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SummitTIMES

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

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JAGANNATH RATH YATRA IN GANGTOK

Jagannath Rath Yatra was today celebrated in the capital with devotion and traditional fervour. The festival holds high significance among the Hindus particularly the Vaishnava sect. A chariot procession is held with the idols of brothers and sister Lord Jagannath (Krishna), Lord Balabhadra (Balaram) and Goddess Subhadra.

[from NITESH R PRADHAN]

State-level consultation on E-Waste Management Rules 2016



SAGAR CHETTRI
GANGTOK, 14 JUL:

A state-level consultation programme on E-Waste Management [Management] Rules 2016 for concerned stakeholders and media personnel was held here at Sidkyeong Tulku Memorial Hall of Forest Department on Saturday. The programme was organised by Karo Sambhav, an E-waste Producer Responsibility Organisation [PRO].

The main objective of the programme is to spread awareness on E-Waste Management [Management] Rules 2016 among concerned

stakeholders. The consultation programme stressed upon roles, obligations and statutory compliance procedures for various stakeholders as mandated by the new Rules and to discuss successful implementation of the new Rules in the State.

The programme was attended by officials and representatives from the State Pollution Control Board [SPCB], Sikkim, Gangtok Municipal Corporation [GMC], State E-Mission Team deployed by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology and Department of Science and Technology.

On the occasion, SPCB Member Secretary, CS Rao mentioned about various initiatives of the board towards e-waste management and other environment-friendly activities in the State. He mentioned that the people of Sikkim have always wholeheartedly accepted the environment-friendly programme and initiative of the government with their full cooperation and participation for its success. He stressed upon the need of responsible recycling of e-waste.

Likewise, SPCB Principal Scientist, Dr Gopal Pradhan stressed upon the need to create aware-

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Vibrations scare Chungthang residents, probe underway

WANGCHUK BHUTIA
CHUNGTHANG, 14 JUL:

"THE DOOR OF MY godown which was locked suddenly started shaking yesterday, the window panes too," said Sonam Tshering Bhutia of Chungthang.

Likewise, another resident, TT Bhutia said the curtains of his window started shaking and he felt a light vibration all around his house which he has never felt before.

The public of Chungthang bazaar in North Sikkim on the periphery of Teesta Hydro Electric power project stage III DAM informed that their houses have been shaking/vibrating on and off since Friday evening.

However, no cracks have developed in the houses.



The local people said that it might have happened because of the flushing out of water from the dam of the 1200 MW Teesta Stage-III. The

reservoir was emptied on Friday to flush out the accumulated silt.

The people stated that they want the safety of their lives and the

properties as they have sacrificed a lot for the nation's development.

A team comprising of officials from Chungthang Sub Divi-

sion, Teesta Urja, Police and local panchayats visited every household situated along Lachen river and also interacted with

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SFA 2nd Division League resumes

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 14 JUL:

Sikkim Football Association Second Division Sikkim League 2018 has resumed after around a fortnight-long gap here at Paljor Stadium on Saturday. In today's match, Sikkim Police outplayed Renzong Football Club 5-2.

Dawa Lepcha scored the lead for Sikkim Police in the 33rd minute but soon Jayis Rai scored the equaliser for Renzong FC in the 40th minute. However, Tempo Bhutia extended the lead of Sikkim Police to 2-1 in the 43rd minute.

Both teams played an attacking game in the second half. Ganesh Limboo scored the equaliser for Renzong FC in the 60th minute. But, Dawa



Lepcha in the 68th minute and Tempo Bhutia in the 70th minute completed their brace to extend the lead of Sikkim Police to 4-2 and another goal by their teammate,

Sangay Bhutia in the 70th minute sealed 5-2 victory of Sikkim Police.

It may be mentioned that the League had been suspended following the lack of local referees and

a row between the association's Referee Board and executive body which ended in the SFA suspending the board.



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Blaming previous governments not the solution, HSP tells CM

REBYNA RANA
GANGTOK, 14 JUL:

Hamro Sikkim Party [HSP] spokespersons Prem Karki and Dilip Rai today addressed the media regarding the Chief Minister Pawan Chamling's statements made during the 204th Bhanu Jayanti celebration held at Manan Kendra, Gangtok, on Friday.

Addressing the media today, Prem Karki and Dilip Rai, said that the Chief Minister always blames the previous governments for the present problems regarding political rights of the Nepali community of Sikkim. However, they added, the CM and his



party have been in power for the last 24 years and should have resolved these problems by now.

It is easy to blame others but he does not state what steps his government has taken, said

the HSP spokespersons. The Chief Minister is also not clear on Gorkha and Nepali identity.

"When he is in Sikkim, he says we are Sikkimese Nepali but when Binay Tamang had come

to meet him he said we are Gorkhas. He should have a clear stand," said the HSP spokespersons.

On the demand for tribal status for Sikkim Nepalis too the government is not clear, the duo stated.

The government placed the Burman Commission report to justify the demand for tribal status but later the CM says that he does not believe in criteria and wants ST status for the left-out communities based on the history of Sikkim during the Chogyal's time. If it is so, the government should withdraw the Burman Commission report, they said.

Blaming previous governments for the problems faced by the Nepali community is being done just for political gains as elections are around the corner, they said.

The HSP spokesper-

sons opined that Nepali seats in the Assembly is possible under Article 371F which has special constitutional provisions for Sikkim.

"We are in the process of framing our political and social programmes for the people of Sikkim. Our stand for the political rights of the majority Sikkimese Nepali community would be clear once we finish framing our programmes," they said.

HSP office bearers Tara Shrestha, Punya Koirala and Tirtha Sharma also addressed the media today.



Internship prog for students at East DC Office concludes

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 14 JUL:

An innovative programme "Internship Fortnight" for students to learn the workings of the District Administration which was started on 02 July concluded on Friday. It was organised by 24 Hours Inspired in association with the DC Office, East.

It is informed that a write up was invited from college as well as school students on the basis of which students were shortlisted with an interview deciding the final candidates.

DC [East], Kapil Meena along with ADC, Bharoni Kumar guided the young students throughout the fortnight.

Young talents were given the opportunity to explore the administrative section and learn about the workings of the government body, it is informed.

Interns Sabin Pandey from SMU, Sachin Singh from BHU, Laxmi Kumari from SRM, Divya Limboo from NBB, Suraj Sharma from Modern SSS, Shahina Anjum from Sikkim Government Law College, Chewang Dolkar from DGSSS were active and spread awareness in the public as well. Interns in the programme have paid deep gratitude towards the DC office and Dewakar Basnet of 24 Hours Inspired for organising such a programme.

Director Gram Swaraj Abhiyan visits West Sikkim



GYALSHING, 13 JUL (IPR): Gopal Sadwani, Director-cum-Nodal Officer for Gram Swaraj Abhiyan for the Aspirational District -Ministry of Tribal Affairs visited Lenchok Salangdang and Upper Thambong GPUs. The Director was accompanied by Under Secretary GOI, LO US RMDD and BDO Mangalbarey and Daramdin, Prem K. Subba.

The Director's visit

pertains to West District as an 'Aspirational District' to review the 7 National Flagship schemes namely PM Ujjwala Yojana, Souvagya, Ujjwala, PM Jandhan Yojana, PM Jeewan Jyoti Bima Yojana, PM Suraksha Bima Yojana and Mission Indra Dhanush.

Recently the West District was ranked 2nd among 115 Aspirational Districts of India.

Ghatani CMRHM house at Upper Mabong



GANGTOK, 14 JUL (IPR): Minister-cum-MLA Salghari Zoom Constituency, Arjun Kumar Ghatani inaugurated a house constructed under Chief Minister's Rural Housing Mission (CMRHM) Phase 1 for the year 2017-18 at Upper Mabong, West Sikkim, today.

Beneficiary Bharta Maya Rai expressed heartfelt gratitude to the state government for providing a house. Mr. Ghatani also interacted with the people and informed about the programmes and initiatives

accomplished by the state government under the leadership of Chief Minister Pawan Chamling. He was accompanied by the Panchayats, officials from Mangalbarey Block Administrative Centre and the public.

SKM observes Students' Rights Day



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 14 JUL:

Sikkim Krantikari Morcha observed Students' Rights Day here at Chokasum, Nam Nang in Gangtok which was attended by SKM acting president, Kunga Nima Lepcha, working president, MP Subba, chief coordinator, Sonam Lama along with other leaders and workers of SKM, and students from different parts of the State.

An SKM press release states that many students of Sikkim Government College, Tadong were injured in a police lathicharge while raising voice for their rights on

14 and 15 July in 2014. Therefore, the party has been observing 14 July every year as Students' Rights Day.

During the meeting students placed their issues and grievances related to education in the State and alleged that policies of SDF government have been responsible for the decline in educational standard in the State.

Acting president, Mr Lepcha, expressed his sadness on lack of discussion on the private member's resolution on land rights for the Sherpa community placed by him in the recently concluded Assembly session.

He clarified that SKM would never dilute the Old Laws of Sikkim but wants equal protection of Sherpa community.

He also expressed his dissatisfaction on the opposition's social media personnel not being permitted to bring a camera inside the State Assembly while the ruling party's personnel were allowed to do so. He alleged that the truth spoken by the opposition has always been hidden. The meeting was also addressed by working president, Mr Subba.

The release informs that the meeting passed six resolutions on the education sector in Sikkim.

Our elected representatives have failed us: North SC Welfare Assoc

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 14 JUL:

North District Scheduled Caste Welfare Association has said that Scheduled Caste elected representatives' failure to speak up for the community regarding the "reduction" in SC reservation from 7% to 4% has hurt the sentiments of members of the Scheduled Caste community of the State.

In a press release issued today, the association has said that the notification on reduction of

SC reservation is illegal and is "a conspiracy to wipe out the existence of Scheduled Caste community of Sikkim."

Time has come for all members of SC community to stand up for their rights since leaders and political parties have failed to fulfil the community's hopes, the release mentions.

The community has been left with no other option but to decide their social and political future on their own, the release adds.

Capacity building on vermi composting at Martam



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 14 JUL:

Capacity building of SHGs was successfully conducted by ATMA(E), FS&ADD at Nazitang Agricultural Farm,

Martam Block today during which training on vermi composting and construction of low cost vermi compost unit was imparted to the farmers, informs a press release.

State-level consultation on E-Waste Management Rules 2016

contd from pg01

ness among the masses on E-waste and its proper management.

SPCB Assistant Environment Engineer, Ranjan Rai thoroughly explained the E-Waste Management [Management] Rules 2016 and spoke about the role and responsibility of various stakeholders.

Speaking on the current practice of collection and disposal of E-waste in Gangtok, GMC Executive in-Charge E-Waste, Bidhan Pradhan

mentioned that the Council has set-up a collection system that helps in channelization of e-waste to recyclers and have collected over 10050 items over the past 4 years and approximate collection is over 10 tonnes.

Devendra Ratnaparkhi from SeMT, MeitY mentioned that the new rules also require Bulk Consumers like government Departments, offices, hotels, educational institutions and other bulk users of electronics to responsibly manage their e-waste by

handing it over to a producer take-back channel and Bulk Consumers now also need to file E-Waste returns with the concerned SPCBs.

Karo Sambhav Head-Strategic Alliances & Outreach, Smita Polite gave her presentation on the extended producer responsibility [EPR] and role of PRO in e-waste management. She also spoke about the role of producer and bulk producer under the E-Waste (Management) Rules, 2016. She further mentioned about

roles of key stakeholders like CPCB, SPCB, producer, bulk producer and recycler in making EPR successful. She also explained about Karo Samhav and its initiatives and activities in e-waste management.

It is informed that the E-Waste (Management) Rules, 2016 that came into effect last year are based on the principle of Extended Producer Responsibility, which holds the producer responsible for the end-of-life management of their products. As

a PRO, Karo Sambhav takes on the mandate of managing e-waste on behalf of producers and it has also partnered with International Finance Corporation for a pan-India project on the development and implementation of a PRO solution for the industry.

Karo Sambhav zonal manager [north-east], Joshua Thiek stated that Karo Sambhav is a unique attempt at creating an ecosystem for responsible management of E-waste and is currently present in over 68 cities, 29

States and 3 Union Territories across India through various initiatives.

It is informed that Karo Sambhav has set-up a collection system across the North Eastern states along with its partner organization Rongjeng Technologies and is closely working with SPCBs to reach out to bulk consumers. It is also planning capacity building sessions with concerned officers in various state government departments.

It has collected 1700

tonnes of E-waste from across the country and its School Program aimed at creating awareness on critical environment issues including E-waste have engaged over 1150 schools across India including 32 schools in Sikkim, it is informed.

The consultation workshop also witnessed an interactive open house discussion.

Gangtok on Sunday, 15 July

Temp: 25°C/18°C
Forecast: Mostly cloudy, a thunder shower.
Sunrise: 04:49 AM
Sunset: 6:33 PM

Road mishap claims 2

GANGTOK, 14 JUL: A road mishap at Thangsing, East Sikkim, has claimed the life of two persons and injured six on 13 July.

According to the police, the Savari vehicle was ferrying passengers from Singtam Bazaar to Thangsing and on reaching Bhakribhir the vehicle started sliding back on an uphill climb eventually tumbling off the road approximately 500 feet down.

The driver of the vehicle is undergoing treatment and will be arrested once he is medically fit.

Legal Services camp held at Gyalshing

GYALSHING, 14 JUL (IPR): A Legal Services camp was organized by District Legal Services Authority, West in co-ordination with Sikkim State Legal Services Authority under the aegis of National Legal Services Authority at the Community Hall, Gyalshing.

The program was chaired by Chairperson cum District & Sessions Judge, Suraj Chettri; Secretary cum Chief Judicial Magistrate, Subarna Rai; SP West, Tenzing Loden Lepcha; Social Worker, Roshna Chettri and Panel Advocate, Pujan Kharka.

Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act & Sikkim Anti Drugs Act were discussed in brief along with various other child rights. The program concluded with an interactive session which witnessed the participation of local gentries.

WHY WRITE A POSTCARD?

C.K. LEPCHA

I like buying postcards so I can write to my friends from the places I visit. So, when I moved to Shimla, I bought a few postcards and mailed it to my friends in Sikkim, Nagaland and Meghalaya. It has been four months since and they still have not received the postcards. I doubt they will ever receive it because the Indian postal service is notorious in losing our mail especially from one end of the country to another.

Last July, somebody mailed me a postcard from Himachal and I still have not received it

although I have made it to Himachal this July. The postcard must be stuck somewhere in between or have died the untimely death before reaching its destination. In many ways, our postal service basically spoils the whole purpose and experience of sending and receiving postcards.

I like receiving postcards too. It was perhaps my father who initiated this interest when he would write postcards whenever he would be away. His postcards would be addressed to both my brother and I. And while some would come in mail, most would be inside the envelope of the letter he would write to our mother.

So, there would be no stamps but these postcards are priceless when I look back today. He would try to give a visual picture of the country and tell us of what he had seen while away from home while imparting fatherly advice. Although we would be more interested in the picture perfect scenes of the places where the postcard would come from. So, postcards did two things for us. It provided an image of a faraway land and allowed us to stay connected with our loved one when he would be away.

So how do we choose a postcard that represents the places we visit? We usually go for the typical or the most unexpected. I was recently in Netherlands and I chose postcards that had tulips and windmills. The idea is to transmit the "typical" picture of the place

you are visiting. And what better way to say greetings from Holland than with tulips and windmills. But when I was in Dharamshala a few months earlier, I picked a postcard with a dog; and while it did not necessarily represent Dharamshala, it was the right postcard for a friend who likes dogs.

But what do you or what can you actually write in a postcard? One cannot write what one would write in a letter because there is very little space and it is out in the open. It has a space to put the address and the stamp, and does not need to be put inside an envelope - which means it is public. Anyone can see it. From the people at the post office to the mailman, and your grandfather, the postcard could be seen and read by anyone on its way to whom it was addressed.

So what can we really write in a postcard? I usually say, greetings from (the place) and that I was just saying hello. It is nice here and depending on who I am writing to; I mention that they would've loved the place. And when friends and family go abroad, the only thing I ask for is to send a postcard. Although I have received only a few postcards in the last few years. Mainly because the postcards never reached my address.

A friend is convinced that the post office people sees nice postcards and takes it home for their children. I don't believe this but it is a nice way to think that someone might have been happy to receive the postcard instead of your postcard lying in some corner of the post office that would eventually be chucked away.

But even if I am to receive only one postcard a year, there is joy in receiving the same. I am an advocate of postcard writing. I have already mailed 15 plus postcards this year which I desperately hope will reach my friends at some point. I know people see no point in postcards especially with the increasing use of technology and the instant transmission of "postcards" from across the world through social media, but there is a different joy in receiving a postcard through mail that has traveled by plane, train, bus perhaps and the mail van to get to you.

Let us hope that the Indian postal system keeps delivering our postcards and we keep sending them to friends and family as we travel far and near.

[C.K. Lepcha, Fellow, Indian Institute of Advanced Study]



Quarter final of Sikkim Dance Icon II held

YOGEN THATAL SINGTAM, 14 JUL:

The quarter final of Sikkim Dance Icon Season II 2018 was conducted here at the community hall of the Singtam Nagar Panchayat today. The program was organized by the Creative Illusion Dexterity Studio Ranipool, East Sikkim. The theme of today's audition was "Say no to drugs, say yes to dance".

For the quarter final, 151 dancers were selected after auditions which were conducted at the same venue a few months ago. The entry fees for the participants were Rs 500 and Rs 1000.

Apart from Sikkim, dancers from Bihar, Siliguri, Bhutan, Assam, Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Sikkim performed today. Mingma D Lepcha, Sristi Pariyar (owner and Instructor, Natraj Dance Academy, Siliguri) and Sushma Yonzon (owner and Instructor,



Twist Your Toe, Academy, Sombarey, West Sikkim), and Hema Dewan (owner and Instructor, Natraj Dance Academy, Siliguri) were the judges.

On 29 July, Creative

Illusion Dexterity Studio will be celebrating their second foundation day which is scheduled to be held at the Agricultural Hall at Ranipool. There is no entry fee and interest-

ed dancers can perform on the day. The theme of the celebration will be "Say no to suicide", informed Sristi Pariyar.

The semi final of Dancing Icon II will be

held at the same venue but the date is yet to be fixed. The result of today's audition will be uploaded on Sikkim Dancing Icon Facebook page.

SLSA organizes National Lok Adalat

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 14 JUL:

Sikkim State Legal Services Authority (Sikkim SLSA) under the aegis of National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) organized National Lok Adalat today.

An SLSA press release informs that 10 Lok Adalat Benches were constituted in all the four Districts of the State comprising of the Lok Adalat Judges and 'Other Persons'. Pre Lok Adalat sittings were also held for identifying cases to be taken up during the National Lok Adalat.

Out of 29 cases taken up, 20 cases were settled. A sum of Rs 2.7 lakh was awarded by the various Lok Adalat Benches.

The following types of cases were taken up in this National Lok Adalat, viz. Criminal Compound-

able Offences and Bank Recovery Cases.

General Public are informed that this year (2018), National Lok Adalat will be organized by Sikkim SLSA on the following dates also and the cases to be taken up would be Criminal compoundable offences, Negotiable instruments Act cases under Section 138, Bank Recovery Cases, MACT Cases, Matrimonial disputes, Labour disputes cases, Land Acquisition cases, Electricity & Water Bills (excluding non-compoundable), Service matters relating to pay and allowance and retirement benefits, Revenue cases, Other civil cases (rent, easmentary rights, injunction suits, specific performance suits). Dates of National Lok Adalat 8th September, 2018 8th December, 2018



ARGHU

The Arghu (Anthyesthi Kriya) of Late Man Bahadur Gurung, World War II veteran who left for heavenly abode on 27th June 2018 falls on **17th July 2018 [Tuesday]**. All relatives, family, friends and well wishers are requested to join us in offering prayers for the departed soul at our residence at **Forest Colony Road, Baluwakhani, Gangtok**. We also express our gratitude to all those who stood by us during our time of bereavement.
R.K. Gurung (Retd. Secy.) Son: 9434409231
Beena Gurung / Rita Gurung (Daughters in law) 9434117702/ 7063305164
Rabina (Grand daughter), H.N Pradhan (Grandson in law)
Sudeep, Sandeep, Aditya, Abhishek, Anurag (Grandsons)

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Vibrations scare Chungthang...

contd from pg01

An emergency meeting was called with the officials of Teesta Urja Ltd., Police, administration and local panchayats to discuss necessary precautions to be taken in case of any emergency.

The meeting was held at the chamber of SDM Chungthang in which the officials of the Teesta Urja informed that a team of experts from IIT will be deployed by them to investigate the vibrations.

SDM Chungthang, Subash Ghimerey informed that a combined monitor-

ing team of Teesta Urja and QRT has been formed for continuous monitoring of activities and keep a track on the intensity of the vibration. Location to set up an emergency camp has also been identified in case of any relief camp to be established. Concerned departments viz. Police, power, food have been informed accordingly to keep their man power and essential equipments and commodities ready in case of emergency, he added.

The SDM further stated that actual reason behind the vibration is unknown and the exact

reason can only be ascertained after the assessment is done by the team of experts i. e. Expert from Teesta Urja and the expert from Mines and Geology Department, Government of Sikkim.

As of now the situation is normal and there is no reason to panic as the vibrations have stopped, he added.

Meanwhile, the expert from the state Mines and Geology Department led by Joint Director, Gombu Tshering Lepcha have reached Chungthang and are visiting the houses.

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

Instigate Involvement to Move Things Along

People are not echo-chambers, they need to disagree to refine their arguments

The region is embarrassingly pliant despite its claims to be otherwise. Diktats run without challenge and obviously dimwitted blunderings accepted without question as examples of strong and decisive leadership. In 1775, a full sixty years before Darjeeling passed from Sikkim into the hands of the East India Company, Samuel Johnson, the British man of letters and political thinker, famously said, "Patriotism is the last resort of scoundrels". Of course, he was not belittling patriotism, just indicting false patriotism, a dodge that seems to have held superficial pride in good stead for close to two and a half centuries now, replacing patriotism with false nationalism or ethnic and cultural chauvinism. Invoke this call, and everything falls in line. Sikkim routinely does this with Article 371F, Old Laws and local protection, Darjeeling reverts to it with Gorkhaland and West Bengal and at around this time last year, was justifying criminal intimidation and social division by stoking memories of the Partition.

Each one of these issues strikes a strong emotional chord with the target audience, and when emotions come into the mix, rationality gets pushed aside. This does not mean that the issues mentioned in themselves are trivial, but by demanding unquestioning abidance to every call fired from the shoulders of these issues reduces them to the status of props, and the people into followers. This militates against every aspect of democracy which requires consensus to be earned, not dictated, where differences of opinion are respected, not browbeaten into submission or mocked into oblivion and where people are encouraged to build social contracts, not erect walls. But one sees too much of fixated positions being taken, with people being pulled into a vortex of division.

Irrespective of how the leaders will want to spin it, fact remains that in these parts people have not been reacting enough, they have been following directions and falling in line. Unfortunately, obedience is not involvement, and democracy requires involvement, and genuine involvement is a commitment born from discussion and debate.

How much of that have we seen in these parts?

But that is not how things should remain. Apart from being unhealthy for democracy and its people, it is also undesirable for issues of importance to be only superficially addressed and deeper involvements not explored. For that to happen, democracy needs to be more vigorously institutionalized. Democracy requires its citizens to remain involved, critical and demanding. Extracting an emotional response which brings them to the streets or withdrawn into cliques for short bursts of protesting is the easy part, to convince them when the emotions have abated and the realities of living returned, that they are free and empowered with equal rights, is where the challenge begins.

Mindsets groomed on feudal control cannot be shaken away just with the knowledge that democracy is available. That takes a sustained process of confidence-building, encouragement, even hand-holding and nurturing.

It is also not enough to just tell the people that they are free and then expect them to start behaving like free and responsible citizens. In fact, people should be egged to dissent and disagree because these reactions have been in very short supply of late even though these are emotional contributions necessary for a democracy to evolve. Politics and politicking in the region has reinforced supremacy of the leaders over the people, and if real participatory democracy is to be institutionalized from the grassroots upwards, people need to be proactively instigated to challenge, argue and demand. That will make them realize they have a voice and a role beyond raising slogans and participating in rallies. Then, the people will also become involved and be free with support and become pragmatic participants of the decision-making process. Then, maybe, the issues which have been flogged without resolution will receive the plans and processes which will push them out of the rut.

People are not echo-chambers for leaders, they have enough hanger-ons for that; people need to be more than passive recipients of information and orders for their issues and movements to stay the course and stay true.

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

Haida Manga: An artist embraces tragedy, beautifully

MARIE MAUZÉ
theconversation.com

"Of all the arts of which traces remain, that of the First Nations of the Northwest coast is certainly one of the greatest."

These are the words spoken by French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss in 1974, at an exhibition of the work of Bill Reid, one of the best-known artists of his generation and a member of the Haida people, an Indigenous nation of the Pacific Northwest.

The Haida community and its art also was an inspiration to another, more contemporary artist, Michael Nicoll Yahgulanaas, inventor of a new graphic genre: "Haida manga."

FORMLINE: A DISTINCT STYLE

"Haida manga," a somewhat incongruous term, describes a hybrid form of visual expression where the artist not only celebrates Haida cultural memory and merges it with Asian brush techniques, but also engages with the challenges facing all modern societies: conflict, war, the impact of human activity on the environment, climate change and intercultural relations.

Yahgulanaas brings to manga a visual and stylistic technique belonging to the cultures of the Pacific Northwest coast: the formline, or figurative line. The formline is a winding line painted in black that swells and contracts, outlining the contours of the picture's subject.

The use of formline in mangas such as *A Tale of Two Shamans* (2001) and *Red* (a 2009 best-seller), also conveys Yahgulanaas' unwavering belief that, beyond differences in Indigenous and Western ways of thinking, people of all backgrounds can find common ground in shared concerns.

BRIDGING COMMUNITIES

Yahgulanaas was born in 1954 to a Scottish father and a Haida mother from a long line of artists, who brought prestige to Haida art over the course of the 19th century.

He is a descendant of the famous master sculptor and jeweller Charles Edenshaw (1839-1920), the father of his great-grandmother, on his mother's side. In his thirties, he asserted his dual heritage by adopting – alongside the surname inherited from his father – the name of his mother's clan, "Yahgulanaas," meaning those from the middle of the village, from the Raven moiety – Haida are divided into two matrilineal descendant groups, the Ravens and the Eagles.

Aware of the differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultures, he strived from an early age to "play the edge between the neighbourhoods" and has clearly positioned himself at the bridge between two communities that are ignorant of, and even hostile toward, each other.

Like fellow Haida artist and activist Guujaaw (Gary Edenshaw), Yahgulanaas led a fierce struggle against the deforestation of the Haida Gwaii archipelago for many years, including the famous 40-day forest-road blockade on Lyell Island, in 1985.

The protest was a resounding success: The timber company backed down and eight years later, a national park was created, with agreements from both the British Columbian and federal governments.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, Yahgulanaas used his talent to serve his communities, publishing comics denouncing logging, the impact of clear-cutting and the environmental risks posed by the movement of oil takers in the Hecate Strait, running between Haida Gwaii and the mainland.

His long years of activism, dedicated to protecting Haida land and the environment, have had a significant influence on his prolific work, which numbers in the thousands. Yahgulanaas is also a multimedia artist with a thriving imagination and a sculptor, creating both monumental works for public spaces and smaller pieces.

HAIDA MANGA, A HYBRID GENRE

According to Yahgulanaas, the use of the term manga to describe the kind of images he creates was suggested to him by students who saw him as a mangaka, or manga artist, during a trip to Japan.

The name came at the right moment to define a new genre, blending a representational approach typical of Japanese manga with the Haida pictorial style, with touches of Chinese calligraphy, giving great fluidity of form to the lines contouring the panels, and opening up room for more creativity and freedom in storytelling.

He then coined the name "Haida manga." The two terms, at once opposed and complementary, encompass several key themes close to his heart, relating to art, culture, politics and identity.

While Yahgulanaas is clearly proud of his roots, his approach is different from that of traditional Haida artists. A self-taught sketch artist and illustrator, he has mastered a vast range of techniques, including Chinese watercolour, which he learned in 1999 with Chinese painter Cai Ben Kwon. He also gleans inspiration from Japanese woodcuts of the ukiyo-e school – images from the floating world – and the manga tradition.

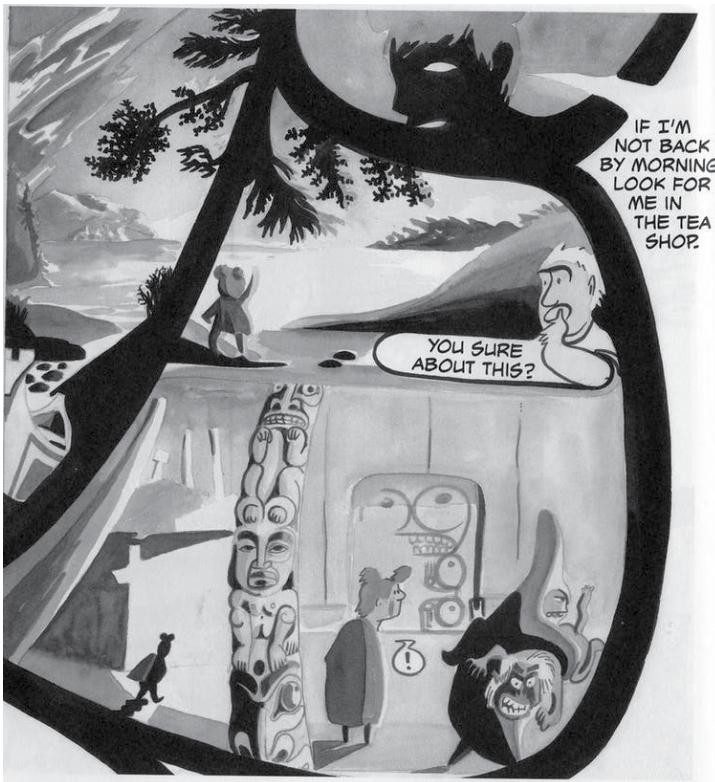
Yahgulanaas strives to go beyond traditional art practices with his hybrid visual art, which draws on several different traditions – Haida, Western, Chinese and Japanese, borrowing both techniques and specific forms of representation.

BEYOND THE SCHISM OF TRADITION AND MODERNITY

His stories come from the Haida oral tradition. *A Tale of Two Shamans* is a personal adaptation of a legend gathered in three local dialects by ethnologist John Swanton in 1900-1901.

Like that of a great number of Indigenous artists and intellectuals in the region, Yahgulanaas draws on the great classics of turn-of-the-century ethnology (including Franz Boas), which now constitute an inexhaustible source of information on the mythology of the societies of the Pacific Northwest coast.

The plot of *Red* (like many manga characters,



the main character has red hair) is inspired by a true story from the distant past, handed down within the Yahgulanaas family. It tells the tale of a young man so blinded by his lust for revenge that he almost drags his community into a bloody war.

Yahgulanaas' images are also inspired by visual documents and Haida artefacts.

Both stories are set against a backdrop of Haida Gwaii landscapes. Some scenes take place in traditional villages, with their rows of coastal houses before which stand heraldic and mortuary totem poles.

Some readers will easily spot the resemblance between the drawing of the burial box containing the body of the shaman and the artefact collected at Skedans by Charles Newcombe for the American Museum of Natural History, which bears a mountain goat symbol of one of its sides. The clothes and accessories worn by the protagonists are characteristic of "traditional" dress and indicate either the character's role or social class.

Yahgulanaas also plays with different historical periods. The face of one male character, Elder, is obscured behind a large moustache, as was the style among Indigenous men of the Pacific Northwest coast at the end of the 19th century. One of the female characters, Jaada, wears a western-style dress and carries a satchel, whereas the shaman, Spirit Dangerous to Offend, appears as a bare-breasted young woman with large hoop earrings.

A GENRE SUITED TO HAIDA TRADITIONS

According to Yahgulanaas, manga is better adapted to the narrative style and specific characteristics of Haida oral traditions than Western comics which, he argues, have a tendency to depict either good or bad protagonists. The characters described in Pacific Northwest coastal myths are highly complex. Take, for instance, the Raven, famed trickster and creator of the world and men, whose contradictory character is both generous and mean.

Yahgulanaas said: "I use a unique blend of comic and traditional style to ask the reader to question pre-existing assumptions and fantasies about the People who produced the morally ambiguous narratives – about the Raven for instance."

DUEL STYLISTIC RECONFIGURATION

From an artistic perspective, Haida manga allows the artist to adapt a traditional style with canonical

rules to another pictorial tradition while distancing himself from Western comic traditions through manga.

Yahgulanaas believes this dual stylistic reconfiguration opens up a new conceptual space, highlighting affinities between the different cultures of the North Pacific: those of the Pacific Northwest coast and those of East Asia.

The blending of the two styles is also a political statement, relegating European-American visual influences to the background, with their associations of colonialism and domination of Indigenous cultures:

"I was attracted to manga because it is not part of a colonial tradition [...] and it is not linked to the colonization of our country. [Also,] manga has roots in the North Pacific, just like Haida art," he explained.

"The black line becomes a prop for the characters to play with"

Yahgulanaas takes his experimentation and genre mixing to a new level, using curved formlines as outlines for his panels. This means that, according to the conventions of Pacific Northwest coastal art, the negative spaces created by the figurative black lines become positive spaces where the action takes place and the characters move.

Since positive space is the place where the story takes place, the formlines are part of the narrative itself. Sometimes a scene or a character – or part of their body – spills out of the frame, encroaching on another panel. The black line is also a prop for the characters to play with, what they grab, hang off, or lean over. It is transformed into part of the landscape. In *Tale of the Two Shamans*, it is the surface of the water where Elder rows his canoe. In *Red*, it is part of a tree or the edge of a forest, it traces the outline of a character and, in one instance, becomes a weapon, the bow that will kill Red, as if the bow were part of a whole.

Some writers, such as anthropologist Nicola Levell and art historian Judith Ostrowitz, have remarked that, for Yahgulanaas, formline is not a purely formal stylistic element used in his mangas.

Rather, it serves as a kind of visual metaphor or dialectic tool to juxtapose a Haida vision of the world with Western ways of seeing, when it comes to space-time, or the connections between the people in it and their relationship to the environment.

Yahgulanaas' artistic approach goes against the grain of the Western comic tradition, with its white frames where space becomes time, structuring the narrative in a way that, for him, does not suit the Haida way of thinking.

He expressed this idea in picture form, in a comic ink sketch titled *In the Gutter* (2011), which pokes fun at the way frames are used in Western comics, attributing political and historical meaning to these blank spaces.

For Yahgulanaas, filling empty spaces or frames with images and the "full" nature of the formlines (as opposed to the empty gutter) act as a kind of history lesson. The lines denounce the commonly accepted narrative that the land colonized by Europeans was empty space – terra nullius – when it was in fact inhabited by autonomous peoples governed by their own laws. A prime example of this way of thinking can be seen in *Red*.

With his Haida mangas, he has opened up an international dialogue. In *Red*, the assembly of images connected by the winding – and seemingly fragmented – formlines cannot truly be understood until the reader has reached the end of the book.

There, a double-page image reproduces a five-by-two-metre fresco, made up of 108 panels painted in watercolour, which inspired the manga.

When the mural is reconstructed, you can see a stylized image of a supernatural entity, or Haida motif (an animal figure, ancestor or social group). This stylized image is in line with canonical two-dimensional art from the Pacific Northwest coast – although bearing no relation to the plot – links all the panels and pages of the book.

Always happy to explain his work, Yahgulanaas emphasizes that the unexpected presence of the motif should raise our awareness of the various, divergent realities outside of our own world:

"The mural is a way of understanding how we are all connected to each other, and moving through the same space."

[the writer is Anthropologue, Directrice de recherche au CNRS, Laboratoire d'anthropologie sociale, École des hautes études en sciences sociales (EHESS)]

Seven persons arrested for promoting superstitions

MEDININAGAR (JHARKHAND), JUL 14 (PTI): Seven persons were arrested for allegedly promoting superstitions at Jamune village in Palamau district today, police said.

A police team conducted raid in the village and arrested seven persons for allegedly promoting superstitions after a man named Manrup Bhuiyan, who was declared mentally unsound by the accused, registered a case in this regard yesterday, Superintendent of Police, Indrajeet Mahatha said.

After branding Manrup mentally unsound, the accused have taken him to Garwah for treatment with an Ojha (quack) on Thursday, the SP said adding that Manrup, however, managed to escape from the clutches of the Ojha and returned to Medininagar to register a case.

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UGC forms panel to probe allegations against Manipur varsity VC

NEW DELHI, JUL 14 (PTI): The University Grants Commission has formed a panel to probe the allegations of administrative negligence and misutilisation of funds by Manipur University vice chancellor Aditya Prasad Pandey, a source from the HRD Ministry said today.

"The panel was formed following a representation from the state government to HRD Ministry. The committee will submit its report by month-end, following which further action will be decided," the source said.

Students of the university have been on strike for more than a month demanding the VC's resignation and an independent probe against him.

"The state government feared a law and order situation and hence recommended the ministry to send Pandey on leave," the source said.

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Sulabh to make available safe drinking water out of contaminated one for 50 paise/litre in Bihar

DARBHANGA (BIHAR), JULY 14 (PTI): An innovative project that aims at making contaminated water from rivers and ponds safe for drinking and promises to make the same available to the people at 50 paise per litre was launched here today by social organisation Sulabh International.

"The Sulabh Jal, which will become fully functional by December this year, would have the capacity to produce up to 8,000 litres of potable water every day. The safe drinking water



will be made available to consumers at a nominal cost of 50 paise per litre", NGO Sulabh International

founder Bindeshwar Pathak said.

This project will be first of its kind in Bihar.

He said before launching the project in Darbhanga, which houses a very large number

of ponds, Sulabh had undertaken a similar drive in the neighboring state of West Bengal in collaboration with French organization "1001 Fontaines".

"Our pilot project, launched three years ago, in the districts of Nadia, Murshidabad and North 24 Parganas was a success. Villages in these districts, along the Indo-Bangladesh border, reported a decline in diseases caused by high arsenic content in water", Pathak claimed.

"There is a high concentration of arsenic and

other harmful chemicals in north Bihar districts bordering Nepal and this project will go a long way in bringing about a change.

This venture will be managed by local residents and NGOs.

Although installation would cost Rs 20 lakh, it will be a non-profit venture and the price of 50 paise per litre has been fixed taking into account costs involving distribution and storage as well", he said.

"Although the is situated in Darbhanga, its benefits may reach wid-

er as people from other districts would be free to purchase water from here", he added.

The project was launched at a pond inside the premises of the Darbhanga Nagar Nigam and the function was attended, among others, by local MLA Sanjay Saraogi.

Saraogi had recently visited the water purification project in North 24 Pargana district of West Bengal with Pathak and seeing its usefulness had urged for the same in Darbhanga.

Rajnath calls on Bangladeshi PM, discusses issues of mutual concern

Anisur Rahman Dhaka, Jul 14 (PTI): Home Minister Rajnath Singh today called on Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and discussed issues of mutual concern, including the menace terrorism.

Singh arrived here yesterday on a three-day visit.

"Had an extremely fruitful meeting with the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina in Dhaka today. We discussed a range of bilateral and regional issues of mutual interest," Singh tweeted after his meeting with Hasina at her official residence.

"It is possible to uproot militancy and terrorism if all the countries in the region join their hands," Singh told Hasina.

Hasina said that Bangladesh and India have



so far settled several outstanding issues, including the land and boundary agreement, through dialogue.

"We expect that the

other issues will be sorted out through talks as well," she said.

Hasina reiterated Bangladesh's stand of not allowing its soil to

be used by terrorists to carry out their activities against any other country.

During his visit, Singh will co-chair the 6th In-

dia-Bangladesh home minister-level talks tomorrow along with his Bangladeshi counterpart Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal.

Peace symposium deliberates on addressing key global issues

KOLKATA, JUL 14 (PTI): Love, passion and dialogue are key to addressing pressing issues like climate change, gender equality and refugee crisis, which will ultimately lead to a more peaceful world, feel members of a global organisation seeking to inculcate common values among people.

The Bharat Soka Gakkai (BSG), the Indian affiliate of Soka Gakkai International (SGI), organised a 'peace symposium' in the city yesterday to deliberate on the issues, and propagate the message of tolerance and coexistence.

"Through these peace symposiums, we are able to create an ideology and awareness among the people of a particular city, especially among the youth. The youth have lot of power, passion and energy, which if channelised in the right direction, can bring lot of positive results," Chairperson of BSG, Vishesh Gupta said.

The organisation also holds exhibitions on various themes in schools and colleges, he said at the symposium on "Towards an Era of Human Rights: Building a People's Movement".

"Exhibits on environmental control and climate change create awareness in the minds of children. Motivated, they tell their parents to save energy and not use plastic," Gupta said.

He said that SGI president Dr Daisaku Ikeda issues a 'peace proposal' every year since 1983, which present "concrete solutions to a variety of global problems or threats that seriously impact people's lives, livelihoods and dignity".

In 2018, the proposal talked about women empowerment, gender equality and refugee crisis.

Gupta said that Ikeda is also of the view that one generation will be "wiped out" if they are not imparted the right education.

Mamata Banerjee flags off Kolkata Rathayatra

KOLKATA, JUL 14 (PTI): Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee today flagged off this year's 47th Kolkata Rathayatra at ISKCON's Albert road temple here.

Organised by the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) since 1971, the Rathayatra attracted a large number of devotees who pulled the chariots of deities of Lord Jagannath, Balaram and Subhadra on the occasion.

Banerjee and Governor K N Tripathi had wished the people of the state on the eve of the Rathayatra festival.

Starting from the city's Hungerford Street opposite the ISKCON temple on Albert Road, the chariots moved through AJC Bose Road,

Sarat Bose Road, Hazra Road, SP Mukherjee Road, ATM Road, Exide crossing, JL Nehru Road, Outram Road before reaching the Brigade Parade Ground, where arrangements have been made for daily special darshan of Lord Jagannath, till July 22, ISKCON sources said.

The 'Ultrathayatra' will start on July 22 noon, when the chariots would return to the Albert Road temple.

On their return journey, the chariots would pass through Outram Road, JL Nehru Road, S N Banerjee Road, CIT Road, Park Circus 7 point crossing before taking the Shakespeare Sarani to reach the ISKCON temple on Albert Road, the sources said.

The Rathayatra was also celebrated at the global headquarter of ISKCON at Mayapur in Nadia district where around a lakh devotees gathered.

Around 1,000 devotees from 62 countries sang 'kirtans' and danced all through the 6-km stretch from Rajapur Jagannath temple to Gundicha temple, a grand structure constructed adjacent to Prabhupad Ghat at Mayapur, the ISKCON sources said.

Inaugurating the celebration at Mayapur, Justice Sambhudd Chakraborty of Calcutta High Court said that Jagannath Rathayatra signifies the progress of life and humanity.

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Book tells kids how to tackle difficult childhood experiences

NEW DELHI, JUL 14 (PTI): A new book introduces kids into discussions around difficult childhood experiences and addresses issues like grief and healing. The picture book “The Ammuchi Puchi” is a gentle bittersweet story of love, loss and hope by Sharanya Manivannan with illustrations by Nerina Canzi.

The author says “The Ammuchi Puchi” was written to help children deal with the loss of a beloved grandparent. Aditya and Anjali lose their grandmother and find themselves consoled by nature.

“It’s a book about grief, the supernatural, eternal love and the power of the imagination. Additionally, “The Ammuchi Puchi” features distinctly South Indian landscapes including a grandmother who chews betelnut and tells ghost stories so many kids reading it will see themselves and their culture in it, and this will positively impact their sense of self in the world,” she says.

Published by Puffin (Penguin Random House India), “The Ammuchi Puchi” is billed as a must have for every family to explain the concept of death and bereavement to young ones, as well as coming to terms with losing a loved one.

The story is about Aditya and Anjali and their grandmother Aamuchi. The two kids love listening to their grandmother’s stories, particularly the scary one about the ghost in the tree. But the night their grandmother passes away, all her stories seem to lose their meaning.

Australia’s Finch sets Surrey record with T20 ton

LONDON, JUL 14 (AFP): Australia’s Aaron Finch made an unbeaten 131, the highest score by a Surrey batsman in a Twenty20 match, as his side ended Sussex’s unbeaten start to English cricket’s Blast tournament with a 52-run win at Hove.

But it might have been a different story for the Australia Twenty20 captain had he not been dropped on just one by Sussex paceman Jofra Archer.

Finch then made Sussex, coached by former Australia fast bowler Jason Gillespie, pay with a blistering 79-ball innings including 10 fours and seven sixes as visitors Surrey piled up 192 for three.

It was a total Sussex never came close to and they were bowled out for 140 in the 18th over.

Archer is a fine fielder, particularly off his own bowling, so it was a shock when he dropped a gentle return catch after Finch pushed forward uncertainly to the first ball of the second over.

Finch was not in a mood to give a second chance, with even Afghanistan leg-spinner Rashid Khan, the world’s top-ranked T20 bowler, unable to escape punishment as the Australian hit him for two fours and two sixes.

Together with Ollie Pope (23 not out), Finch shared an unbroken fourth-wicket stand of 100 from 50 balls.

Croatia stand between Mbappe’s France and World Cup glory



time that none of Brazil, Germany, Italy or Argentina have made the final, after Spain’s win over the Netherlands in 2010.

A tournament that will be remembered for the colourful presence of hordes of Latin American supporters has a final between two European



champs was the captain. Now he is the coach, and he can become just the third man to win the trophy as a player and a manager, after Mario Zagallo and Franz Beckenbauer.

- ‘THE GAME OF OUR LIVES’ - “A World Cup final, it’s a bit like a boyhood dream

against Portugal in the Euro 2016 final.

“It serves a lesson to us, and it means we know what it is to play in a final,” added Matuidi.

Half of France’s team is different now, however, with Mbappe having burst onto the scene. His explosive performance in the 4-3 win over Argentina in the last 16 lit up the competition, but apart from that France have played like a Deschamps side, with the emphasis on defence.

Les Bleus laboured through their group, beating Australia and Peru by the odd goal and drawing with Denmark in the only goalless game of the tournament.

They have since proved too strong for the Argentines, Uruguay and Belgium, and they are rightly favourites in the final, which is a repeat of the 1998 semi-final.

Back then, two Lilian Thuram goals sunk a Croatia team playing in their first World Cup as an independent nation. Twenty years on, this side have written their own history and the nation of just over four million people is the smallest to reach the final

since Uruguay in 1950.

- EXHAUSTING - After winning all three group games, outclassing Argentina, they have beaten Denmark and Russia on penalties and defeated England in extra-time in the semi-finals.

It has been a grueling, exhausting run for Zlatko Dalic’s team, and they must rouse themselves for one last effort.

“We took the difficult path, probably we will be the only team at a World Cup to have played eight games to get to a final if you tally up all the minutes,” admitted Dalic.

“It is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. It has been difficult for us but I am sure we will find the strength and motivation.”

The great, cavernous Luzhniki, by a bend in the Moscow River, will be the scene of the drama, but the biggest celebrations will take place on the streets of the winning country.

And the Croatians are confident most of the world will be supporting them.

“I have this feeling there will be hundreds of millions rooting for us on Sunday,” said Ivan Rakitic.

Indian boxers on a roll at Serbian youth boxing tourney



NEW DELHI, JUL 14 (PTI): There was no stopping the Indian juggernaut at the Golden Glove of Vojvodina Youth Boxing Tournament as nine from the country advanced to the semifinals to be assured of medals on day 3 of the competition in Subotica, Serbia.

Six of the nine to make the semifinals were women, joined by three men, while one boxer -- Astha Pahwa (75kg) -- lost in the quarterfinal stage last night.

Nitu (48kg), Divya

The women started the proceedings with Nitu sailing past Thailand’s Nillada Meekon in a unanimous verdict.

Divya too claimed a 5-0 win over Hungary’s Betina Kiss before Sakshi defeated Croatia’s Nikolina Cacic by a similar margin.

Jyoti was pushed a bit by Italian Georgia Ross but eventually triumphed 4-1, a score that was repeated during Anamika’s win over Kazakhstan’s Zhansaya Abdraimova.

Manisha, however, dominated in her 5-0

victory over Hungarian Veronika Villas.

Later in the men’s competition, Barun hardly broke a sweat in his win over Macedonia’s Boban Mijalev.

Asian medallist Bhavesh defeated Hungary’s Tamas Borsos, while Vijaydeep had no trouble out-punching Bosnia-Herzegovina’s Dragoljub Kulic.

Six other Indian boxers made the semifinals yesterday, taking the total number of Indian semifinalists to 15.

NHRC silver jubilee: Docu screened; panel discussion at IIMC in Sep

New Delhi, Jul 14 (PTI): The NHRC has lined up a host of programmes as part of its silver jubilee celebrations, which include special lectures, exhibition, panel discussion and release of a special postal stamp to mark 25 years of its existence.

Earlier this week, a special logo and slogan-tag line was launched by National Human Rights Commission Chairperson justice (retd) H L Dattu to mark the jubilee at a function held at the Manav Adhikar Bhawan.

A documentary spanning the journey of this institution that has served a “watchdog of democracy” was also screened on the occasion.

“Our calendar is filled with jubilee-related activities. On September 5, a panel discussion on the ‘Role of media in creating awareness on human rights’ is scheduled to be held at the Indian Institute of Mass Communication, silver jubilee lectures by eminent speakers would be held on September 10 at the Teen Murti Bhawan,” a senior

NHRC official told PTI.

Titled ‘NHRC: 25 years, Billion Hopes’, the documentary has been made by the Films Division as part of the silver jubilee celebrations of the commission.

“The film captures the journey of the NHRC from its humble beginning in 1993 to its present stature, references some of the landmark cases in which the NHRC’s intervention had made significant impact and the back story of how the redressal system works,” the official said.

Currently, housed in a modern high-rise building complex -- Manav Adhikar Bhawan -- in south Delhi, the NHRC has received “over 17.5 lakh grievances” from people across the country since its inception and most of them were from Uttar Pradesh.

“The documentary commissioned by the NHRC features interviews of Noble laureate and champion of child rights Kailash Satyarthi, Ramon Magasasay award winner, Bezwada Wilson, who has been fighting

for the rights of manual scavengers for the last few decades, and NHRC chairperson justice (retd) Dattu,” he said.

The winning logo was chosen from nearly 900 entries sent to the commission for its silver jubilee logo contest.

Over 4,230 entries were received by it for the slogan/tag line category from people of varied age groups from different parts of the country.

The NHRC had adopted the winning logo with some modifications, the

official said.

Other commemorative events planned to be organised include, a walk for human rights, human rights mela, painting competition, postal stamp and special cover, international human rights conclave/conference, which would culminate into a grand ceremony on its foundation day on October 12.

The NHRC was established on October 12, 1993 under the Protection of the Human Rights (PHR) Act, 1993.

Prior to having its

own headquarters in the Manav Adhikar Bhawan, the NHRC office was located in Faridkot House in Lutyens’ Delhi, and it began its journey from the Sardar Patel Bhawan.

The rights panel has five members, including the chairperson, who deliberate upon the cases put before them.

In 2016, Justice Dattu on the occasion of the NHRC’s foundation day, had pitched for vesting it with “more power”, saying the rights watchdog should “roar like a tiger”.

Aditi misses cut at Marathon Classic in Ohio



SYLVANIA (OHIO), JUL 14 (PTI): Aditi Ashok performed poorly on the front nine for the second day in a row and shot a dismal 73 after a first round score of 75 to miss the cut at the Marathon Classic in Ohio.

This must have been particularly disappointing for Aditi, who finished T-8 at the event last year to register her first-ever LPGA Top-10 finish.

On the first day, she bogeyed first three and the fifth to go 4-over and never recovered despite two closing birdies.

On the second day, she started from the 10th and birdied 15th and 17th to make some ground, but then a double bogey on the third and a single on the fourth ended her chances of weekend action. She has now missed four cuts

in 14 events.

Meanwhile, Brooke Henderson birdied the last two holes of the day to join Caroline Hedwall in a tie at the top heading into the weekend.

The pair leads at 9-under par, one-stroke ahead of Thai Thidapa Suwannapura at 8-under par and two-strokes ahead of a group at 7-under par that includes Emma Talley, In Gee Chun

and Jacqui Concolino.

Henderson, who carded a bogey-free, 5-under par 66 at Highland Meadows Golf Club, yesterday, is in the hunt for her second win of the season and seventh career win on the LPGA Tour.

Suwannapura struggled to match the 10 birdies she picked up during Thursday’s round, as she looks for her first LPGA win.

EU takes anti-Trump trade show to China and Japan

BRUSSELS, JUL 14 (AFP): The European Union's top officials will meet the leaders of China and Japan next week to boost ties in the face of fears that US President Donald Trump will spark an all-out global trade war.

The trip by EU Council President Donald Tusk and Commission head Jean-Claude Juncker includes the signing of a free trade deal with Japan, which was moved from Brussels last week because Japanese premier Shinzo Abe was dealing with deadly floods at home.

Their Asian tour comes as the EU -- which, with 28 countries and 500 million people is the world's biggest single market -- tries to forge al-



liances in the face of the protectionism of Trump's "America First" administration.

European Commission spokesman Margaritis Schinas said the "landmark" Japan deal was "the biggest ever negotiated by the European Union".

"This agreement will create an open trade zone covering nearly a

third of the world's GDP," Schinas added.

In China on Monday, the two leaders will meet with President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang to discuss their shared tensions with Washington, having both recently announced new tariffs on US goods in retaliation for measures imposed by Trump.

They are expected to

reaffirm their support for the rules-based international order, including the World Trade Organization, which faces unprecedented criticism from Trump's administration.

The leaders will also discuss climate change -- another area on which the EU is in disagreement with Trump after he pulled out of the Paris climate deal -- and nuclear issues in North Korea and Iran, Schinas said.

But the EU and China will have to smooth over existing differences over Beijing's own restrictive market practices including the "dumping" of cheap Chinese imports, especially steel.

Some of those concerns are shared by Wash-

ington. The EU recently pushed through measures targeting China that were intended to offset the consequences of granting China so-called market economy status at the WTO, which will make it more difficult to prove and punish illegal trade practices by Beijing.

In Tokyo, talks will also focus on presenting a united front against the United States over its tariffs, with the Japanese government having slammed them as "extremely deplorable".

The EU-Japan deal was hailed recently as a "strong signal to the world" against US protectionism by EU Trade Commissioner Cecilia Malmstrom, who is travelling with Juncker and

Tusk to Asia.

Abe was originally due to come to Brussels to sign the deal last week, but he called off the trip after flooding and landslides in Japan that killed more than 200 people.

Tusk had said that after the "tragic circumstances" they would move the summit to Tokyo.

Schinas confirmed that Juncker would stick to his "very demanding agenda" and go on the trip to China and Japan, despite suffering from a painful medical condition that made him stumble repeatedly at a NATO summit in Brussels this week.

The EU spokesman denied "insulting" suggestions that Juncker was drunk.



Death toll in Balochistan suicide bombing reaches 130

PESHAWAR, JUL 14 (PTI):

The toll from the deadliest attack on a campaign rally in Pakistan's restive Balochistan reached 130 today as the country's security establishment was under pressure to improve security and intelligence gathering to avoid further election carnage.

At least 20 of the injured among over 200 people are reported to be in critical condition, the Express Tribune reported.

Militants yesterday targeted a gathering of Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) leader Siraj Raisani in the Mastung area in the troubled province, killing at least 128 people and injuring over 200 others.

Raisani, who was a candidate from PB-35 (Mastung), was among those killed in the attack.

With two more deaths, the number of casualties mounted to 135 in the yesterday's twin attacks in Balochistan and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa provinces.

Normal life remained disrupted and business activities suspended in various parts of the Balochistan city as security has been put on high alert in the area.

The Islamic State terror group had claimed responsibility for the attack through its Amaq news agency.

Meanwhile, there was a growing demand to improve security situation across Pakistan as the people of country are due to exercise their franchise on July 25.

In an hard-hitting editorial today, the Dawn newspaper wrote, "this sudden upsurge in terrorist incidents calls for several urgent responses. First, state protection must be extended to all

candidates who ask for it without delay".

"Every effort must be made to ensure that the election is not derailed by elements hostile to the democratic process, for that is what the perpetrators of these attacks are," it said.

The Election Commission of Pakistan has summoned Chief of National Coordination Counter-Terrorism Authority (NACTA) today to brief it on security threats to leaders of various political parties.

In a letter written to the authority, the commission said it should be briefed about the security arrangements for political parties and overall security situation in the country, the ARY news said.

The NACTA had recently warned of deadly threats to various politicians, including Imran Khan, ANP's head Afsandiyar Wali, chairman of the Quami Watan Party (QWP) Aftab Ahmad Khan Sherpao and some PML-N leaders.

Yesterday's attack in Balochistan came hours after a bomb hit a rally of Akram Khan Durrani of Mutahida Majlis Amal (MMA), an alliance of religious party, including Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazal (JUI-F) and Jamaat-e-Islami, in the Bannu area of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province.

Five persons were killed and over 37 other in the attack.

On Monday, a suicide bomber had killed Awami National Party (ANP) leader and candidate in the general elections, Haroon Blour, and 19 others after striking at a corner election meeting in Peshawar.

Sharif, daughter arrested in graft case, shifted to Adiala jail

M ZULQERNAIN/SAJJAD HUSSAIN

LAHORE/ISLAMABAD, JUL 13 (PTI): Pakistan's former prime minister Nawaz Sharif and his daughter Maryam were shifted to Adiala jail in Rawalpindi today after they were arrested on their return to the country following the conviction in one of the three corruption cases against the powerful political family, weeks before the July 25 polls.

Sharif and Maryam were shifted to Adiala jail in separate armoured vehicles escorted by police.

According to jail manual, they can be medically examined at jail hospital.

Maryam is expected to be moved later to Siyehla Rest House which has been declared as sub-jail.

Initially it was said that the duo will be shifted by a helicopter, but the idea was dropped due to darkness.

The plane carrying Sharif, the supremo of the Pakistan Muslim League - Nawaz, and Maryam landed at Lahore's Allama Iqbal Airport at 9:15 IST, nearly three hours late from the scheduled arrival.

According to an airport official, the father-daughter duo surrendered before a team of the country's anti-graft body - The Na-



tional Accountability Bureau (NAB) - without any resistance.

A special plane later carried Sharif and Maryam to Islamabad. The plane landed at New Islamabad International airport in Islamabad.

The accountability court judge Muhammad Bashir issued judicial warrants against Sharif and Maryam without their mandatory presence in the court.

NAB had requested the court to condone their presence due to security reasons.

The judge accepted the argument and deputised a local magistrate to visit the convicts to record their arrest and allow NAB to hand them over to the jail authorities.

The Etihad Airways flight EY243 arrived in Lahore from Abu Dhabi. Earlier, Sharif and

Maryam flew to the UAE capital from London, where Sharif's wife Kulsoom, suffering from throat cancer, is battling for her life.

Sharif reportedly refused to sit in the vehicle of the Rangers to get to the airport terminal. Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) officials took their passport for immigration.

According to media reports, dozens of security officials entered the plane after it landed and asked other passengers to leave. The duo's passports were seized by a three-member FIA team, and both were permitted to meet Begum Shamim Akhtar, Sharif's mother, in the Haj Lounge.

The two were convicted on July 6 in the Evenfield properties case linked to the Sharif family's ownership of four luxury flats in London.

Both Sharif, 68, and Maryam, 44, have been sentenced by an accountability court to 10 and 7 years in prison respectively.

The Sharif family is now facing two more corruption cases in the accountability court Al-Azizia Steel Mills and Flagship Investments in which they are accused of money laundering, tax evasion and hiding offshore assets.

Sharif and Maryam were later sent on a special private plane bound for Islamabad International Airport. Upon landing at the Islamabad airport, they will either be flown to Adiala Jail or driven to Attock Jail, Dawn newspaper reported.

Around 10,000 police officers have been deployed across the city to maintain law and order. The Punjab government has suspended

mobile and internet services in Lahore.

Sharif's PML-N party, led by its President and Sharif's younger brother Shabbaz, today managed to take out a rally despite imposition of section 144 that bars assembly of more than five people.

Earlier, media reports and an official of the Civil Aviation Authority had said their plane was diverted to Islamabad to avoid any law and order situation in Lahore as a large number of the PML-N workers were heading in hundreds of vehicles to the city to cheer up their leader.

The rally kicked off at the Lohari Gate in the afternoon and could manage to proceed a few kilometers as party workers struggled to remove cargo containers on their way.

Close to the airport, Sharif's supporters clashed with police which otherwise did not stop them from removing containers.

"It appears the Punjab caretaker government had reached a deal with the of PML-N withdrawing thousands of policemen to give a free hand to reach close to the Lahore airport and wind up the rally," a senior police officer told PTI.

"We have orders from our top command not to take action against

the PML-N rally participants," he said.

The PML-N workers joined in the rally from different points in Lahore.

Talking to reporters before reaching the airport, Shabbaz said "a sea of people" has turned up today to give historic reception to Sharif.

"The people of Lahore has given a verdict ahead of July 25 polls," he declared. "I am thankful to the people of Lahore for coming out in such a huge number," he said, adding that the people have rejected the decision of the court to convict Sharif and Maryam.

Speaking to the BBC at Abu Dhabi airport as he waited to change planes, Sharif said: "What credibility will these elections have when the government is taking such drastic action against our people and this crackdown is taking place all over the country?"

In a video message, tweeted by Maryam, the former premier urged his followers to stand with him and "change the fate of the country".

"The country is at a critical juncture right now," a grim looking Sharif said.

Sharif was disqualified by the Supreme Court last year in the Panama Papers case.

12 Russians indicted for hacking into Democratic servers

LALIT K JHA

WASHINGTON, JUL 13 (PTI): Twelve Russian intelligence officers were indicted today for hacking into the servers of senior Democrats, including its presidential candidate Hillary Clinton in 2016, days ahead of a meeting between US President Donald Trump and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin.

According to the indictment, the 12 are members of the GRU, a Russian Federation intelligence agency within the Main Intelligence Directorate of the Russian military.

These GRU officers engaged in a sustained effort to hack into the computer networks of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, the Democratic National Committee, and

the presidential campaign of Hillary, and released that information on the Internet under the names "DCLeaks" and "Guccifer 2.0" and through another entity, the indictment said.

The indictment comes ahead of the crucial meeting of President Donald Trump with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin in Helsinki, Finland on July 16.

According to the indictment, Russian intelligence officials in 2016 began spear phishing volunteers and employees of the presidential campaign of Hillary Clinton, including the campaign's chairman.

Through that process, officials in this unit were able to steal the usernames and passwords for numerous individuals and use those credentials

to steal email content and hack into other computers.

They also were able to hack into the computer networks of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC) and the Democratic National Committee (DNC) through these spear phishing techniques to steal emails and documents, covertly monitor the computer activity of dozens of employees, and implant hundreds of files of malicious computer code to steal passwords and maintain access to these networks.

To avoid detection, these Russian intelligence officials used false identities while using a network of computers located around the world, including the United States, paid for with

cryptocurrency through mining bitcoin and other means intended to obscure the origin of the funds.

This funding structure supported their efforts to buy key accounts, servers, and domains. For example, the same bitcoin mining operation that funded the registration payment for DCLeaks.com also funded the servers and domains used in the spear phishing campaign, the indictment said.

"The Internet allows foreign adversaries to attack America in new and unexpected ways," Deputy Attorney General Rod J Rosenstein said.

"Together with our law enforcement partners, the Department of Justice is resolute in its commitment to locate, identify and seek to bring

to justice anyone who interferes with American elections," he said.

"Free and fair elections are hard-fought and contentious, and there will always be adversaries who work to exacerbate domestic differences and try to confuse, divide, and conquer us. So long as we are united in our commitment to the shared values enshrined in the Constitution, they will not succeed," Rosenstein added.

The White House said there were allegations in this indictment that Americans knew that they were corresponding with Russians. "There is no allegation in this indictment that any American citizen committed a crime. There is no allegation that the conspiracy changed the vote count or affected any election

result," the White House Deputy Spokesperson Lindsay Walters said.

"Today's charges include no allegations of knowing involvement by anyone on the campaign and no allegations that the alleged hacking affected the election result. This is consistent with what we have been saying all along," Walters said in a statement.

The opposition Democratic party demanded that Trump cancel his July 16 meeting with Putin. "These indictments are further proof of what everyone but the president seems to understand: President Putin is an adversary who interfered in our elections to help President Trump win," Senate Minority Leader, Chuck Schumer said.

"President Trump

should cancel his meeting with Vladimir Putin until Russia takes demonstrable and transparent steps to prove that they won't interfere in future elections. Glad-handing with Vladimir Putin on the heels of these indictments would be an insult to our democracy, Schumer demanded.

Senator Patrick Leahy said the indictment charging 12 Russian intelligence officers with conspiring to interfere with our presidential election is no witch hunt.

"The President needs to put America first and stop undermining this crucial national security investigation," Leahy said.

Nancy Pelosi, the Democratic Party leader, said that the Russians waged a massive, con-

certed operation to interfere in US elections, and they will do so again in the fall.

"Strong, immediate action is needed to secure our state election systems, yet Republicans are wasting the country's time with sham hearings while refusing to provide a single additional penny to protect our elections," she said.

"The stakes for the upcoming Trump-Putin meeting could not be higher. President Trump must demand and secure a real, concrete and comprehensive agreement that the Russians will cease their ongoing attacks on our democracy. Failure to stand up to Putin would constitute a profound betrayal of the Constitution and our democracy," Pelosi said.



JUSTIN BIEBER & HAILEY BALDWIN: Total eclipse of the heart! The newly engaged couple goes to eat dinner at Cecconi's in Brooklyn, New York, while Bieber pops a piece of Eclipse gum in his mouth.

Scarlett Johansson quits trans role after LGBT backlash

LOS ANGELES, JUL 14 (PTI): Hollywood star Scarlett Johansson has dropped out of a role in which she was going to play a transgender man following a backlash from the LGBT community.

The actor exited the drama film "Rub and Tug" a little more than a week after her casting sparked backlash amid trans groups and activists.

"In light of recent ethical questions raised surrounding my casting as Dante Tex Gill, I have decided to respectfully withdraw my participation in the project. Our cultural understanding of transgender people continues to advance, and I've learned a lot from the community since making my first statement about my casting and realise it was insensitive.

"I have great admiration and love for the trans community and am grateful that the conversation regarding inclusivity in Hollywood continues. According to GLAAD, LGBTQ+ characters dropped 40 per cent in 2017 from the previous year, with no representation of trans characters in any major studio release," Johansson told Out Magazine in a statement.



"Rub and Tug" focused on Dante Tex Gill, a crime kingpin who used his massage parlour as a front for prostitution in the '70s and '80s. Gill lived his life as a trans man, which led many on social media to wonder why a trans actor was not tapped for the role.

"Oh word?? So you can continue to play us but we can't play y'all? Trace Lysette, a transgender actress best known for appearing on Amazon's "Transparent," wrote on Twitter after the casting announcement.

"Actors who are trans never even get to audition FOR ANYTHING OTHER THAN ROLES OF TRANS CHARAC-

TERS," tweeted Jamie Clayton, another transgender actress known for her role on "Sense8."

"While I would have loved the opportunity to bring Dante's story and transition to life, I understand why many feel he should be portrayed by a transgender person, and I am thankful that this casting debate, albeit controversial, has sparked a larger conversation about diversity and representation in film.

"I believe that all artists should be considered equally and fairly. My production company, These Pictures, actively pursues projects that both entertain and push boundaries. We look forward

to working with every community to bring these most poignant and important stories to audiences worldwide," Johansson added.

Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) responded to the news with a statement, celebrating the decision as well as those who spoke out against the casting.

"Scarlett Johansson's announcement, together with the transgender voices who spoke out about this film, are game changers for the future of transgender images in Hollywood.

"Hollywood changed how Americans understand gay and lesbian lives, and TV is starting to do the same for transgender people with authentic transgender portrayals being major hits with critics and audiences. The film industry has a real opportunity to do the same," said GLAAD president and CEO Sarah Kate Ellis.

New Regency won an auction for "Rub and Tug" on July 2, and it was set to be directed by Rupert Sanders, who previously worked with Johansson on "Ghost in the Shell."

Joaquin Phoenix says his Joker film will be 'unique'

Los Angeles, Jul 14 (PTI): Actor Joaquin Phoenix has revealed that his upcoming Joker film directed by Todd Phillips will be "unique".

The 43-year-old actor, who recently signed on to appear in the untitled DC movie, said the film would not easily fit into any specific genre.

"I wouldn't quite classify this as like any genre. I wouldn't say it's a superhero movie, or a studio movie. It feels unique, and I think more than anything, and probably the most important thing, is Todd seems very passionate about it and very giving, and so that's exciting.

'I think, underneath the excitement of these films, and the size of them, there are these incredible charac-



ters that are dealing with real life struggles. And sometimes that is uncovered and exposed, and sometimes it isn't,

and so I always felt, like, there were characters in comics that were really interesting and deserve the opportunity

to be kind of studied. And so I think that's what Todd sees appealing about this idea," Phoenix told Collider.

Biopic should be told truthfully, says Chitrangada Singh



Actor Chitrangada Singh, who has produced "Soorma", says biopics should be narrated truthfully.

With "Soorma", a biopic on hockey player Sandeep Singh who made a miraculous comeback after facing a near death experience through hard work, Chitrangada has joined the bandwagon of female actors turning producers.

"It is a very powerful story and since it is a biopic it should be told truthfully. Sometimes we do dramatise things and I had promised Sandeep that we would be truthful to his story. There is nothing we have added for the sake of cinema," she told PTI.

"Ninety per cent of the film is true, just 10 per cent is not because we couldn't take names of certain people and we couldn't get some permissions. There is no fake incident that has been created, it is all real," she added.

At a time when Bollywood is bringing on celluloid inspiring tales of sports stars from Milkha Singh to MS

Dhoni, Chitrangada says making a biopic on somebody who is not known enough was challenging.

"We need to make heroes out of people we don't know and that doesn't mean they are less heroic. In our society, there are so many people who are heroes in their own right and we don't know about them, their achievements," she adds.

Diljit Dosanjh essays Singh in the biographical drama that released today, and Chitrangada believes that in a biopic an actor should resemble the person on whom the film is based for it to be relatable to the audience.

"Lot of names were discussed, but when Diljit's name came we just went ahead with him. When you are making a biopic, you have to match the physicality, you need to have a strong resemblance otherwise it is disconnecting. Diljit was fit, he was bang on with the look test and he looked like Sandeep."

Chitrangada, 41, first met Singh, through a

friend in Delhi and after listening to his story, she felt apologetic for not being aware about him and his struggles and the comeback, which she says, left her in a state of "disbelief".

"I was apologetic that I did not know anything about him. When I heard his story, I was blown away. It is an unbelievable feat that he made a great comeback. I have been around sports people all my life, I know it is extremely difficult to make a comeback. It was absolute disbelief."

The actor-producer says what touched her the most about Singh's struggle is his fight for self-respect.

"He was left alone by a lot of people and did not have funds to look after himself... He had no idea if he would ever be able to make a comeback or walk or run or be a part of the team. He fought for self respect. We are sometimes left in a corner and the only thing you fight for is yourself and the belief that you have in yourself.

ARIES: You might come across strong opposition today from someone who seems to want to cut straight through to your heart, Aries. In reality, this is a message reminding you to think about things in terms of the collective - the oneness of us all. Be aware of a greater perspective in which you see more than just your side of the issue. Talk to people you trust before making any major decisions.

TAURUS: Act on your instincts today, Taurus, and you won't go wrong. You may need to give up a bit of control and put logical thinking aside for the day. Let the wind take you where it wants you to go. Explore your mind and its interactions with others. You'll find that it will be just about impossible to solidify any plans. You're better off exploring options and comparing notes with others. Don't pigeonhole yourself into one way of thinking.

GEMINI: Today you'll find that you're the missing puzzle piece that people need in every situation, Gemini. Engage in light conversation in social arenas and feel free to turn your charm up full blast. You have the ability to make favorable impressions on just about everyone, so get the day off on the right foot. Get out of bed earlier than normal and get your blood pumping with a brisk walk or workout.

CANCER: You may find that people want to do a great deal of talking but not a great deal of feeling today, Cancer. Go ahead and put your emotions on the back burner and let your mind take over. Deal with facts and make sure your emotions don't interfere with the information you receive. Things can get clouded if you don't stay true to the communication that's taking place. Be conscious of your words.

LEO: You should be able to evaluate your emotions from a very neutral, detached perspective today, Leo. Use this opportunity to take action based on what you feel. Make sure your actions aren't reactionary and that you aren't simply acting rashly in response to someone else's hasty maneuvers. Think before you make any sudden moves. You'll be amazed at what incredible things can develop if you simply use your head a bit first.

VIRGO: If you're talking about another person today, Virgo, make sure you aren't saying anything that would be upsetting if they were standing right there. Gossip may be running rampant, but that's no excuse for you to contribute to it. Be aware that what you say has a strong impact on the people around you and is likely to reach many more ears than you may think.

LIBRA: It's important for you to take action on a day like today, Libra. Trust yourself and your instincts. Oftentimes you'll have the perfect advice for every situation and every other person except yourself. Remember that you might have to consult others in order to find the best counsel for yourself. Talk things out and take definitive action. Hesitation causes delay. You have all the facts you need.

SCORPIO: You might find yourself a bit unfocused and confused about which way to go, Scorpio. The baffled look on your face isn't helping anyone else figure out how to help you. Don't feel obliged to remain in an unhealthy situation. It may be time to let go and break some ties to things that no longer work for you. Feel good about extricating yourself from old habits that no longer serve you.

SAGITTARIUS: It's important for you to get outside and feel the wind blowing, Sagittarius. Reconnect with nature and be aware of the four elements. Take deep breaths and fill your lungs with this energizing life force. Imagine yourself on a mountaintop looking over a vast ocean below. Expand your awareness so that nothing escapes your attention. Keep your head clear of clutter and be open to new adventures.

CAPRICORN: Make practical use of the thoughts you have synthesized over the last few days, Capricorn. Stretch your boundaries and extend your wisdom to the people around you. This is a day to take action. Connect with your heart and move forward with your plans. We normally think of our hearts as being soft, tender, and vulnerable. Today think of your heart as being tough, strong, and adventurous.

AQUARIUS: This is an important day for you to make valuable connections with others, Aquarius. You'll find yourself engaged in fast-paced, witty conversations and debates from which you can learn a great deal. You're good at seeing both sides of an issue, but the problem is that this can lead to indecisiveness and an inability to commit to anything. Choose a path today and stick to it.

PISCES: It could be hard for you to get a handle on things today, Pisces, as your focus seems to jump from one subject to the next without finding resolution for any. This isn't a day to find solutions. You're better off researching, asking questions, and gathering facts. Keep the channels of communication open, and don't try to pin anyone down for a solid answer. You'll accomplish a great deal by keeping things active and light.