained consciousness, I found myself lying on the floor and my braid was chopped off," she claimed, adding her house, however, was not ransacked.

Police said they have made a Daily Diary entry of the incident and launched a probe into the matter.

Gurgaon Police PRO Ravinder Kumar said the perpetrator was yet to be identified and the woman has not complained of any external wounds.

The woman was in extreme trauma and still terrified. She was admitted to a private hospital and discharged last evening, he said.

Another incident was reported in Malhaka village. Aseena had fallen unconscious and when she woke up she found her hair had been chopped off.

"I'm feeling scared," Aseena said.

Of Haramzadas and Karelas, expanding the mango discourse

MANIK GUPTA

RATAUL (UTTAR PRADESH), JUL 30 (PTI): The Gadha is fodder for donkeys, the Haramzada good looking but bland in taste and the Langda, well, not lame but a little off balance. Mangoes all, but each distinctive in taste, look and etymology!

And there are some 297 more varieties growing in the Noor Bagh orchard in Rataul, the town that gives name to its own species of mango and is about 50 km from New Delhi.

In a country where spirited debates over which mango is better can go on for hours - and even take on regional overtones - mangoes could well be the food for argument.

Enter Noor Bagh -- created a century ago by Maulvi Hakimuddin and now owned by his great-grandson Zahoor Siddiqui -- and the man-

go horizon suddenly broadens.

Rataul once had 500 varieties of mango and is now a repository of 300, says cultural historian Sohail Hashmi.

Though the Rataul is a local favourite, Hashmi expands our aam dictionary beyond the usual Dussehri, Chausa and Langda by telling tales of other varieties.

The list is long -- the Makhsoos (the chosen one), Khas-ul-Khas (choicest among the chosen), Samar-e-Behisht (fruit of heaven), Zardalu (yellow potato) and Ghulab Khas (special rose) among others.

Explaining the etymology, origin and juiciest tales behind many of these, Hashmi, who curates mango walks, warns everyone to beware of the Haramzada (bastard).

"It is called Haramzada because though hav-

ing all the good looks of a well ripened mango, it is bland in taste," he chortled.

Then, there's the much loved Langda, which will be the first one to fall even if the wind is blowing 10 miles away.

"Iska balance bigda hua hai (It's off balance). Hence the name Langda," he said and the laughter followed.

The region is also home to the Tamuriya mango, named after Taimur, the 15th century military ruler and founder of the Timurid Empire, who is believed to have passed through on his way to invade Delhi.

This mango commemorates the passage of Taimur, Hashmi said.

There is a mango called Dudhia Baghalpuri, dudhia because it is almost white, and Baghalpuri because the sapling was from Baghalpur in

Bihar. The mango, Hashmi said, also smells of raw rice.

But, how do you differentiate between one mango tree and another?

"In every mango tree, the leaves are different. So even if the tree is not bearing any fruit, an expert can tell you about it just by seeing the leaves," answered Hashmi.

Hashmi has long been

chasing the Karela, which looks like the bitter gourd and has a similar after taste too.

"I have found two such trees of Karela aam in Bhopal, and will soon get a sapling to Rataul," he said.

There is also the Fazri or Fazli, the last mango of the season that can grow up to 1 kg and is sometimes called the

Gadha aam.

"This mango is fodder to donkeys. Though edible, it is mostly used to make mango chutney. If only they grew earlier in the season, they could replace the Safeda, used for mango shakes," Hashmi said, feasting on a deep orange Anfas.

Historian Rana Safvi, a fellow walker on the mango tour, says the

great Indian mango fetish has been here since the time of the Mughals.

"When Babur came here, he complained of having no fruits worth eating. Later on, it was Jehangir who said that had his grandfather tasted mangoes he would have changed his opinion," Salvi told PTI.

According to Rana, much of the Indian ob-

session with mangoes can be blamed on Ghalib, who romanticized this fruit just a bit too much when he said "only donkeys don't eat mangoes".

Siddique, who now owns Noor Bagh, runs the Salma Public School, a primary school for underprivileged girls. The entire proceedings from the mango walk were donated to this school.

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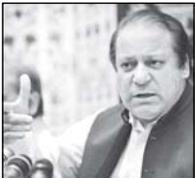
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Sharif wants to know: 'Is everyone else in Pakistan Sadiq and Ameen?'

ISLAMABAD, JUL 30 (PTI): Nawaz Sharif, still smarting from the shock disqualification by the Supreme Court for dishonesty, wants to know if everyone else in Pakistan was "Sadiq and Ameen" or honest and righteous.

The apex court on Friday disqualified 67-year-old Sharif for dishonesty and ruled that corruption cases be filed against him and his children over the Panama Papers scandal, forcing him to resign from premiership.

The court's ruling stated that Sharif had been dishonest in not disclosing his earnings from a Dubai-based company of his son in his nomination papers during the 2013 general election. One of the apex court judges, Justice Ejaz Afzal Khan, said that Sharif was no longer "eligible to be an honest member of the parliament".

Addressing leaders of his Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) yesterday, Sharif said, "You should be proud that your leader doesn't have a stain of corruption on him."

"I am proud that I have not been declared ineligible over charges of corruption," he said at the PML-N's parliamentary meeting that approved his brother and Punjab Chief Minister Shehbaz Sharif as his successor. The former premier claimed he did not receive any kickbacks or commissions and never compromised on principles.

"When I never took a salary, what would I declare," he said, referring to the Supreme Court judgement that led to his ouster. "When you take something, there's a problem; when you don't, there's a problem," he observed.

"Is it only my family that should be held accountable? Is everyone else in this country Sadiq (honest) and Ameen (righteous)?" he asked.

Chinese military displays conventional, N-missiles at parade

K J M VARMA

BEIJING, JUL 30 (PTI): Chinese military today showcased five models of its homemade conventional and nuclear missiles in a massive military parade, marking the 2.3-million strong People's Liberation Army's 90th founding anniversary.

The models include the Dongfeng-26 ballistic missile, which can be fired at short notice and fitted with a nuclear warhead, the Dongfeng-21D land-based anti-ship ballistic missile described as a "carrier killer" and the Dongfeng-16G conventional missile designed for precision strikes against key enemy targets. Also on display were two types of solid-fuel inter-continental strategic nuclear missiles, which rumbled on top of long-bed missile launchers, state-run Xinhua news agency reported.

The equipment and soldiers driving the mobile launch vehicles came from the PLA's Rocket Force, which was established in December 2015 as part of the PLA's extensive military structural reform. The predecessor of Rocket Force, the Sec-



ond Artillery Force, was founded on July 1, 1966. China's latest J-20 stealth fighters made their parade debut in north part.

Three J-20 jets led an echelon formation consisting of 15 fighter aircraft which roared over the Zhurihe military training base in Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region during the country's first-ever Army Day parade.

The J-20 is China's indigenous fourth-generation medium and long-range fighter jet. It made its maiden flight in 2011

and was first publicly displayed at the 11th Airshow China in Zhuhai, Guangdong Province, in November last year.

"The enlisting of fourth-generation jets will bring fundamental changes to the rules of the game in air battlefield," said Wang Mingzhi, a professor with the PLA Air Force Command College.

"It will also draw the curtain on transformation in the PLA Air Force," Wang said.

Besides J-20, J-16 fighters and Y-20 heavy transport aircraft were

also among the new aircraft making parade debuts today. The J-16 is a two-seat, dual-engine multi-role fighter with beyond-visual-range air-to-air and air-to-ship strike capabilities.

The Y-20 plane with a maximum take-off weight of about 200 tonnes, is designed to carry cargo and personnel over long distances in complicated meteorological conditions. It officially entered military service in July, 2016. The PLA was founded on August 1, 1927 when the ruling

Communist Party of China under the leadership of Mao Zedong carried on with his national liberation movement.

The parade was held in the backdrop of over month-long standoff between Indian and Chinese troops at Doklam in Sikkim section. Besides Doklam, China is also concerned by the situation in North Korea and the deployment of Terminal High Altitude Area Defence (THAAD) missile by the US in South Korea much to the opposition of the Beijing.

Very disappointed with China on North Korea, says Trump

LALIT K JHA

WASHINGTON, JUL 30 (PTI): US President Donald Trump has accused China of doing nothing on North Korea and said he was "very disappointed" with Beijing, a day after Pyongyang launched an intercontinental ballistic missile test. Trump also said he will no longer allow North Korea to continue with its belligerent behavior.

"I am very disappointed in China. Our foolish past leaders have allowed them to make hundreds of billions of dollars a year in trade, yet they do NOTHING for us with North Korea, just talk," Trump said in two tweets yesterday.

On Friday, North Korea fired a new intercontinental ballistic missile that experts say has the potential to reach the US mainland.

"We will no longer allow this to continue. China could easily solve this problem!" said the US President, expressing his deep disappointment over Chinese inaction while North Korea continues with its ballistic missile tests and going ahead with its nuclear weapons programme.

Meanwhile, in response to North Korea's ballistic missile and nuclear programmes, two US Air Force B-1B bombers under the command of US Pacific Air Forces, joined their counterparts from South Korea and Japanese air forces in a sequenced bilateral missions July 29. This mission is in direct response to North Korea's esca-



latory launch of intercontinental ballistic missiles on July 3 and July 28, the US Pacific Command said. "North Korea remains the most urgent threat to regional stability," said Gen Terrence J O'Shaughnessy, Pacific Air Forces commander.

"Diplomacy remains the lead; however, we have a responsibility to our allies and our nation to showcase our unwavering commitment while planning for the worst-case scenario.

The B-1s then performed a low-pass over Osan Air Base, South Korea, before leaving South Korean airspace and returning to Guam. Throughout the approximately 10-hour mission, the aircrews practiced intercept and formation training, enabling them to improve their combined capabilities and tactical skills, while also strengthening the long standing military-to-military relationships in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region, a media release said.

US Pacific Command maintains flexible bomber and fighter capabilities in the Indo-Asia-Pacific theater, retaining the ability to quickly respond to any regional threat in order to defend the US homeland and in support of our allies, it said.

Deal for supply of 48 Mi-17 choppers to India likely by yr end: Russian official

ZHUKOVSKY (RUSSIA), JUL 30 (PTI): Russia and India are holding negotiations for the supply of 48 Russian Mi-17 military transport helicopters with Moscow hoping to seal the deal by the year end, a top Russian official has said.

Russian arms supplier Rosoboronexport's CEO Alexander Mikheev said India has more than 300 helicopters belonging to the Mi-8 and Mi-17 family, which are deployed in troop and arms transport, fire support, convoy escort, patrol, and search-and-rescue (SAR) missions. He said India knows their specifications well.

Mikheev said Russia and India are holding talks with a view to sign a contract for 48 (Mi-17V-5) helicopters and the techno-commercial negotiations are set to commence.

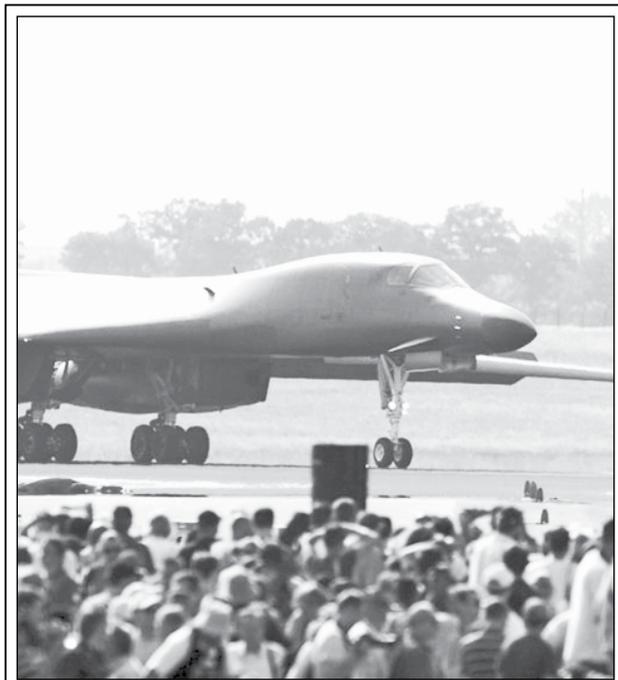
"We hope that we will reach an agreement be-

fore the end of this year," he told a select group of journalists here on the sidelines of Russia's premier air show MAKS 2017.

Last year, Russia had handed over to India the final batch of three Mi-17V-5 military transport helicopters under a previously signed contract with Rosoboronexport, a company of the Rostec State Corporation, that entailed a total of 151 units of the Mi-17V-5 helicopter, produced by the Kazan Helicopter Plant.

Designed to transport cargo inside the cabin and on an external sling, the Mi-17V-5 is considered to be one of the world's most advanced military transport helicopters.

Mi-17V-5, supplied to India, ranks among the most technically advanced helicopters of the Mi-8/17 type, incorporating the best engineering solutions of previous generations.



Two US bombers have been flown over the Korean Peninsula in a show of force after North Korea's latest missile test. The supersonic B-1 bombers took off from an airbase in Guam and were joined by Japanese and South Korean fighter jets, performing a low-pass near Seoul. The maneuver came in response to an intercontinental ballistic missile test by Kim Jong Un's regime, which experts say now puts several major US cities in firing range.



Kutse Shegu

The Kutse Shegu (49 days) of **Late Sonam Wangchuk Lachungpa** who left for his heavenly abode on 13th June 2017 falls on

31st July 2017 [Monday]. All Relatives, friends and well wishers are requested to join us in prayers for the departed soul at our residence at **Chandmari, near MP Dara JN Road**. We Would like to thank everyone who stood besides us during the time of bereavement.

Nimphuty Lachungpa (Wife) & family. Ph- 8016303146

NAGALAND STATE LOTTERIES

DEAR GENTLE EVENING

Draw Time : 8:00 pm onward

Draw No:118 DrawDate on:30/07/17
1st Prize Rs.50 Lakhs/- 871 27710
(Including Super Prize Amt)
Cons. Prize Rs.8,000/- 27710 (REMAINING ALL SERIALS)
2nd Prize Rs.9500/-
05928 07124 22817 30272 39711
52546 55481 59001 74147 89712
3rd Prize Rs.9000/-
06627 15698 19715 23313 25656
30606 49487 70986 71701 86866
4th Prize Rs.1000/-
1440 2679 3063 3950 6112 6229 6477 8380 8757 9116
5th Prize Rs.600/-
1707 2040 2482 3335 4188 5388 7498 7900 8744 9928
6th Prize Rs.250/-
0022 0115 0150 0379 0388 0411 0487 0723 0792 0954
1031 1063 1155 1263 1306 1341 1344 1382 1477 1546
1663 2056 2071 2268 2292 2837 2902 2903 3029 3206
3261 3377 3532 3749 3797 3887 3941 3967 4063 4082
4091 4116 4208 4213 4350 4369 4575 4661 4837 4853
4856 5071 5077 5391 5427 5589 5691 5872 5873 5899
5957 6109 6308 6330 6463 6487 6509 6568 6575 6694
6695 6824 7030 7143 7171 7244 7510 7539 7671 7809
7923 8289 8354 8374 8375 8504 8607 8686 8704 8772
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SIKKIM STATE LOTTERIES

DEAR PROSPECT

Draw No:54 DrawDate on:30/07/17

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2nd Prize Rs.9500/-
03676 04580 05268 06037 21662
29059 40636 40752 88296 92243
3rd Prize Rs.9000/-
11871 12773 15223 19319 29006
47925 52194 54502 56591 97714
4th Prize Rs.1000/-
0285 2674 2980 3622 3645 6893 7103 7689 8202 9820
5th Prize Rs.600/-
1048 2325 3258 3369 4756 5304 5429 7280 7308 8982
6th Prize Rs.250/-
0066 0075 0175 0205 0443 0445 1198 1341 1588 1606
1641 1822 1851 1861 2286 2322 2408 2460 2517 2562
2788 2814 2856 2984 3384 3517 3545 3564 3620 4108
4143 4202 4318 4350 4365 4413 4496 4513 4561 4576
4581 4726 4740 4807 4823 4933 4973 5075 5087 5277
5394 5446 5635 5795 5833 6058 6097 6220 6389 6391
6616 6687 6763 6786 6910 6931 6965 6973 7024 7046
7126 7130 7438 7535 7538 7652 7699 7716 7773 7977
8032 8313 8487 8712 8738 8791 8830 8832 8984 9064
9070 9122 9203 9263 9266 9304 9364 9669 9703 9819

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MIZORAM STATE LOTTERIES

DEAR FLAMINGO MORNING

Draw No:50 DrawDate on:30/07/17

1st Prize Rs.50 Lakhs/- 89K 31123
(Including Super Prize Amt)
Cons. Prize Rs.8,000/- 31123 (REMAINING ALL SERIALS)
2nd Prize Rs.9500/-
08377 11653 15417 33446 52516
61526 70918 88796 90183 90386
3rd Prize Rs.9000/-
08707 12993 17473 20381 27567
36296 51237 63262 83410 86189
4th Prize Rs.1000/-
1701 1729 1825 3061 4295 4804 8395 8661 8907 9226
5th Prize Rs.600/-
0329 1060 1226 3761 4879 5997 6076 6137 7042 7419
6th Prize Rs.250/-
0143 0492 0497 0622 0710 0886 0896 0992 1141 1265
1320 1401 1404 1567 1578 1680 1725 1861 1956 1967
2026 2035 2049 2121 2184 2726 2789 2808 2928 2934
3012 3050 3052 3170 3495 3574 3631 3641 3748 4007
4053 4231 4331 4577 4742 4950 5025 5097 5119 5331
5368 5510 5624 5655 5668 5694 6047 6095 6277 6398
6432 6830 6874 6876 6899 7055 7312 7681 7684 7689
7846 7975 8054 8131 8281 8305 8359 8371 8410 8525
8546 8623 8660 8689 8699 8734 8782 8806 8966 9047
9092 9127 9272 9298 9338 9536 9580 9581 9593 9823

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STAR IN STRIPES: Kendall Jenner hit the streets of NYC in an eye-catching striped outfit recently.

TOMORROWLAND UNITE FIRE: 22,000 EVACUATED FROM FESTIVAL IN BARCELONA

Over 22,000 people have been evacuated from a music festival in Spain after a massive fire ravaged the main stage. Crowds fled the Tomorrowland Unite concert, which was taking place in Barcelona's Parc de Can Zam, just hours before DJ Steve Aoki was due to perform.

Videos on social media showed embers dropping from a large stage decoration, before spreading across the speaker system and a big screen. Authorities said the stage was "totally destroyed" but no injuries have been reported and the fire is out. An area packed with pyrotechnics that were going to be used at the end of the 12-hour festival had been secured, they added.

No official explanation has yet been given for how the fire started but local media blamed fireworks. Tomorrowland Unite is a round-the-world live-screening of the main Tomorrowland festival, held in Belgium. A promotion for the event says that "special effects are synchronised with the show in Belgium adding value to the global connection".

The Barcelona event was



listed as cancelled on Tomorrowland's website. A statement read: "Tonight, July 29th 2017, the UNITE Barcelona stage caught fire due to a technical malfunction. Thanks to the professional intervention of the authorities all 22,000 visitors were evacuated safely and without reports of injuries. Authorities will follow up and continue the investigation with the local Spanish organiser of UNITE."

Aoki, best known for his collaboration with One Direction star Louis Tomlinson on the track Just Hold On, had been due to begin a set at 2am local time.

what's TRENDING

AKSHAY KUMAR SAYS HIS DREAM ROLE WOULD BE TO PLAY A PSYCHO

Akshay Kumar is currently gearing up for the release of Toilet: Ek Prem Katha that is due to release in two weeks. While Bhumi Pednekar was recently quoted saying that she would want to continue doing cause driven roles, Akshay is no different. The actor is also currently working on the same lines with TEPK and Padman in his kitty.

Regarding the same, when asked at a recent media interaction whether he deliberately does socially conscious films, Akshay said, "We are trying to address issues in films, with a dash of comedy, romance and action. My next film is Padman, which is based on sanitary napkins. More than 90 percent of Indian women can't even afford them. It's an issue not really talked about."

The actor was then asked if Padman would cover the controversy surrounding GST on sanitary napkins to which he replied rather jokingly, "Do you want me to do a documentary or a commercial film? The film is about that issue, but it's fictionalized and commercialized to appeal to all audiences."

Akshay was further inquired about his upcoming film with Rajinikanth, 2.0 and without spilling much of the beans, Akshay said, "At this point, I can only tell you that I'm the villain, who gets beaten up by Rajinikanth."

Lastly, when the actor



was asked out of blues about his dream role, the actor spontaneously replied that though he has played number of characters in his films, he would want to play the role of a psycho someday.

Interesting much?

GEORGE CLOONEY VOWS TO SUE MAGAZINE OVER PHOTOS OF TWINS ALEXANDER AND ELLA



The actor and his wife Amal Clooney, a human rights lawyer, were photographed with their children at home in Italy by Voici.

Actor George Clooney has threatened a magazine with legal action following the publication of photographs of his children. He accused photographers from French publication Voici of illegally taking photographs of him and his family at their home in Lake Como, Italy.

"Over the last week photographers from Voici

magazine scaled our fence, climbed our tree and illegally took pictures of our infants inside our home," he said.

"Make no mistake, the photographers, the agency and the magazine will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. The safety of our children demands it." Voici published the photographs on Friday. The children, named Alexander and Ella, were born in June but the couple have not shared photographs or details about them.

Voici defended the publication of pictures, saying there was "public demand" for snaps of the twins.

"People love George Clooney and have been following his life story for years now," the magazine said in a statement. "Those pictures do not put in danger Mr Clooney, his wife or their kids."

Clooney is known for his starring roles in films including Oceans Eleven and Good Night and Good Luck. Amal Clooney is a human rights lawyer.

notice! Make it a point to get out and mingle with others. You're a talented, capable person in your own right, but you really shine when you're with others. This is especially true today.

LEO: You have a romantic soul, Leo. Today your thoughts are on love and romance. You may be thinking of that special someone in your life, grateful that you've found each other. Or you may wish you had someone important in your life and spend a good part of the day plotting how to find a mate. If you're serious about settling down, draw on all of your resources to make it happen.

VIRGO: Something big could be occurring close to home today, Virgo. It would be advisable to stay inside,

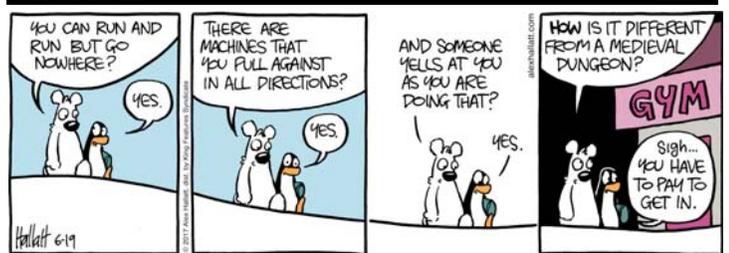
if possible, or at least not stray too far. Traffic may be gridlocked and the sidewalks crowded with pedestrians anxious for a closer look. Use this self-imposed "house arrest" to do some neglected chores. Play music and have fun while you organize bookshelves and clear the clutter from your closets.

LIBRA: You have hidden talents that may be revealed to you today, Libra. Perhaps collaboration with someone new has you doing things you never thought you could. Perhaps you discover a talent for writing, graphic design, or money management. You can't help but delight in this discovery, as it opens up a world of new possibilities. You don't need to take

action now. Revel in your untapped potential. **SCORPIO:** You're a kind, caring individual, Scorpio. Today your concern for others may be so strong that you take steps to do something concrete to save, if not the world, at least a few of the individuals in it. You may hear of a worthy cause that's about to fold for lack of volunteers. You could turn out to be just the savior they need. One person truly can make a difference. You can prove it today.

SAGITTARIUS: Today you may develop a deeper understanding of what's really important to you, Sagittarius. You may be surprised by what you discover. The material means far less

ARCTIC CIRCLE



BABY BLUES



THIS DAY IN HISTORY
Dr. RAJEN UPADHYAY
Assistant Professor in History,
Namchi Govt. College

31st July WORLD HISTORY

1498: Christopher Columbus on his third voyage to the Western Hemisphere became the first European to discover the island of Trinidad.

1703: Daniel Defoe, the well known writer of Robinson Crusoe was placed in a pillory for the crime of seditious libel after publishing a politically satirical pamphlet, but was pelted with flowers.

1790: The first U.S. patent was issued to inventor Samuel Hopkins for a potash process.

1865: The first narrow-gauge mainline railway in the world was opened at Grandchester, Queensland, Australia.

1904: During Russo-Japanese War the Battle of Hsimucheng was fought in which Imperial Japanese Army defeated the Imperial Russian Army in a strategic confrontation.

1919: The German National Assembly adopts the Weimar Constitution that came into force on

August 14.

INDIAN HISTORY

1658: Abu'l Muzaffar Muhi-ud-Din Muhammad commonly known as Aurangzeb, the sixth, and widely considered the last effective Mughal Emperor proclaimed himself as the Emperor of Hindustan after imprisoning his father Shah Jahan.

1861: A heavy rainfall of 9,300 mm was recorded in July in Cherapunji, Assam, presently in Meghalaya, that created a world record.

1880: One of India's most popular Hindi writers, Premchand was born in Varanasi Uttar Pradesh.

1933: Gandhiji was arrested from Sabarmati Ashram and imprisoned without trial.

1940: Udhram Singh, fiery revolutionary, freedom fighter and social reformer, was hanged by the British Government in the Pantone Villa Jail, London.

THE DAY AHEAD

ARIES: Today you may wake up and realize that there is serious room for improvement, Aries. If decorating isn't your strong suit, why not call in the professionals? In the meantime, there's a lot you can do by simply clearing away the clutter and reorganizing your bookcases in a more attractive way. Mingle some artwork and knickknacks among the books for a more interesting visual effect.

TAURUS: You tend to keep to yourself, Taurus, but today you could be inspired to join a group activity. Perhaps some friends have invited you to come out for drinks. Or maybe a neighbor asked you to consider joining a neighborhood organization. Whatever the scenario, all signs indi-

cate that any group activity you join will be worthwhile. You will do some good and likely make new friends, too.

GEMINI: Technology is highlighted for you today, Gemini. It could be that you install a new phone or computer system, which will make life just a bit easier. Or perhaps you decide to take a course to learn to master a technical area that has been difficult for you to grasp. Whatever you do or learn today is bound to make you happier and more productive.

CANCER: You're a social creature, Cancer, and today you can expect to attract a lot of attention. You're feeling good and looking even better - and don't think that people don't

you'll learn this today as good fortune puts you in the right place at the right time. You may meet someone who makes a big difference to your career. Perhaps he or she turns you on to a good job prospect or introduces you to someone who ends up being a business partner. Your life may change if you're open to possibilities.

PISCES: Be open to any invitations that come your way or any new people you meet. Change is in the air for you, Pisces, and you need only be receptive in order for it to come about. You may even meet someone at a social event who winds up being your partner for life. Explore all your interests and trust your intuition, for it will be a reliable guide.