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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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Litterateur KN Sharma conferred 1st Rashmi Prasad Alley Literary Award

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 31 AUG:

In keeping with its mission to honour unsung heroes of Sikkim who have contributed in the development of Nepali and other State recognized languages, Sikkim Pragma Pratisthan has conferred the 1st Rashmi Prasad Alley Literary Award to litterateur KN Sharma for his contribution to the Nepali language.

Chief Minister Pawan Chamling handed the cash award of Rs 31,000 along with shawl and felicitation to Mr Sharma in a function organized by Sikkim Pragma Pratisthan to mark the 26th Bhasa Manyata Diwas at Manan Kendra in Gangtok today.

Mr Chamling has also announced Rs 5 lakh from Chief



Minister's Welfare Fund to Sikkim Pragma Pratisthan

and Rs 2 lakh for literary magazine for Higher School

and College level students for promotion of Nepali lan-

guage in the State of Sikkim. In his address, Mr Cham-

ling urged Sikkimese students to work with firm

dedication, sincerity and responsibility so that they can achieve their goal not just for personal gain but for the upliftment of the society as a whole.

Marking the recognition of Nepali language in the Indian Constitution as historic, Mr Chamling said that the overpowering influence of the global link language English over local languages is a universal phenomenon and should not be taken as a deterrent.

"Rather, we should positively make individual and collective efforts to safeguard and promote our own language," said Mr Chamling.

He further said that conscious efforts should be made to safeguard and promote

turn to pg02

Black Cat Div GOC calls on Governor Ganga Prasad

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 31 AUG:

General Officer Commanding, Black Cat Division, Major General NS Raja Subramani, called on Governor Ganga Prasad at Raj Bhavan this morning.

A press communiqué received from Raj Bhavan informs that it was a courtesy call by Major General Subramani to the Governor on his assumption of office last Sunday. Major General also extended greetings and best wishes to the Gover-



nor for his stay in Sikkim.

The Governor expressed that synergy and coordination existing between Black Cat Division

and civil population of Sikkim Division should be maintained, strengthened and taken forward in a cordial manner.

Banks will have to 'abort' lending to infra sector, esp power companies, warns SBI

MUMBAI, AUG 31 (PTI): The nation's largest lender State Bank today said banks will have to "abort" lending to infrastructure projects, especially to the power sector, because of the harrowing experience of the past decade as most such loans have turned sour.

The power sector loans are facing a slew of problems due to a changes in non-performing assets recognition after the February 12 RBI circular, which was upheld by the Allahabad High Court last week.

Following the end of the RBI deadline on August 27, as many as 30 power projects with a cumulative exposure of Rs 1.7 trillion are now facing bankruptcy proceedings. Banks have under a fortnight to resolve them, else will have to be sent to NCLTs.

"Somehow, the kind of problems which all banks are now faced with, may be they will have to abort their financing to the infra projects," SBI managing director Dinesh Kumar Khara told reporters on the sidelines of an event.

When asked if the infra sector funding, critical for economic progress, is "untouchable for banks now", he singled out the power sector saying, "nobody wants to touch that".

Making it clear that banks are open to lending to all the sectors till the risks are hedged properly, he said there are problems relating to the fuel supply pacts and power purchase agreements.

Khara said bankers are open to funding road projects, and credited to the National Highways Authority which structures these projects.

Fellow managing director PK Gupta

ta said in the case of the power sector, the February 12 circular revamping the NPA recognition norms, has made the going difficult for banks because of the stipulation of quicker recognition of an asset as an NPA and its immediate referral to insolvency courts.

Gupta also said a referral to NCLT will naturally lead to the annulment of PPAs, which unnerves bankers.

SBI, which has around Rs 27,000 crore exposure to these troubled accounts, has assessed 11 power assets and has found four of them not resolvable, while the rest seven can be resolved, he said.

Gupta further said banks have 15 days after the 180-day deadline to resolve them ended August 27. If banks are not able to iron out resolution plans, some of the seven may also have to go to the NCLTs.

He, however, said the February 12 circular will not have a significant impact on SBI as it has already recognised a majority of these are NPAs and has provided accordingly.

"The amount of incremental provisioning that we may have to make is not very substantial as most of these assets are anyways NPAs and adequately provided for," he said. Also, the full and immediate provisioning does not cover these accounts, which means that banks can stagger the loss coverage over a year.

According to a recent Icra report, after the August 27 deadline, banks will have to set aside around Rs 1 trillion in additional provisions for around 70

turn to pg02

SDF carries out Umbrella Rally in Singtam

**SKM CANNOT FOOL
EAST DISTRICT
AGAIN: DB THAPA**

SUMMIT REPORT

SINGTAM, 31 AUG:

Singtam Bazaar in East Sikkim today saw a massive gathering of Sikkim Democratic Front supporters from five constituencies participating in SDF's Umbrella Rally held in front of Singtam PS. Area MLA cum Agriculture Minister, Somnath Poudyal, SDF East district in-charge, DB Thapa, Gnathang-Machong MLA cum Transport Minister, DT Lepcha, accompanied by members of Singtam Nagar Panchayat, Zilla Panchayats and party supporters participated in the event.

Speaking to reporters, SDF East district in-charge, Mr Thapa, said that a series of umbrella rallies are being held in different parts of East district.

On Sikkim Krantikari Morcha giving a strong fight to SDF in the 2014 election by winning from eight constituencies of East district, Mr Thapa alleged that SKM had misguided people of the district.

"There were some issues during the time but those issues have been resolved. It is impossi-



ble for SKM to create that kind of propaganda again. This time, all the 13 constituencies including the Tumin-Lingee Constituency in East district will be won by SDF. We have swept the urban local bodies and panchayat elections. This time the East district people will not be fooled like they were before," said Mr Thapa.

Tumin-Lingee MLA cum

Tourism Minister, Ugen T Gyatso, in his address termed Singtam as the "root" of SDF party.

On SKM president, PS Tamang [Golay] claiming to come to power in 2019, Mr Bhutia said, "SKM is building castles in the air. 2019 is not far away, just few months left now. You will see the results."

Slamming the SKM supremo,

Gnathang-Machong MLA cum Transport Minister, Mr Lepcha said, "Golay cannot contest the 2019 election as per law. When he addresses the people of bazaar areas, he talks about being captain or coach. But when he is in the villages, he talks about contesting elections. He should know that no one is above the Constitution and law."

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Training on organic certification and input adoption at Lingdong

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 31 AUG:

Organic Sikkim, a service provider agency under Sikkim Organic Mission, conducted GPU level training programme on certification and input adoption on organic farming for farmers of Lingdong Berfok GPU and senior students of Lingdong Secondary School at Gram Prashashan Kendra in Lower Lingdong, North Sikkim on 30 Aug, a press release informs.

Zilla Panchayat member, Ranzong Lepcha, Panchayat vice president, Chukit Lepcha, Panchayat member, Sonam Dupden Lepcha, Village Level Worker cum Mission Officer, KT Bhutia, and other officials attended the programme.

Field Coordinator [Organic Sikkim], Meena Sharma, in her address highlighted the concept and principle of organic farming and benefits of or-



ganic certification. She also briefed on National Programme for Organic Production [NPOP] and National Organic Programme [NOP] standards while stressing on the marketing procedure through ICS and importance of transaction certificate for marketing of organic produce.

Mission Officer cum VLW, Ms Bhutia, highlighted various methods of on-farm input preparation using local available farm materials. She also briefed on the usage of off-farm seed and inputs which has been distributed to the farmers by Food Security & Agriculture Develop-

ment Department earlier. Panchayat member, Mr Lepcha, extended gratitude to the FS&AD Department for organising such a beneficial programme for the farmers and updating them on organic farming practices.

Zilla Panchayat member, Ms Lepcha, urged

students to be well informed on organic farming practices so that they can guide their parents for documentation works.

A copy of Scope Certificate was also handed over to Lingdong Berfok GPU by Mission Officer, Ms Sharma, on behalf of Organic Sikkim.

Banks will have to 'abort' lending to...

contd from pg01

accounts in the power, EPC and telecom sectors worth around Rs 3.8 trillion.

Gupta said in an ideal case, if a bank is given more time, it will be able to get a resolution plan for the asset without going to NCLTs.

When asked as to when the bank will return to profitability, he said resolution of a few big assets is underway and as and when it happens, it will be able to turn back into the black.

Meanwhile, Gupta said apart from the roads sector, there is no demand for large credit from any other corporate sector now.

He said retail continues to drive the loan demand and has been growing at 14-15 per cent for the bank. He also exuded confidence that the bank will be able to meet the 10 per cent credit growth target for the fiscal.

On the travails in the infra sector, Khara said generally, over 25 years are required for a project to mature and SBI's experience in the sector is only 10-years old.

It can be noted that a bulk of the 11.6 per cent NPAs for the system have come from the infrastructure sector.

Long-term financing alternatives beyond bank lending have already evolved and both RBI and government are cajoling the players to avail of the same.

SKM welcomes new members from Middle Shyari

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 31 AUG:

Twenty-three families from Zim Pong Gaon, Middle Shyari, under Syari Constituency, today joined Sikkim Krantikari Morcha in the presence of Area MLA cum acting president, Kunga Nima Lepcha, and chief coordinator, Sonam Lama.

An SKM press release claims that the new members had been supporters of Sikkim Democratic Front since 1994.

While welcoming the new members, Mr Lepcha stated that they had made the right choice by choosing SKM that promises



uniform development in the upcoming government party.

Later, SKM executives of North district called on chief coordinator, Mr Lama, in Gangtok where-

in it was decided to intensify party activities in all three constituencies of the district.

Similarly, Constituency level committee of Zoom

Salghari, West Sikkim held its coordination meeting at Bhasmey Ward where the members put forward strategies to strengthen the party in the Constituency.



Hee Karate Academy bags runners-up trophy at State c'ship

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 31 AUG:

Hee Karate Academy has bagged six gold, six silver and six bronze medals, clinching the runner-up trophy in the 16th State Karate Championship 2018 held at Indoor Hall in Namchi, South Sikkim from 24-26 Aug. Twenty karatekas from the academy had participated in the championship organized by Sikkim State Karate-Do Association, a press release informs.

The gold medalists include Muksam Limboo [6-7 years boys kumite], Meeke Hangma Limboo [16-18 years girls kata], Rohit Poudyal [senior men individual kata], Bishnu Kumar Limboo [senior men 45 kg kumite], Mingso Hang

Limboo [14-15 years boys kumite], and Suyam Limboo, Bishal Limboo and Mukum Hang Limboo from the junior team kata.

Likewise, the silver medalists are Anjali Subba, Meeke Hangma Limboo, Rohit Poudyal, Omker Gurung, Srijana Subba and Suyam Limboo.

Similarly, Dina Hangma Subba, Thungwamukma Subba, Sandipa Subba, Mukum Hang Limboo, Bishal Limboo and Phungphona Limboo of Hee Karate Academy have bagged the bronze medals.

Founder of the academy and coach, Bhim Bahadur Subba, has expressed satisfaction and pride over the performance of the players in the mega event.

Hindi Fortnight begins at SSB Gangtok Sector

GANGTOK, 31 AUG [PIB]: Hindi fortnight commenced at Sashastra Seema Bal [SSB] sector headquarter in Gangtok today wherein Deputy Inspector General, SSB Gangtok, BK Pal, informed the jawans and officers that the fortnight will be observed from 01-15 Sept.

In his address, Mr Pal urged Hindi speaking personnel and officers to extend help to personnel who belong to non-Hindi speaking belt in using Hindi regularly. It will help in extensive use of

Hindi in daily functioning of the office, he added.

Assistant Publicity Officer, SSB Gangtok, GD Saklani, informed that during this fortnight, various activities and competitions will be organized along with distribution of suitable rewards. Hindi Diwas will be observed on 14 Sept at SSB's sector headquarter in Gangtok wherein prizes will be distributed to the participants of Hindi competition.

India, Nepal exchange MoU on Raxual-Kathmandu railway line as PM Modi meets Oli

SHIRISH B PRADHAN

KATHMANDU, AUG 31 (PTI): India and Nepal today exchanged an MoU to build a strategic railway line connecting Bihar's Raxual city to Kathmandu after Prime Minister Narendra Modi held talks on all aspects of the bilateral ties with his Nepalese counterpart K P Sharma Oli.

This was the third meeting between Modi and Oli this year. They met earlier during Oli's visit to India in April and the subsequent visit of Prime Minister Modi to Nepal in May.

"Our deliberations were wide-ranging, covering multiple aspects of India-Nepal relations," Prime Minister Modi said after the meeting on the sidelines of the 4th BIMSTEC Summit here.

"We discussed ways to further deepen our economic, trade and



cultural ties. Enhancing connectivity between our nations was dis-

cussed as well," he added.

Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Raveesh Kumar said that the two leaders held a detailed review on all aspects of the bilateral relationship.

They had a "warm meeting", Kumar added.

"Following the talks, PM @narendramodi and PM of Nepal K.P. Sharma Oli witnessed the exchange of an MoU between the Government of India & the Government of Nepal regarding preliminary engineering-cum-traffic survey of the broad gauge line between Raxaul (India) & Kathmandu (Nepal)," Kumar tweeted.

The MoU was signed by Secretary at the Ministry of Physical Planning and Works, Madhusudan Adhikari, from Nepali side and Manjiv Singh Puri from the Indian side.

In consultation with the Government of Nepal, India's Konkan Railway Corporation Ltd. will be conducting a

preliminary engineering-cum-traffic survey of the new rail line.

The Raxaul-Kathmandu rail line is expected to expand connectivity by enhancing people-to-people linkages between the two countries and promoting economic growth and development, said Indian Embassy in a press release.

The signing of the MoU comes two years after China agreed to construct a strategic railway link with Nepal through Tibet with an apparent aim of reducing the Himalayan nation's dependence on India.

It also comes in the backdrop of recent Chinese linkages with Nepal as it took on building three highways to be completed by 2020. The two countries have recently also signed a transit treaty.

This agreement also comes years after a sense of mistrust had prevailed when certain sections in Nepal blamed India for the 135-day blockade in 2015 - 2016 that had crippled Nepal's economy.

There are three other railway projects in the pipeline -- New Jalpaiguri-Kakrabhitta, Nautanwa-Bhairahawa and Nepalgunj Road-Nepalgunj.

Earlier, Prime Minister Modi had a series of bilateral meetings, including discussions with his counterparts from Thailand and Bangladesh, on the sidelines of the 4th BIMSTEC Summit here.

He also held talks with presidents of Sri Lanka and Myanmar.

The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is a regional grouping comprising India, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Bhutan and Nepal. The grouping accounts for 22 per cent of the global population, and has a combined gross domestic product of USD 2.8 trillion.

Litterateur KN Sharma conferred 1st Rashmi Prasad Alley Literary Award...

contd from pg01

mote our language which can be possible only if intellectuals and members of the civil society collectively take initiative.

"Instead of blaming anyone, we should introspect on our own shortcomings and work towards mending them. Government has consistently worked towards preservation of Nepali language through creation of infrastructures and institutions of learn-

ing," Mr Chamling said adding that Government has taken policy decision to recruit Nepali language teachers from Primary level from next academic session.

He appealed to litterateurs and researchers to come up with a middle path so that all languages of the State are incorporated in academics. He also extended his support towards organising a body to develop the Nepali language further.

Mr Chamling made a clarion call for emotional and intellectual integration of the Sikkimese people and expressed that strength lies in unity. He also highlighted the accomplishments of the State in every sector through good governance and inclusive policies of the Government.

The Chief Minister dedicated a section of his address to the students, exhorting them to make

the most of the unlimited opportunities provided by the Government.

"Some of you might get through your examinations by resorting to unethical means but to pass in life, you cannot afford to copy. You have to find your own answers to life's challenges. But the student-friendly policies of my Government are such that they can even guide you through the challenges of life," stated the CM.

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Gangtok on Saturday, 01 Sept

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2 Indians among Ramon Magsaysay Award winners

MANILA, AUG 31 (PTI): Two Indians - one a psychiatrist who works for the mentally-ill street persons and another whose initiative to harness science and culture creatively for economic progress improved the lives of Ladakhi youth - today received this year's Ramon Magsaysay Award.

Bharat Vatwani and Sonam Wangchuk are among six individuals who received the award, regarded as the Asian version of the Nobel Prize.

Vatwani was recognised for "his tremendous courage and healing compassion in embracing India's mentally-afflicted destitute, and his steadfast and magnanimous dedication to the work of restoring and affirming the human dignity of even the most ostracized," the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation said in its citation for the winner.

Vatwani, who is based in Mumbai, and his wife started an informal operation of bringing mentally-ill street persons to their private clinic for treatment, leading them to establish Shradha Rehabilitation Foundation in 1988, aimed at rescuing mentally-ill persons living on the streets; providing free shelter, food, and psychiatric treatment; and reuniting them with their families.

Wangchuk, 51, was recognised for "his uniquely systematic, collaborative and community-driven reform of learning systems in remote northern India, thus improving the life opportunities of Ladakhi youth, and his constructive engagement of all sectors in local society to harness science and culture creatively for economic progress, thus setting an example for minority peoples in the world," the citation said.

Wangchuk was a 19-year-old engineering student at the National Institute of Technology in Srinagar, when he went into tutoring to finance his schooling and help woefully unprepared students pass the national college matriculation exams.



Pre-Special Summary Revision training in Namchi

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 31 AUG:

Election Commission of India declared commencement of Special Summary Revision [SSR] with respect to 01 Jan, 2019 as the qualifying date with effect from 01 Sept, 2018 to 31 Oct, 2018. Consequently, pre-SSR training was conducted for Booth Level Officers and Supervisors of South district today at Community Hall in Namchi, South Sikkim, a press release informs.

At the outset, Under Secretary, Election Department, Tripti H Subba, briefed the Supervisors and

BLOs about their roles and duties with regard to the upcoming SSR. She also requested all BLOs to use and popularize National Voters' Services Portal [NVSP], Election jingle which will be broadcast from 01 Sept, 2018 at local radio stations and the recently released YouTube video.

Election Department, South engaged two BLOs namely Basudev Khanal and Chet Prakash Rai of Assembly Constituencies Barfung and Namchi Singithang respectively as resource persons for the said event considering their expertise, knowledge and innovative ideas.

Mr Khanal briefed about filling up various forms and documents that are required to be collected by the BLOs. He also apprised the gathering on maintaining BLO register.

Mr Rai then took over and gave a detailed presentation on NVSP and BLO hybrid app.

The programme concluded with the distribution of honorarium, forms, stationeries and posters.

The Under Secretary requested all to work in coordination with each other and make SSR 2018 a success.



TB elimination campaign held in Soreng

GYALSHING, 31 AUG [IPR]: To achieve the goal of elimination of Tuberculosis by 2022 as initiated by Chief Minister Pawan Chamling, an "Advocacy, Communication and Social Mobilization on TB elimination campaign" was conducted here at Soreng Community hall, under Soreng PHC, in West Sikkim today.

The workshop was chaired by Zilla Adhakshya, Devika Subba, in the presence of Sub Divisional Magistrate, Chief Medical Officer [West], District Tuberculosis Officer [West], Block Development Officers and Panchayats along with ASHAs, AWWs and other dignitaries.

District Tuberculosis Officer, Dr Bikash Pradhan, presented data on TB cases in the country and the State and reflected on ground reality of TB prevalence.

He appealed for multi-sectoral involvement for planning an effective outreach programme to elimi-

nate TB from the State. He assured of equipped computerised system in the district to test TB and added that equipment to test MDR will also be installed at PHCs for better service at the earliest. He urged all to work with dedication and include TB agenda in every monthly meeting of various departments.

Chief Medical Officer, Dr. T Namgyal, highlighted various initiatives of the State Government including HPV vaccination campaign, Proud Mother Scheme and Village Health Sanitation & Nutrition Committee [VHSNC].

He informed that 70 countries across the world are conducting the HPV vaccination programme successfully. It is an expensive vaccination but in Sikkim, it is being provided free of cost to protect girl children from cervical cancer. With no side effects, about 7000 girl children have been vaccinated,

he added.

He also spoke on the implementation of Mission Indra Dhanush, a flagship programme under Gram Swaraj Abhiyan to immunize against seven life threatening diseases among new born babies. He further informed that District Hospital, Gyalshing is equipped with experts and facilities for the same.

Zilla Adhakshya, Ms Subba, urged all to be aware and conscious about health and hygiene to cope with emerging challenges. She appreciated the contribution of ASHAs for their dedicated service to the community.

She suggested involving students in motivating and educating people about TB. She further requested all Panchayat members to play an active role right from communication to generating awareness in eliminating TB from the State.



SUMMIT REPORT

GYALSHING, 31 AUG:

Five-day training programme for 50 elementary teachers of West district that had commenced on 27 Aug concluded today here at the conference hall of District Institute of Education and Training [DIET] in Gyalshing, West Sikkim. In this connection, a valedictory function of the aforesaid training programme was also organised today, a press release informs.

Additional Director, Human Resource Development Department, West, Eden T Bhutia, at-

tended the valedictory function today as chief guest accompanied by Principal of Kyongsha Government Senior Secondary School, Susma Subba, as guest of honour.

Principal, DIET

Gyalshing, OP Ghatani, informed that the training covered various topics like Corporal Punishment as per NCPCR guidelines, POC SO, Mental Health and Inclusive Education. Different guest resource persons

were also invited from concerned departments for the programme, he added.

Additional Director, HRDD West, Ms Bhutia, in her address said, "21st century is the age of information. We have to

implement it and come out with effective results. In teaching profession, we must be genuine."

Emphasizing on the POC SO Act, she urged all to take a pledge to make the schools of West district free from crime against minors. She further added that due to mental health issues like depression, many teachers are taking voluntarily retirement on which proper research needs to be undertaken.

The valedictory function concluded with the distribution of certificates to all 50 participants.



Sikkim U-20 to play at national Futsal C'ship in Bengaluru

GANGTOK, 31 AUG: Sikkim U-20 futsal team has left for Bengaluru to participate in the national Futsal Championship being organised by Futsal Association of India from 02-06 Sept. The team is led by its coach, Tenzing N Bhutia, and manager, Sonam Tamang, a press release informs.

Demonstration on preparation of herbal spray at Lashithang

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 31 AUG:

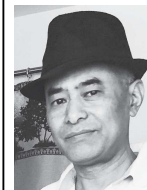
International Panacea Limited [IPL] organized Ward level training cum demonstration programme on preparation of herbal spray for pest and disease management at Lashithang Ward, under Amba GPU, in East Sikkim today, a press release informs.

Field Executives, Sarada Ghimirey and Narad Danggal, presented demonstration on preparation of herbal spray from Fermented Plant Extract [FPE] for red ant, termites and nematodes management. The farmers were also briefed on documentation process of organic farming.

The farmers thanked the Field Executives for providing basic remedy for pest management.



ANTHYESTI KRIYA



The 13 days Antheyesti Kriya of **Late Raju Kumar Pradhan** who left for his heavenly abode falls on **1st September 2018**. All relatives, friends and well wishers are requested to join us

is offering prayers for

departed soul at **Lower Arithang, near Snowlion Security Office, Gangtok, East Sikkim**. We also like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to all those who stood by us during our time of bereavement.

Family members:

Mrs Phur Diki Sherpa (wife), Manzil Pradhan (son), Merina Pradhan, Deepa Pradhan, Deepika Pradhan (daughters), L.K. Pradhan [brother], Shila Pradhan [sister] Contact: 9647875404, 8016053652.

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KINDLY CHECK THE RESULT WITH THE OFFICIAL GAZETTE

Training for 50 elementary teachers of West district concludes

SummitTIMES

Bully at Your Own Risk

*Democracy allows dissent and disagreement.
The authorities should respect that*

A friend narrated an interesting episode recently. He was on board an evening flight out of Kolkata. In these days of slow economies when airlines are not even maintaining their fleets properly, it comes as no surprise that they are also cutting back on housekeeping expenses. As a result, this plane was infested with mosquitoes. Everyone was swatting around until one of the passengers called in the stewards and requested them to do something about the machchars. The hostess said they could do nothing about it and pointed out that even they had to deal with the pesky insects. This happened recently, so there was the worry of dengue and malaria as well. This passenger kept complaining. All anyone wanted was for something to be done. Even a polite excuse might have worked. The plane had not yet taken off. A few minutes later, the captain radioed the air traffic controllers "reporting" that one of the passengers had become a dangerous nuisance and needed to be disembarked. This person was being persistent, may be even obnoxious at worst, not a dangerous nuisance and the only potentially dangerous presence in the plane was the swarm of mosquitoes and the officials would not even tortoise-coil away. The Captain, as the friend put it, did what the Indian state invariably does when it cannot or does not want to reason with someone – brand them a nuisance/spoilspoil/ antinational etc and get rid of them.

In another incident, the other day a cabbie was pulled over by a traffic cop who had received a wireless alert claiming that the vehicle had stopped at an unauthorized spot to pick up a passenger. The driver insisted that he had allowed in a passenger at a traffic jam (not of his making) and the passenger attested to as such. The cop was gruff and insisted he had to do his job. The cabbie had two choices – cough up the fine then and there or go to court, fight it, waste time and pay double if he loses.

If you are in the airline business, you will see nothing wrong in what the air crew in the first instance did. If you are taxi driver, vehicle owner or even a regular commuter, you will empathise with the challaned taxi driver because we have witnessed too many instances when traffic rules and driving etiquette are applied exclusively on the lay citizens and don't exist for anyone in khaki (and also the two shades of blue in Sikkim's case). We also see such attitudes manifest from positions of authority every time they even suspect a hint of emancipation rising in the cattle class (the mango people, as we like to call them nowadays). Sample what happened with the govt-student clash in 2014. Officials at HRDD were stereotypically pompous in addressing the concerns raised by the students, the college management was typically spineless in discussing the issue and the cops played to role when they went at the kids with rolls instead of some more patience just because the kids were not being quickly obedient enough. That day, however, the kids had had enough. They pushed back. Hard. Even though we have done everything to infantilize them by dictating their syllabus and routines and putting them into uncomfortable uniforms, they had shuffled through enough humiliation for the day. Later, the authorities continued to talk down to them during negotiations. Soon, the issue spilled out of the campus and everyone with an axe to grind against the government, the administration and all its other manifestations took to the streets and even slapped down the students when they said they wanted out.

There are lessons to be learned from all this, and the first one is for the authorities to realize that India is not a colony anymore. The cops maintain law & order for the benefit of the people and are not given uniforms and authority to keep the people in line. Air crews were given the power to deplane passengers because an out of control passenger midair posed a safety risk. They cannot throw off people for being obnoxious just as cops cannot be allowed a free run to interpret rules as they want and enforce them as they please. One understands the difficulties of allowing freedoms while enforcing order, but come on, we had seven decades to figure that one out. Democracy allows us safe releases for pent up frustrations, dissents and disagreements, but we plug those every time we allow authority to play the bully and impose indignities on the people. Then, occasionally the people explode. There is no need to suffer those when it could have been avoided and healthier democracy created in its lieu. But we are not allowing it, are we? Not with the latest round of arrest of free thinkers and intellectuals on the argument that they are Naxal collaborators. Sympathizers of the denied and marginalised may be, but that is not the same as collaborators.

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

Social media mobilisation is a bright spot in Uganda's dark Bobi Wine saga

GEORGE OGOLA
theconversation.com

President Yoweri Museveni has ruled Uganda with authoritarian firmness for the last 32 years. But even his most ardent supporters were shocked by the ferocity with which his security forces recently meted out violence on journalists and supporters of Robert Kyagulanyi, a musician-turned-politician popularly known as Bobi Wine.

Wine, an opposition MP, has emerged as a threat to Uganda's old political order. Against many odds, including systematic state intimidation, in 2017 he won the Kyaddondo East constituency seat at a canter. He got nearly 80% of the vote and beating the ruling party and the main opposition's candidates. In subsequent by-elections, the candidates he has backed have all won.

But the weight of this success is becoming painful for Wine. He and 11 others have been charged with treason after one of the vehicles in Museveni's convoy was pelted with stones at a campaign rally. Wine was initially charged in a military court with illegally possessing a firearm. When the military dropped that charge, he was released – then immediately rearrested and charged with treason in a criminal court.

This shows how desperate authorities are to deal with the threat Wine poses. And the way Museveni's government has moved to keep a lid on how the case is being reported is raising fears that Uganda's democratic regression is deepening.

In full view of the public, journalists covering protests in Kampala calling for Wine's release were brutally assaulted. Their recording equipment was either confiscated or destroyed by security forces. This has sparked a national and international outcry.



Museveni's grip on power remains exceptionally strong. His control of the country's civic and political institutions is nearly complete after 32 years in power. But there are pockets of dissent emerging from digital platforms whose practical political consequences are being slowly realised.

CONTROLLING INFORMATION

Museveni runs a brutal regime. The control of information seems key to eliminating public dissent. A number of newspapers as well as radio and TV stations have been shut down over the years, always at the whim of the president.

Individual journalists have also borne the brunt of the state's violence. Arrests, kidnapping and torture are common. Some of Uganda's best journalists have fled the country over the years of Museveni's rule to seek refuge in neighbouring countries.

The Ugandan government's tight grip on the flow of information can also be seen in its various attempts to control the use of social media. It has obviously recognised this as a new platform for political expression. In 2016 the government shut down social media during the country's elections. Museveni defended the move, calling it a security measure to avert

lies intended to incite violence and illegal declaration of results.

In July this year, Uganda introduced an unprecedented tax on the use of social media services such as Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp. Critics see the 200 shilling tax as being specifically targeted at the youth and intended to discourage their use of social media for communication.

Despite these measures, social media has become an important form of political participation – especially for young Ugandans who are institutionally excluded from meaningful participation in the country's economic and political processes.

NEW POLITICAL PLATFORMS

Museveni has previously dismissed social media as a platform used particularly by young people for gossip.

But that "gossip" has become an important form of political participation and protest vernacular. What cannot be published in the newspapers or broadcast on radio or television finds expression in tweets, memes or other forms of social media.

In fact, social media is becoming a formal political platform in its own right. Following Wine's arrest social media users in Uganda and across the continent popularised the hashtag #Freebobiwine to focus attention on

him and his co-accused. The hashtag quickly attracted significant interest, and led to peaceful protests in Kenya, South Africa and at Ugandan embassies around the world.

It's on the back of this kind of attention that more than 80 world-famous human rights activists and artists – including Angelique Kidjo, Chris Martin, Wole Soyinka and Damon Albarn – expressed their support for Wine. They've also called for international organisations to censure Museveni.

This international attention prompted an unusual climbdown from Uganda's government. The military has apologised for its brutal handling of journalists. And Wine has been given bail on the treason charges.

Other repressive governments are no doubt watching this story unfold, and are worried. Such transcontinental alliances forged and popularised through social media are undermining many governments' attempts to control information and invalidate legitimate dissent. More importantly, the conversations enabled by hashtags like #FreeBobiWine borrow from international norms of conduct. This invests local campaigns with agency as well as legitimacy.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Bobi Wine's story of political intimidation by powerful government forces, detention and alleged torture, is a dark one. Social media's potential to organise and mobilise is a bright light in that darkness. This case may very well reveal how Uganda could look once Museveni's iron grip on traditional media is loosened and citizens have more space to debate, discuss and dissent.

[the writer is Reader in Journalism, University of Central Lancashire]

Memory loss isn't just an old person's problem- here's how young people can stay mentally fit

CATHERINE LOVEDAY
theconversation.com

When I give talks, I am often approached by people who are worried about their memory. Maybe they are studying for an exam and don't feel that they learn as well as their peers. Maybe they keep forgetting to close the window when they leave the house. Or maybe they struggle to remember an event that happened a few weeks ago but which everyone else can describe in vivid detail.

To feel that your memory may not be up to scratch can be unsettling or even downright frightening. And that's hardly surprising -- memory makes us who we are. Being able to reflect on and share the past is fundamental to our sense of identity, our relationships, and our capacity to imagine the future.

To lose any part of this ability not only causes problems in our daily routine, it threatens the very notion of who we are. By far the biggest health fear in people over the age of 50 is Alzheimer's disease and the catastrophic loss of personal memory it entails.

MEMORY DISORDERS IN YOUNG PEOPLE

Are concerns about memory the preserve of the post-retirement generation? It seems not. In fact, if modern trends are anything to go by, younger people are just as nervous of losing access to their past. Go to any big concert these days, and your view of the performer will frequently be obscured by a sea of smartphones, each committing the sights and sounds to a safe permanent digital record.

As far back as cave dwellers, humans have found ways to preserve knowledge and experiences, but has the modern lifestyle taken it a step too far? Could an over-reliance on technology make our memory systems lazier and less efficient?

Some studies have found that using an internet search engine can lead to poorer recall of information, although another study recently published failed to replicate this effect. And most researchers agree that in these situations it is not that memory becomes less effective, just that we use it differently.

How about recording events on a smartphone? A recent study showed that a group pausing to take photos at regular intervals had poorer recall of the event than those who were immersed in the experience. And an earlier piece of research suggested that photos helped people remember what they saw, but reduced their memory of what was said. It seems that the key factor in these situations is attention – actively taking photos may distract and distance someone from aspects of an experience, meaning that less is remembered.

However, there are novel ways around this problem if you insist on taking pictures. Our own work has shown that distraction can be countered if photos are taken automatically using a wearable camera.

TECHNOLOGY AND MEMORY

While it may be true that technology is changing the way we use our memory at times, there is no scientific reason to believe that it reduces the in-

herent capacity of our brains to learn.

Nevertheless, in today's fast-paced and demanding society, there are other factors that may have a negative impact, for example poor quality sleep, stress, distractions, depression and alcohol consumption. The good news is that these effects are generally regarded as temporary unless they continue over very long periods of time.

There are a small number of people who may experience memory problems over and above everyday forgetfulness. Head injuries, strokes, epilepsy, brain infections such as encephalitis, or congenital conditions such as hydrocephalus, a build up of fluid in the brain, can all lead to a significant loss in our ability to retain and recall information. And recently, a new condition has been identified -- severely deficient autobiographical memory -- which describes a small percentage of the population who report a specific but marked impairment in the ability to recall their past.

These people are the exception though, and most people who worry about their memory have no real cause for concern. When it comes to remembering, we all have our own strengths and weaknesses. The friend who gets top marks in every pub quiz may be the same one who always forgets where they left their wallet. And the partner who can describe last year's holiday in incredible detail may take forever to learn a new language. In fact, even world memory champions report everyday forgetfulness, like losing their keys.

By and large, where our memory fails us, it is because we are tired, not paying attention, or trying to do too much at once. Using lists, diaries and smartphone reminders does not make memory less efficient – rather, it frees the brain up to do other things. And instead of making us lazy, looking something up on the internet can help to reinforce or enrich our knowledge base.

But there may be occasions when technology gets in the way – by distracting us from a potentially special moment, or luring us into surfing the web instead of getting much-needed sleep. Most everyday memory lapses can be fixed simply by being more mindful and less busy. So, if you want to remember time with friends, my advice is to enjoy the moment, chat about it afterwards and enjoy a good night's sleep.

[the writer is Neuropsychologist, University of Westminster]



PM Modi inaugurates 400-bed Nepal-Bharat Maitri Pashupati Dharamshala

KATHMANDU, AUG 31 (PTI): Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Nepalese counterpart K P Sharma Oli today jointly inaugurated a 400-bed Nepal-Bharat Maitri Pashupati Dharamshala - a rest house for pilgrims - build with the Indian assistance in Kathmandu.

"I am glad to inaugurate the Nepal-Bharat Maitri Pashupati Dharamshala in Kathmandu," Prime Minister Modi said as he handed over the rest house to the Pashupati Area Development Trust.

As Siang swells, 19 airlifted from marooned areas in Arunachal, 200 rescued in Assam

ITANAGAR/GUWAHATI, AUG 31 (PTI): As many as 19 people were today airlifted by the Air Force from a flooded Arunachal Pradesh island, while over 200 others were rescued by disaster response teams from Assam's Dhemaji district as the Siang river, originating from China, continued to swell due to heavy rains.

Siang river, known as Tsangpo in China, flows downstream upon entering India to join the Brahmaputra.

The 19 rescued people - cattle-herders from Assam - were stranded for over 24 hours in East Siang district of Arunachal. The IAF operation followed a request by the district administration, East Siang DC Tamiyo Tatak said.

Arunachal Chief Minister Pema Khandu personally monitored the evacuation operation from Itanagar, the DC said, adding Lok Sabha MP Ninong Ering and Pasighat West MLA Tatung Jamoh along with police and



locals helped in rescuing the cattle.

The other 200, who were rescued by personnel of National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), had gone to Dhemaji, near East Siang, for

farming activities.

All of them, including children, have been brought to safety, sources in the Dhemaji administration said.

According to a Chinese government report, Tsangpo was in spate

because of heavy rains. The various GD (gauge and discharge) stations on the Tsangpo had observed a discharge of 9,020 cumec water on Wednesday, officials there said.

The administrations of East Siang and bordering Dhemaji, Lakhimpur and Dibrugarh in Assam had sounded alerts yesterday following rise in water level in Siang.

Over 1,000 families living along the river have been affected at Mebo area in East Siang, Arunachal MLA Lombo Tayeng said. Informing that 15 families of Seram-Ramku village lost their homes as the flood water came gushing in, he said most of the inhabitants on the left bank had been rescued to safe places.

Tayeng said Rs 1 lakh each will be provided for their rehabilitation.

He also sent a report to Union Minister Kiren Rijiju for needful action, besides requesting him to facilitate visit of an inter-ministerial

central team to assess the situation.

In a circular, the East Siang DC cautioned people against venturing into Siang River for fishing and swimming. According to sources in the Central Water Commission (CWC), the Siang river has become turbid.

In Lakhimpur and Dibrugarh districts of Assam, the administrations have taken precautionary measures in view of a CWC warning, which predicted an "unprecedented" rise in the water level of Brahmaputra, official sources said.

The Inland Waterways department has been asked to keep boats ready for rescuing people from riverine and other vulnerable areas, if need be, they said.

The administration has also instructed its officials to keep the army, paramilitary forces ready to reach out to the marooned people and stock food and medicine supplies for emergency situations.



BIMSTEC calls for holding accountable states that encourage terrorism

SHIRISH B PRADHAN

KATHMANDU, AUG 31 (PTI): Describing terrorism as a "great threat" to international peace and security, India and six other BIMSTEC nations today called for identifying and holding accountable States and non-State entities that encourage, support or finance terrorism, provide sanctuaries to terrorists and falsely extol their virtues.

The Kathmandu Declaration issued at the end of the two-day 4th BIMSTEC summit, which was attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi among others, deplored terror attacks in all parts of the world including in BIMSTEC countries and stressed that there can be no justification whatsoever for any act of terrorism.

"Today's proceedings at the BIMSTEC Summit were extremely productive. We built on the ground covered yesterday and reiterated our commitment to further strengthen multilateral cooperation in diverse areas," Modi said.

"Terrorism and transnational organised crimes continue to pose a great threat to international peace and security including in the BIMSTEC countries," the Kathmandu declaration said as it strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations wherever and by whomsoever committed.

The declaration, which was unanimously adopted by all the member states, said the "fight against terrorism should target not only terrorists, terror organisations and networks but also identify and hold accountable States and non-State entities that encourage, support or finance terrorism, provide sanctuaries to terrorists and terror groups and falsely extol their virtues."

The declaration did not name any specific country, but Pakistan is often accused by its neighbours, including India, of providing safe havens to terrorists.

It asked all nations to devise a comprehensive approach which should include preventing financing of terrorists and terrorist actions from territories under their control, blocking recruitment and cross-border movement of terrorists, countering radicalisation, countering misuse of internet for purposes of terrorism and dismantling terrorist safe havens.

It said that combating terrorism and transnational organised crimes require sustained efforts and cooperation and comprehensive approach involving active participation and collaboration of the Member States.

The declaration called for strengthening cooperation and coordination among the law enforcement, intelligence and security agencies of the member states, holding meetings at the level of BIMSTEC Home Ministers and the BIMSTEC National Security Chiefs.

The BIMSTEC is a regional grouping comprising India, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Bhutan and Nepal. The grouping accounts for 22 per cent of the global population, and has a combined gross domestic product of USD 2.8 trillion.

The declaration also underlined the importance of multi-dimensional connectivity, which promotes synergy among connectivity frameworks in the region, as a key enabler to economic integration for shared prosperity.

It stressed the need for a fair, just, rule-based, equitable and transparent international order and reaffirming faith in the multilateralism with the United Nations at the centre and the rule-based international trading system.

In the declaration, the member states reiterated their pledged to work collectively towards making BIMSTEC a stronger, more effective and result-oriented organisation for achieving a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable Bay of

Bengal Region.

They have also resolved to achieve, leveraging on BIMSTEC's position as a bridge linking South and Southeast Asia, an enhanced level of economic and social development in the region, and remain fully committed to consolidate and deepen cooperation among Member States towards transforming the organisation into an effective platform to promote peace, prosperity and sustainability.

The member states have also stressed on the need to accelerate progress in the core areas of cooperation and to review, restructure and rationalise the existing areas of BIMSTEC cooperation and streamline the operational modalities for activities, implementation of programmes and projects under BIMSTEC for bringing out tangible results.

The declaration also recognised that eradication of poverty is the greatest regional challenge in realising development objectives and expressed firm commitment to work together for implementing the Agenda 2030 for sustainable development.

At the end of the summit, Nepal Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli handed over the chairmanship of the grouping to Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena.

Oli congratulated Sri Lanka for assuming the role as new host for BIMSTEC and extended thanks to the heads of states/governments of member states for their support in materialising the summit with success.

A Memorandum of Understanding was also signed on establishment of the BIMSTEC Grid Interconnection to enhance energy cooperation among the member states.

"The MoU provides for optimisation of using energy resources in the region & promotion of efficient & secure operation of power system, among other things," Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Raveesh Kumar tweeted.

Post-docu theft, Bru body for fresh revision of electoral rolls

AIZAWL, AUG 31 (PTI): The newly-formed Mizoram Bru Displaced People's Coordination Committee (MBDPCC) has appealed to the Election Commission and the Mizoram government to conduct revision of electoral rolls in the six relief camps in Tripura again.

The request followed a burglary at the election office of Mizoram's Mamit district following which enlistment forms duly filled in by the displaced Bru people in the relief camps of the neighbouring Tripura have gone missing.

The August 23 burglary took place two days before the final phase of repatriation of Bru families from Tripura to Mizoram started on August 25.

In a statement issued yesterday evening, MBDPCC president T Laldinglana asked the poll panel and the Mizoram government officials to conduct revision of voters list expeditiously and hand over the electoral photo identity cards to the voters personally.



Mizoram, the last remaining Congress bastion in the northeast, is due for polls this December.

The MNDPCC president condemned the theft of filled in election forms and praised the EC and the Mizoram government for conducting revision of voters lists in the relief camps earlier.

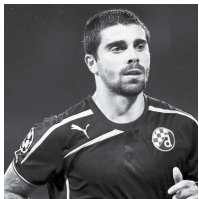
The Mizoram election department has conducted revision of voters lists of Bru refugees in their Tripura camps before the repatri-

ation, despite opposition from the civil societies.

Mizoram police arrested five persons, including two women, in connection with the burglary. All of them work in the district election office.

Thousands of Bru refugees from Mizoram fled to Tripura after ethnic clashes of 1997. The clashes broke out after a forest official was killed by Bru National Liberation Front (BNLF) militants.





ISL: Mumbai City FC sign Portugal international Paulo Machado

MUMBAI, AUG 31 (PTI): Indian Super League (ISL) club Mumbai City FC today announced the signing of Portuguese international Paulo Machado for a period of one year.

An experienced campaigner in some of Europe's most elite competitions, 32-year-old Machado joins Mumbai City FC after a successful campaign with Portuguese side CD Aves, winning the Taa de Portugal.

Machado has represented his country at the U-17 level, winning the 2003 UEFA U-17 European Championships.

He has also represented his country at the U-20, U-21 and U-23 levels before becoming a full international, with six caps to his name.

"He (Machado) brings with him so many years of experience and a strong winning mentality. I am excited to work with him once again and I'm confident he can be an important figure in this side," said Mumbai City FC's head coach Jorge Costa.

Machado said, "When Jorge Costa and Mumbai City FC presented me this opportunity to join this club, I did not have to think twice. There are so many reasons for me to be excited."

"I hope I can join my teammates soon in Thailand for the pre-season and get on with the training and the hard work," he added.

Currently, Mumbai City FC players are in Thailand for the pre-season training, where they are expected to play four matches. Machado is the fifth foreign player to be recruited by Mumbai City FC.

Nitu clinches second successive gold at world youth boxing championships

BUDAPEST, AUG 30 (PTI): Defending champion Nitu (48kg) claimed her second successive gold at the world youth boxing championships with a gritty performance in the final here today.

The Haryana-boxer, who is also an Asian champion, defeated Thailand's Nillada Meekoon in a split decision on the first day of summit clashes in which she was the only Indian in action here.

She had won her previous world championship gold last year when the event was held in Guwahati.



Also in the finals are Asian champion Manisha (64kg), Anamika (51kg) and Sakshi (57kg) but they will be in action tomorrow.

It was a gruelling slugfest that Nitu had

to pull through against Meekoon, who made the bout slightly messy with her defensive tactics that involved considerable holding.

The Indian, however, kept her composure and

came up with straight and clean blows to fetch a favourable verdict from the judges.

Tomorrow, Manisha will be up against England's Gemma Paige Richardson, while An-

amika will square off against Destiny Garcia of the USA.

Sakshi will face Croatia's Nikolina Cacic in her final bout.

Earlier, Jony (60kg) and Astha Pahwa (75kg) joined Asian medalists Bhavesh Kattimani (52kg) and Ankit Khattana (60kg) and Neha Yadav (+81kg) and Sakshi Gaidhani (81kg) in settling for bronze medals after semifinal losses.

The Indian women's team had claimed seven medals in the previous edition of the event and has surpassed that number this time.

Asiad Boxing: Amit soldiers into final, injured Vikas settles for bronze

JAKARTA, AUG 31 (PTI): Debutant boxer Amit Panghal (49kg) continued his sensational run to make the final with a hard-fought win but an injured Vikas Krishan (75kg) had to settle for bronze after being declared medically unfit for his semifinal at the 18th Asian Games here today.

Amit was the lone Indian boxer to make the final in the ongoing edition, beating Philippines' Carlo Paalam in a 3-2 verdict.

The 22-year-old Armyman, who won a silver medal at the Commonwealth Games earlier this year, will be up against reigning Olympic champion and world championships silver-medallist Hasanboy Dusmatov of Uzbekistan in the summit clash tomorrow.

In a see-saw battle which swung decisively in his favour in the final three minutes, Amit recovered from a shaky opening round. The Filipino was aggressive but Amit too managed to connect just enough right straights to fetch a split verdict in his favour.

"It wasn't the best of starts by Amit, he took time to settle down, did well in the second round but the Filipino came back strongly in the third. Amit managed to get some clean ones to clinch it. It was very tense," Indian boxing's High Perfor-



mance Director Santiago Nieva told PTI.

Next up is Dusmatov to whom Amit had lost a close quarterfinal contest in the Hamburg world championships last year.

"It's time to beat Dusmatov. Amit was not as strong as he is right now at the world championships, the strength difference was evident then but now, Amit is a lot more stronger. I think Dusmatov will be under pressure tomorrow," said Nieva.

Amit won gold at the prestigious Strandja Memorial Tournament in Bulgaria earlier this year and has been enjoying a breakthrough season. He is

also an Asian championships bronze-medallist.

Amit's draining victory made up, to an extent, for the disappointment of Vikas being forced to withdraw from his last-four bout owing to a cut on his eyelid sustained in the pre-quarters.

The 26-year-old was to take on Kazakhstan's Amankul Abilkhan this evening.

"There is inflammation in retina as well and it is too risky to let him fight. He will have to take a break for a few weeks," an official of the contingent told PTI.

Vikas has, however, managed to script history by becoming the first Indian boxer to clinch

three successive Asian Games medals.

He won a lightweight 60kg category gold in Guangzhou 2010, before winning a middle-weight bronze in the 2014 edition in Incheon.

The Haryana-boxer sustained the cut during his pre-quarterfinal bout and the injury aggravated during his gruelling quarterfinal clash against China's Tuoheta Erbieke Tanglatihan.

The former world championships bronze-medallist, who won a gold at the Commonwealth Games earlier this year, overcame the bleeding to assure himself a medal.



Chopra misses bronze by a whisker in Diamond League Final

ZURICH, AUG 31 (PTI): Newly-crowned Asian Games champion Neeraj Chopra produced yet another impressive performance but missed the bronze medal by a whisker, finishing fourth in the prestigious Diamond League Final here today.

The 20-year-old Indian, who was competing in the season's Diamond League Series Finale just three days after winning Asian Games gold in Jakarta, sent the spear to a best distance of 85.73m to end at fourth position in the eight-man event here last night.

Chopra, a Commonwealth Games gold medallist, was at the third position till the fifth and penultimate round but the reigning Olympic champion Thomas Rohler of Germany came up with a 85.76m effort in his last attempt to pip the Indian by a mere 0.03 meter.

The star Indian could not repeat his national record shattering throw of 88.06m in Jakarta but his effort here earned him USD 6000 besides the enormous amount of experience he got by rubbing shoulders with the best in the business.

Meanwhile, a third-round monster throw of 91.44m from Germany's Andreas Hofmann earned him his first big international javelin prize as he claimed one of the 16 Diamond Trophies on offer in the first of the Diamond League Finals here. The second Final will be held in Brussels today which will see competition in another 16 sets of events.

In the absence of world champion Johannes Vetter (who pulled out of the event), Rohler was the favourite to win the gold here but Hoffman, Germany's 'Third Man' (after Vettel and Roeler), upstaged his

more illustrious compatriot to win gold.

Rohler had beaten Hofmann to the European title in Berlin earlier this season.

Estonia's Magnus Kirt took second place with 87.57m.

Chopra had qualified for the Final as sixth best in terms of points. He took part in three Diamond League Series legs. He finished fourth in Doha, sixth in Eugene and fifth in Rabat. He missed the Birmingham leg on August 18 due to the Asian Games.

The points were accumulated over the 14-leg Diamond League Series in a season. The top eight finishers in each leg gets prize money. The eight-place finisher gets USD 1000 while the winner pockets USD 10,000.

Chopra will compete in the IAAF Continental Cup in Ostrava, Czech Republic from September 8 to 9 as a member of the Asia Pacific team before winding up the international season.

Top two athletes from four regions -- Europe, Americas, Africa and Asia-Pacific -- compete in the prestigious Continental Cup and Chopra will pair with Taipei's Cheng Chao-Tsun, who is the only Asian to have 90m-plus throw.

Cheng, however, has been struggling this season as he was carrying a minor shoulder injury and he finished fifth in the Asian Games while Chopra won the gold.

Mohammed Anas (men's 400m), Jinson Johnson (men's 8800m), Arpinder Singh (men's triple jump), Hima Das (women's 400m), P U Chitra (women's 1500m) and Sudha Singh (women's 3000m steeplechase) are the other Indian taking part in the Continental Cup.

Joshna fires Indian women's team to final, men settle for bronze

JAKARTA, AUG 31 (PTI): Joshna Chinappa upstaged eight-time world champion Nicol David as the Indian women's squash team outplayed defending champions Malaysia 2-0 to enter its second successive Asian Games final here today.

The Indian men, who also entered the mega-event as defending champions, settled for bronze after a 0-2 loss to Hong Kong in the semifinals. Saurav Ghosal, who was not fully fit, and Harinder Pal Sandhu, lost to Max Lee and Leo Au, 0-3 and 1-3 respectively.

The loss came after the women's team created the biggest upset in the draw, blanking the David-led Malaysia in the semifinals. The team, comprising Joshna, Dipika Pallikal Karthik and



Sunayna Kuruvilla, is now assured of at least a silver.

Joshna, World No.16, had a point to prove after a crush-

ing loss against familiar foe Annie Au in the final pool match against Hong Kong. India lost the tie 1-2 and

finished behind Hong Kong, resulting in a tougher opponent in Malaysia, the most dominant team in the Games'

history.

The match against Nicol went down to the wire and was full of long gruelling rallies. Joshna had a match ball on 10-9 in the fourth game but the Malaysian fought back to take the next three points, levelling the opening singles at 2-2.

The crowd support was heavily in favour of Malaysia but not enough to distract the gritty Indian. This time she converted the match ball on 10-9 to complete the biggest win of her Asian Games career.

"I was very upset yesterday as you must have seen. I did not play the way I was supposed to play. Spoke to my parents and coach and that helped. Today, I just wanted to be myself. Nicol is such a champion. She always

plays a fair game and today was no different. Really happy to have come through," said Joshna after a 12-10, 11-9, 6-11, 10-12, 11-9 victory.

Nicol was gracious in her defeat.

"Joshna played really well. It was a very good match and I could not play my A game," said Nicol after the loss.

World No.19 Dipika Pallikal Karthik too did not play to her potential against Joey Chan yesterday. But today in the second singles, she came out firing on all cylinders against former World No.5 Low Wee Wern.

The Indian's brute power was too much to handle for Wee Wern, who is on a comeback trail after a 20-month injury lay-off. The scoreline may not suggest but it was a tricky match for Pallikal, who

eventually pulled through 11-2, 11-9, 11-7.

"The plan was definitely to rattle her with my power. Wee Wern has been a top player and has already won three tournaments after her comeback. Also, I had to do it for Joshna. She played such a great match to get us on the brink of a win," said Pallikal.

India will play Hong Kong in the final, against whom they lost in the group stage.

"Hong Kong are as tough to beat as Malaysia. They have a very solid team. But our confidence has got a major boost after today," she added.

With the win, India have equalled their best performance at the Games, having won a silver four years ago.

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India, Pak agree on IWT mandated tours to both sides of Indus basin

LAHORE/NEW DELHI, AUG 31 (PTI): India and Pakistan have agreed to undertake the Indus Waters Treaty mandated tours by their Commissioners in the Indus basin on both sides to resolve issues on the various hydroelectric projects, including the Pakal Dul and Lower Kalnai in Jammu and Kashmir.

After the conclusion of the two-day high-level bilateral talks on the Indus Waters Treaty here, the first official engagement between India and Pakistan since Imran Khan became Prime Minister on August 18, the External Affairs Ministry said deliberations were held on further strengthening the role of the Permanent Indus Commission (PIC) for matters under the 1960 Treaty.

As per the provisions of the treaty, technical discussions were held on implementation of various hydroelectric projects under the provisions of Indus Waters Treaty including Pakal Dul (1000 MW) and Lower Kalnai(48 MW) in the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

Both the countries agreed to undertake the Treaty mandated tours of both the Indus Commissioners in the Indus basin on both sides, the ministry said in a statement in New Delhi.



It was agreed to hold the next meeting of the PIC in India on mutually convenient dates.

According to news reports in Pakistan, India has invited Paki-

stani experts to visit the sites of the Pakal Dul and Lower Kalnai hydropower projects on the Chenab river next month to address Islamabad's concerns over the construc-

tion of the projects.

During the talks India rejected Pakistan's objections to the construction work, Dawn newspaper reported.

"India has hinted at continuation of the work on both the hydro-power projects," an official said.

Earlier, both delegations reiterated their stance over the construction of the projects. The Indian Water Commission led by Commissioner P K Saxena reviewed Pakistan's objections minutely. It also presented its point of view, the report said.

The Pakistani side was led by Commissioner for Indus Waters Syed Meher Ali Shah.

According to the paper, Pakistan's demands included reduction of the height of Pakal Dul's reservoir up to five metres, maintenance of 40-metre height above sea level while making spillways' gates of the Pakal Dul project, besides clarifying the pattern and mechanism for the water storage and releases and some technical concerns over design of the Lower Kalnai hydropower project.

India and Pakistan signed the Indus Waters Treaty in 1960 after nine years of negotiations, with the World Bank being a signatory.

The water commissioners of Pakistan and India are required to meet twice a year and arrange technical visits to projects' sites

and critical river head works, but Pakistan had been facing a lot of problems in timely meetings and visits.

The last meeting of the Pakistan-India Permanent Indus Commission was held in New Delhi in March during which both the sides had shared details of the water flow and the quantum of water being used under the 1960 treaty.

The treaty sets out a mechanism for cooperation and information exchange between the two countries regarding their use of the rivers. However, there have been disagreements and differences between India and Pakistan over the treaty.

The water commissioners of Pakistan and India were required to meet twice a year and arrange technical visits to projects' sites and critical river head works, but Pakistan had been facing a lot of problems in timely meetings and visits.

Under the provisions of the Indus Water Treaty 1960, waters of the eastern rivers Sutlej, Beas and Ravi had been allocated to India and the western rivers the Indus, Jhelum and Chenab to Pakistan, except for certain non-consumptive uses for India.

PM Modi holds 'productive talks' with Thai counterpart



KATHMANDU, AUG 31 (PTI): Prime Minister Narendra Modi today held "productive talks" with his Thai counterpart Prayuth Chan-ocha during which the two leaders reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral ties, including ways to strengthen cooperation between India and Thailand.

The two leaders met in the Nepalese capital, Kathmandu, on the sidelines of the 4th Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) Summit.

"The Prime Minister of Thailand, Mr. Prayuth Chan-ocha and PM @narendramodi held productive talks in Kathmandu. Their discussions focussed on strengthening bilateral cooperation

between India and Thailand," the Prime Minister's Office tweeted.

The two leaders are here to attend the BIMSTEC summit.

Earlier this morning, Prime Minister Modi and other leaders from BIMSTEC met informally at the Leaders' Retreat here.

The BIMSTEC is a regional grouping comprising India, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Bhutan and Nepal. The grouping accounts for 22 per cent of the global population, and has a combined gross domestic product of USD 2.8 trillion.

Prime Minister Modi yesterday held talks with Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and Sri Lankan President Maithripala Sirisena.



China to limit number of online games over myopia fears

SHANGHAI, AUG 31 (AFP): Shares of Chinese video game companies plunged today after the government unveiled plans to control the number of online games as part of an effort to prevent myopia among children.

The plan is the latest move to tighten government oversight over the country's fast-growing and highly popular video game industry -- and a new blow to their stock market fortunes.

The new regulations were announced late Thursday after Chinese President Xi Jinping issued an "important directive" to protect children's eyesight.

The education ministry said in a statement Thursday that the authorities will regulate and control the total number of internet games, as well as the number of new titles.

The statement, which was signed by eight ministries, said the authorities will also explore an age-appropriate alert system and take actions to limit the amount of gaming hours among children.

The news sent the shares of Chinese video game companies sharply down on Friday morning.

Tencent dropped by more than five percent in Hong Kong while Perfect World Co, which was once listed on the NASDAQ stock exchange, sank almost nine percent in Shenzhen.

Smaller game developers also lost ground in Shenzhen. Youzu Interactive Co plunged nearly eight percent and Sichuan Xun You Network Technology lost more than eight per cent. Ourpalm Co was down nearly six percent.

China has a high rate of myopia among students at an increasing-

ly younger age, the official Xinhua news agency said, citing Xi's order.

Myopia has seriously affected children's physical and mental health, posing a big problem for the nation's future, the agency said.

The plan follows a halt in the approval of new online game licences.

Bloomberg News reported earlier this month that China had stopped approving any new mobile games as part of a wider shake-up of the market.

No new titles for domestic firms had been added since May and no new imported games have been approved since February, according to the National Radio and Television Administration, which updates the online list of approved games regularly.

Trump says EU bid to end auto tariffs 'not good enough': report

WASHINGTON, AUG 31 (AFP): President Donald Trump has reportedly rejected as "not good enough" a European Union proposal scrapping tariffs on automobiles, a move which threatens to amplify a simmering trans-Atlantic trade dispute.

Just hours earlier, the EU Trade Commissioner Cecilia Malmstroem had said the bloc was "willing to bring down... our car tariffs to zero" provided that the United States did the same.

"It's not good enough," Trump told Bloomberg News yesterday in an Oval Office interview, speaking of the Brussels offer.

"Their consumer habits are to buy their cars, not to buy our cars," The White House in July sought to defuse the trade tiff when Trump and European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker met and pledged to work towards a limited trade accord that would eliminate customs duties, but excluded the automobile sector.

Trump also compared the EU to China. He has reportedly threatened to slap import taxes on 200



billion in Chinese goods, as a trade war escalates with Beijing.

"The European Union is almost as bad as China, just smaller," Trump said.

He also warned that he could pull the United States out of the World Trade Organization.

"If they don't shape up, I would withdraw from the WTO," Trump said of one of the key anchors of the post-World War II multilateral trading system that the United States helped construct.

At a time when Trump's protectionist policies have sparked a wave of trade wars, the institution best placed to help settle trade differences is facing a deepening crisis.

'Shape up or we'll quit', Trump tells WTO

WASHINGTON, AUG 31 (AFP): President Donald Trump has threatened to pull the United States out of the World Trade Organisation if it does not "shape up."

His remarks, made in an interview with Bloomberg News on Thursday, were the latest in a series of attacks on institutions of the global order that the US helped to build after World War II.

"If they don't shape up, I would withdraw from the WTO," Trump told the news agency, describing the agreement to set the organization up as "the single worst trade deal ever made".

Trump, who has previously criticized the WTO's dispute settlement system as being un-

favorable to the US, said Washington had "rarely won a lawsuit" there although things began changing last year.

"In the last year, we're starting to win a lot," he said.

"You know why? Because they know if we don't, I'm out of there." China, which is currently embroiled in a trade war with the US, joined the WTO in 2001 -- a move which US Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer has described as a mistake.

Trump made the threat as Washington presses challenges at the WTO against trading partners that have fought back against tariffs on importers that were imposed by the Trump administration.



PM Modi meets Nepalese counterpart KP Oli

SHIRISH B PRADHAN

KATHMANDU, AUG 31 (PTI): Prime Minister Narendra Modi today met his Nepalese counterpart K P Sharma Oli on the sidelines of the 4th BIMSTEC Summit here and they held a detailed review on all aspects of the bilateral relationship including ways to further deepen economic and trade ties.

This was the third meeting between the two leaders this year. They met earlier during Oli's visit to India in April and the subsequent visit of Prime Minister Modi to Nepal in May.

"Our deliberations were

wide-ranging, covering multiple aspects of India-Nepal relations," Prime Minister Modi said after the meeting.

"We discussed ways to further deepen our economic, trade and cultural ties. Enhancing connectivity between our nations was discussed as well," he added.

Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Raveesh Kumar said that the two leaders held a detailed review on all aspects of the bilateral relationship.

The two leaders had a "warm meeting", Kumar added.

Prime Minister Modi had a se-

ries of bilateral meetings, including discussions with his counterparts from Thailand and Bangladesh, on the sidelines of the 4th BIMSTEC Summit here.

He also held talks with presidents of Sri Lanka and Myanmar.

The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is a regional grouping comprising India, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Bhutan and Nepal. The grouping accounts for 22 per cent of the global population, and has a combined gross domestic product of USD 2.8 trillion.



PRETTY IN PINK! Things seem to be moving fast for Jennifer Lopez, 49, and Alex Rodriguez, 43, as the pair were seen house-hunting together in Beverly Hills.

Kangana Ranaut on Sonu Sood quitting Manikarnika: He refused to work under a woman director

Sonu Sood has decided to opt out of Kangana Ranaut's much-ambitious project Manikarnika: The Queen of Jhansi, and said it was because of a scheduling conflict. The actor who was reportedly playing Sadasivrao Bhau is currently filming Rohit Shetty's Simmba and was in a fix because he was asked to reshoot portions by Kangana. Apart from dates, another thing that didn't go well is the fact that he had to sport a clean shaven look for the period film. However, the 45-year-old actor has beard look for Simmba. Hence, the step. However, it seems like there is more to it. Buzz of the town is Sonu had a tiff with his co-star Kangana Ranaut who was recently in news after the clapboard with her name as director went viral. Apparently, the credit controversy was just the tip of the iceberg because a fresh salvo of shots have been fired. According to Pinkvilla



when the Queen actress was quizzed about Sonu's exit, she said "Sonu and I haven't even met since the last shot with Krish [director] last year. He is busy filming Simmba. He couldn't even give us tentative dates to match combinations with other actors. The producers showed him the film and writers narrated the patchwork to him, he refused to meet me. He vehemently denied to work under a woman director which is kind of amusing because Sonu is a dear friend and I have even launched the music of a film that he produced on his request. Even though the team suggested that they have full faith in me, it seems, Sonu had neither dates nor faith."

She also rubbished reports of having a showdown with him and said, "When I last spoke to him he suggested that I can go ahead with someone else and when I narrated the script to Zeeshan Ayyub, he called the studio and gave the dates. By that time it was too late as Zeeshan gave me dates for September. Now, I hear I had a showdown with him, when I never met him, never directed him, when did I have this showdown?" When asked if the portions shot with him earlier will now be reshoot? Kangana added, "Yes, none of the portions he has shot before will be used because he has spiked hair with gel in his hair, so the new team of DOP and editors and our writers of Manikarnika have discarded those scenes so I have to shoot all of that anyway so it's easy to get another actor on board. Who keeps spiked hair for a period film?"

EMINEM DROPS SURPRISE ALBUM KAMIKAZE WITHOUT ANY WARNING!

He recently marked a decade of sobriety. And now Eminem has something else to celebrate, as he released a brand new album, titled Kamikaze, on Thursday night without any pre-warning. The rapper, 45 only released his last LP, Revival, eight months ago, but decided his new material was ready for his fans to enjoy much sooner than anticipated, after not 'overthinking' the album. Taking to his Twitter and Instagram account, the 'Lose Yourself' hitmaker simply shared the official album cover and track-list, captioning the posts: "Tried not 2 overthink this 1... enjoy. #KAMIKAZE Out Now." The new release is made up of 13 tracks - including the song 'Venom' which will feature in the upcoming movie of the same name about Spider-Man's villain, starring Tom Hardy and Riz Ahmed. The first song on the track-list, titled The Ringer, is crammed full of meandering aggressive thoughts, profound insights and fraught emotion. The song opens with Eminem admitting: "I'm just gonna write down, my first thoughts and see where this takes me. Cause I feel like I wanna punch the world in the f***in' face right now." Some of the topics which the hip-hop star touches on within the track, are the billions of views his videos get,



how a fan told him to study his old music, and how some rappers now use auto-tune in their music. The album also features Joyner Lucas [who has also collaborated with Chris Brown], Eminem's manager Paul Rosenberg, Royce Da 5'9", and Canadian singer-songwriter Jessie Reyez. Eminem - whose real name is Marshall Bruce Mathers III - doesn't hide from the criticism he's become accustomed to within his new release. The controversial star openly divulges how he has previously handled negative attitudes towards him and reveals the honest options he's surrounded by. One of the tracks include a voicemail from his manager Paul, who says: "Are you

really going just to deride everybody who, you don't like what they have to say about you or the stuff you're working on? I don't know if that's really a great idea, it's like what's next, 'Kamikaze 2,' the album where you reply to everybody who didn't like the album that you made replying to everybody that didn't like the previous album? It's a slippery slope, I don't know if it's really a good idea." The politically outspoken rapper also targets President Donald Trump and Vice President Mike Pence, the Grammy Awards and the press in Kamikaze, while also showing off his vocal skills. Meanwhile, Eminem recently courted controversy when gunshot effects played

as part of his performance instilled panic in the crowd at his Manchester, Tennessee show. Panic ensued during the 8 Mile star's performance of his song Kill You, when, according to Billboard, 'many fans screamed and ducked as a series of loud blasts rang through the crowd'. But rather than being actual gunfire, it turned out to just be a sound effect incorporated into the song. The Academy Award winning songwriter drew criticism for including such an effect in the wake of the deadly mass shooting at Las Vegas' Route 91 country music festival last year. In April, the River star - who has battled an addiction to sleeping pills - posted a picture on Instagram showing him holding up the chip he was given when he reached a decade of sobriety. Eminem has been sober since 2008 when he checked himself into rehab and started the 12-step program, and has spoken openly about his addiction and recovery in his music. Kamikaze full track listing is as follows: The Ringer, Greatest, Lucky You [feat. Joyner Lucas], Paul-Skit, Normal, Em Calls Paul-Skit, Stepping Stone, Not Alike [feat. Royce Da 5'9"], Fall, Kamikaze, Nice Guy [feat. Jessie Reyez], Good Guy [feat. Jessie Reyez], Venom-Music from the Motion Picture.

Johnny Depp's crime drama City of Lies at center of \$10million suit

Johnny Depp's yet-to-be-released motion picture City of Lies is at the center of a \$10 million breach of contract lawsuit between its distributor and the Israel-based Bank Leumi, in the wake of its release being pulled back. The distributor, Global Road, was named along with the Miramax label by Bank Leumi, according to Page Six, in a suit filed in a federal court in California earlier this week. Miramax, which owns the TV distribution rights to the film, told Bank Leumi that no payment was due as result of 'significant problems with the production' that 'have significantly devalued' the motion picture, the bank said in court docs. One of those factors was Depp's 'highly publicized alleged off-screen conduct' in addition to 'a lawsuit filed against Mr. Depp and the production because he allegedly physically attacked a crew member on the set.' Bank Leumi told the court 'the real reason' the film was pulled was because Global Road is 'in financial distress and decided not to pay' in excess of \$10 million toward 'marketing and distribution expenses' that were assured in previous pacts. Global Road Entertainment earlier this week laid off about 45 people in its film division, according to The Hollywood Reporter, after it was overtaken by its bank lenders. Earlier this month, the movie's Sep-



tember 7 release was pulled back. It was not immediately clear when the Brad Furman-directed film would be released. The Hollywood veteran last month was at a receiving end of the aforementioned suit over his alleged actions on the set of the movie, as location manager Gregg 'Rocky' Brooks claimed in his suit that the Edward Scissorhands actor struck him on multiple occasions amid a dispute during filming, TMZ reported. Brooks said that during production the evening of April 13, 2017, he told Depp and Furman they needed to wrap things up based on their schedule. He said a boozy Depp hit him two times in his ribs, then told him, "I will give you \$100,000 to punch me in the face right now," before the star's guards guided

him away. In the movie which examines the aftermath of law enforcement examining The Notorious B.I.G.'s March 1997 murder in the wake of Tupac Shakur's October 1996 killing, Depp, 55, plays Det. Russell Poole. The enigmatic actor's has had a difficult summer, including a Rolling Stone story that called his lifestyle and finances into question; residual fallout from domestic violence allegations made by his ex-wife Amber Heard. Depp, who denied the allegations of physical abuse against Heard, issued a statement saying that 'there was never any intent of physical or emotional harm' in the marriage upon agreeing on a settlement two years ago.

ARIES: Your self-confidence may be a bit low and you could doubt your abilities right now, Aries. Don't get depressed or disheartened. Your skills are excellent. Try to look at your situation objectively and pinpoint why you aren't progressing in your career as rapidly as you'd hoped. You may be worried about money, but know that everything will work out in the end. **TAURUS:** Today you may feel bored and frustrated with your life's direction. Taurus. You feel buried under responsibilities, with no time left to do what you really want to do. You have other interests to pursue but no time to pursue them. It's frustrating. You might want to rethink your priorities. If you're creative about time management, you'll be able to find

some time. **GEMINI:** You're less optimistic and energetic than usual, Gemini. Your mind feels sluggish - your whole body does, in fact. You're either coming down with the flu or completely and thoroughly disheartened. This would be a good day to take some time off. Issues from the past may come back to haunt you. Perhaps you should address them once and for all. **CANCER:** You may be discouraged about money matters today, Cancer. Perhaps a raise you'd been hoping for didn't come through. Perhaps a professional project didn't work out as you expected. Now is the time to put your ingenuity to work and figure out a way to earn the money you need. Trust that you have the necessary know-how. A good opportunity

awaits you. **LEO:** If work is beginning to feel more like a burden than a joy, it may be time to rethink your job. Leo. Your personality is such that you need lots of room to stretch and grow. If you feel stifled, you know it's time to find a new professional challenge. You're fortunate that your skill set affords you many opportunities. Choose carefully! **VIRGO:** You're especially in tune with the environment and the people around you today, Virgo. Such sensitivity is new to you, and you aren't exactly sure what to do with the myriad messages that come into your head, seemingly out of nowhere. Even though this is outside your usual experience, try to accept rather than analyze.

LIBRA: You're drawn to public service, Libra. This desire propels you to volunteer your services with a group of some kind. You may feel a bit awkward at first, but your natural leadership abilities will soon kick in. The group will be left wondering how they ever managed without you. Your talent shines through once again. Well done! **SCORPIO:** Don't take everything at face value today, Scorpio. Information you receive might not be accurate. Someone could be repeating gossip or even creating it just to have something to talk about. Don't take part in the discussion. Since your workload is likely heavy, forego the socializing in favor of finishing the tasks in front of you. **SAGITTARIUS:** You may be feel-

ing a bit on edge today, Sagittarius. Your self-confidence is shaky and you may feel in need of new challenges. The tedious tasks you have in front of you don't inspire your imagination or creativity. Do what you can to get through this difficult day. Be extra kind to yourself by indulging in a good lunch or listening to classical music. **CAPRICORN:** You and your mate may be experiencing some differences of opinion. It seems you each have definite ideas about some of life's fundamental values and they aren't completely in sync. Make an extra effort to communicate, Capricorn. You may find that your values aren't as far apart as they first seemed. This rift between you will soon close. Hang in there.

AQUARIUS: It isn't exactly all lightness and harmony at home today, Aquarius. There's tension in the air and it manifests in silly family arguments. Try to arrange separate activities for siblings, and encourage your partner to eat out with friends. This is a day to give everyone his or her space. Tomorrow everyone will be happy to eat together again. **PISCES:** This could be a particularly stressful day, Pisces. Your workload is heavier than ever, thanks to the increased responsibility you've taken on. The day seems endless, yet there aren't enough hours to get done all that needs doing. Take care not to take your anxiety out on others. If you're nice to them, they may even help you finish your project!