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SummitTIMES

Vol 03 | Issue 225 | Gangtok | Sunday | 26 August 2018

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

RNI No. SIKENG/2016/69420

Pages 8 | ₹ 5

Suicide Prevention Awareness Month observed in East district



SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 25 AUG: District Mental Health [DMH] Cell under Department of Health Care, Human Service & Family Welfare, Singtam in collaboration with seven Primary Health Centers of East district is observing "East District Suicide Prevention Awareness Month" be-

tween Aug-Sept 2018 with an objective to conduct widespread awareness on early signs and symptoms of mental disorders, threatening signs of suicide and harmful effects of alcohol & substance abuse, a press release informs.

Chief Medical Officer, East, Dr Tshering Laden, **turn to pg03**



New Governor Ganga Prasad arrives in Sikkim

GANGTOK, 25 AUG [IPR]: Newly appointed Governor of Sikkim, Ganga Prasad, was welcomed by Chief Minister Pawan Chamling on his arrival at Rangpo in East Sikkim today. The CM was accompanied by Cab-

inet Ministers, Area MLA, Deputy Speaker, MP Lok Sabha, Chief Secretary, DGP and senior officers of the State Government. The official oath taking ceremony will be held on 26 Aug at New Raj Bhawan.

Pang Lhabsol greetings from Governor and CM

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 26 AUG:

On the occasion of 'Pang Lhabsol', Governor Shrinivas Patil and First Lady, Rajanidevi Patil, have extended warm greetings to the people of Sikkim.

In a press communiqué received from Raj Bhavan, the Governor has said, "Pang Lhabsol, a unique festival with cultural and historical significance to this tiny Himalayan State, gives us the insight into the Sikkimese way of life. It also provides us with the foundation of harmony and mutual respect among different sections and communities which has remained the hallmark of Sikkim's identity.

It was the day in the 13th century AD that a solemn pact of unity and brotherhood between the Lepcha tribes and the Bhutia tribes was made at the historic Kabi Lungtsok. The pact between the Lepcha chieftain, Thekong Thek, and Bhutia chieftain, Khye Bumsa, with majestic and revered Mt. Khangchendzonga as the principal witness has shaped the destiny of Sikkim and transformed it as the land of unity, peace and tranquility.

We worship our guardian deity Mt. Khangchendzonga and offer gratitude for protecting us from bad omens, natural disasters, diseases and catastrophes, and seek blessings for well being of all in future.

May this day remain auspicious and remind every Sikkimese to-

wards making efforts to strengthen and preserve this unique heritage till eternity.

My sincere compliments to the Pang Lhabsol Celebration Committee for its efforts over the years to promote and preserve the festival as a celebration of our unity and brotherhood with special veneration to Mother Nature."

In another press release, Chief Minister Pawan Chamling and Tika Maya Chamling have also extended their warmest greetings and best wishes to the people of Sikkim on the occasion of Pang Lhabsol.

In his message, the CM has said, "We must instill the feeling of communal harmony deep within our souls and remember that we came together as one nation through sanctity of brotherhood. Each one of us should work towards keeping the communal harmony and secular fabric of our society intact.

Pang Lhabsol may be the only festival in the world that celebrates in true and elaborate grandeur the sense of belonging of an individual and the faith in our Mountain Deity. Let us take inspiration and wisdom from the legends that have been handed down to us through generations and let us bow down to our Sacred Summit, knowing that we are safe and constantly watched over.

I pray to our Guardian Deity to continue to protect Sikkim and bless us with good health, peace and happiness."

Pope says he shares outrage over clergy abuse cover-up

DUBLIN, AUG 25 (AP): Pope Francis said at the start of a visit to Ireland today that he shares the outrage of rank-and-file Catholics over the failure of church authorities to punish the "repugnant crimes" of priests who raped and molested children.

Seeking to respond to a global outcry over the abuse scandal, Francis cited measures taken by his predecessor, Pope Benedict XVI, to respond to the crisis. But Benedict never acknowledged the Vatican's role in fueling a culture of cover-up, and Francis provided no new details of any measures he would take to sanction bishops who fail to protect their flocks.

"The failure of ecclesial authorities bishops, religious superiors, priests and others to adequately

address these repugnant crimes has rightly given rise to outrage, and remains a source of pain and shame for the Catholic community. I myself share these sentiments," the pope said in a speech to government and civil authorities at Dublin Castle.

Adding to his prepared remarks, Francis said he was committed to ridding the church of this "scourge" no matter the moral cost or amount of suffering.

Francis trip has been overshadowed by renewed outrage over the Catholic Church's systemic failures to protect children following revelations of sexual misconduct and cover-up in the US church hierarchy, a growing crisis in Chile and prosecutions of top clerics in Australia and France.

Francis was expected to meet with victims during his 36-hour visit to Ireland.

But neither his words at the start of his visit nor a new meeting with victims is likely to assuage demands for heads to roll over the scandal.

Perhaps in an indication of popular sentiments, the reception Francis received in Dublin contrasted sharply with the raucous, rock star welcome that greeted St. John Paul II in 1979. No one from the general public was on hand at the airport or the roads nearby, and only a handful of people waited to cheer him outside the

Vatican residence, despite gloriously sunny weekend weather.

Deeply Catholic Ireland has had one of the

world's worst records of clergy sex abuse, crimes that were revealed to its 4.8 million people over the past decade by a series of government-mandated inquiries.

The reviews concluded that thousands of children were raped and molested by priests and physically abused in church-run schools, and exposed bishops who worked to hide the crimes.

After the Irish church atoned for its past and enacted tough new norms to fight abuse, it had been looking to the first visit by a pope in 40 years to show a different, more caring church that understands the problems of ordinary Catholic families today.

More than 37,000 people most of them young Catholics signed up

to attend a Vatican-sponsored World Meeting of Families that ends Sunday in Dublin, more than twice the number as for the previous family rally held in Philadelphia three years ago.

And many faithful remained hopeful that Francis' appearance would bring healing.

"I see a lot of new life amongst young people who have a deep committed faith, Catholic faith," said Sean Ascogh, a churchgoer at a recent service in Blessington southwest of Dublin.

"Obviously, they are very disappointed by what has been happening in the church in the last few years, particularly the whole abuse scandals, but I think people can see beyond that."

USFC donates Premier League cash prize to Kerala Flood Relief Fund

REBYNA RANA
GANGTOK, 25 AUG: Champions of Premier A Division Sikkim League 2018, United Sikkim Football Club [USFC], has donated an amount of Rs 50,000 to the Kerala Flood Relief Fund. This donation for the relief fund has been extended from the cash prize they had received as winners of the League which concluded at Paljor Stadium on 24 Aug.

A function was held today at Bhaichung Bhutia's [USFC owner] residence in Pangthang which had the presence of USFC players along with their senior manager, Arjun Rai, coach, MD Lepcha, and close friends of Mr Bhutia.

During the function, the club also distributed new football kits sponsored by



Lotto to the players.

Speaking to media persons, Mr Bhutia said that his squad will be participating in the upcoming Second Division I-League with no major changes.

"The squad will include current players with only a couple of new

players. The club will also be playing in the upcoming Governor's Gold Cup at Paljor Stadium. I am proud of my boys on their win. The entire team's undying hard work has paid off," said Mr Bhutia while extending gratitude to all for their support.

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Closing programme held for Kailash Mansarovar Yatra 2018

GANGTOK, 25 AUG (IPR): A closing programme to felicitate and thank all the line departments, stake holders and officials involved in the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra 2018 via Nathula was organised by the Tourism & Civil Aviation Department and STDC.

The chief guest for the event was the Chief Secretary, Government of Sikkim, AK Shrivastava. Present in the gathering were Secretary, Tourism & Civil Aviation Department, CP Dhakal; Secretary, Energy & Power Department, KB Kunwar; DIG ITBP, Kapil Dwivedi; Chief Engineer (Swastik) BRO, Harendra Kumar.



Chief Secretary expressed his joy at the milestones that Tourism Department has achieved and said that

there was no dearth of work in the Tourism Sector. He also praised the Chief Minister for re-opening the Nathu-

la trade route which led to the strengthening of the Indo-China relations thus making the Kailash Mansarovar Pilgrimage

via Nathula, successful.

He also applauded the efforts of all the line departments involved, from Transport to Health to Energy and Power, IPR, ITBP, BSNL, NDRE, BRO and the 17th Mountain Division. He concluded his address by saying that the message that should go out to all the tourists should be "Come to Sikkim to Feel Sikkim; Don't come to Sikkim to touch Sikkim."

Earlier, Secretary Tourism gave a detailed account of the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra via Nathula since its inception in 2015. He also spoke on the importance of culture and hospitality that Sikkim provided to

the Yatris, stating that it was our tradition to host the pilgrims.

He said that the Chief Minister's efforts into turning Sikkim into a Pilgrimage Tourism destination is the dream of all the people and that the department would leave no stone unturned in doing so. Compared to the other routes, from Nepal and Lipulekh, he stated that the route via Nathula was most preferred and has a success rate of 98%.

Khadass and mementos were handed out to all the line departments involved including the Sikkimese Yatris who had completed the pilgrimage successfully in the previous years.

SDF constituency level meet held at Dochum



YOGEN THATAL SINGTAM, 25 AUG:

Sikkim Democratic Front held its Constituency level coordination meeting at Dochum, under Sirwani Chisopani GPU, in East Sikkim today.

President of SDF, South district, Ganesh Rai, urged the youth to ignore rumours spread by opposition parties to

defame SDF and its supremacy, Pawan Chamling, and encouraged them to work for the betterment of the State as envisioned by Mr Chamling.

An interactive session was also held during the meet wherein preparations and plans for the upcoming general election were deliberated upon.

Training on Integrated Pest Management at Lower Lingdum

SUBASH RAI

GANGTOK, 25 AUG:

Central Integrated Pest Management Centre [CIPMC], Gangtok conducted a two-day human resource development training programme for farmers of Rumtek, Lingdum and Reykhola here at Lower Lingdum in East Sikkim on 24-25 Aug.

Speaking on the occasion, Deputy Director [Integrated Pest Management], Food Security & Agriculture Development Department, RK Sharma, briefed the farmers on locally available organic ingredients to be used for

pest management. She urged the farmers to be dedicated and consistent towards availing ample benefits from locally prepared organic pesticides.

Likewise, head of Regional Ayurveda Research Institute, Tadong, SK Mondal, highlighted on the health benefits of consuming organic food items. He also briefed the farmers on locally available plants and herbs that can be utilized to cure various diseases.

Plant Protection Officer, CIPMC, BR Meena, informed about ways to differentiate between

farmer friendly and anti-farmer insects wandering in the fields and detailed on various remedies and techniques to control diseases by applying IPM techniques.

Mr Meena further added that the main objective to opt for IPM techniques is to yield more production by investing minimum resources.

Later, a practical session was also held wherein Mr Meena trained the farmers on preparation of organic pesticides using locally available ingredients.



Special Summary Revision of Electoral Rolls to commence next month

GANGTOK, 25 AUG [IPR]:

Following the direction of Election Commission of India, a press conference on Special Summary Revision of Electoral Rolls with reference to 01 Jan 2019 as qualifying date was organized at the conference hall of the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer [CEO] in Baluwakhani today.

Addressing the press

conference, CEO, Sikkim, R Telang, said that the agenda of the programme was to inform the general public and political parties regarding electoral rolls.

He informed that the ECI has announced the conduct of Special Summary Revision of Electoral Rolls with 01 Jan 2019 as the qualifying date.

"All eligible citizens of

Sikkim, attaining the age of 18 and above as on 01 Jan 2019, are requested to register themselves in the electoral roll. The voters can also apply for inclusion, deletion, correction and transfer of their names in the electoral rolls. The schedule of the programme will commence from 01 Sept and will continue till 31 Oct. No voters should be left

behind," stated Mr Telang.

He further informed that forms for the electoral rolls are available with Booth Level Officers, Block Development Officer/Sub Divisional Magistrate Office and District Collector Office. Public can apply online at www.nvsp.in and put their queries and suggestions on the Facebook page of Election Department Sikkim, he added.

He also briefed about the Electronic Voting Machines [EVMs] and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail [VVPAT] machines and explained that the new version ensures safety while briefing about various security features of the machines.

During the press conference, a video regarding the usage of VVPAT machine was showcased. A jingle to air on FM performed by "Triple A", a local band from Arithang, was also launched along with a six-minute video presented by bloggers, "Twins and the Other Girl", demonstrating ways to register online. The band and the bloggers were also felicitated during the course of the event.

Discussions were also held regarding the recent notification of Urban Development & Housing Department with regard

NPS secures 1st position in ARCEIS Inter-School Cultural Fest

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 25 AUG:

Namchi Public School, South Sikkim has secured the first position in the annual ARCEIS Inter-School Cultural Fest 2018 competition hosted at the multi-purpose auditorium of the school in Namchi. The theme of the competition this year was 'Unity in Diversity'.

St Thomas School, Gangtok bagged the second position with St Xavier's School, Pakyong in the third position, a press release informs.

The panel of judges included Sikkim's dancing star, Mingma Dorjee Lepcha, along with school faculty members, Martha M Moktan and Betlina Pradhan.

The cultural fest featured dancers from various schools performing with props and costumes to perfection.

Principal, NPS, Fr George A D'Souza, thanked the chief judge, Mr Lepcha, for attending the event and also extended gratitude to all the participants of ARCEIS schools.



265 dead in Kerala floods since Aug 8, 36 still missing

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, AUG 25 (PTI):

The death toll in Kerala floods has touched 265 since August 8 while 36 people are still missing, the latest government figures show, even as the state prepares to mount a massive rehabilitation process for the displaced.

The hilly district of Idukki, housing the largest arch dam in Asia from which waters were released for the first time in 26 years, has been hit the hardest -- 51 deaths and 10 still missing, as per the latest figures released by the Disaster

Management State Control Room.

The district, home to tea and spices plantations, is also a favourite tourist destination.

According to the latest toll figures released by the government, 265 people have lost their lives in the floods since August 8, when a second spell of monsoon fury unleashed.

Thrissur has reported 43 deaths, Ernakulam (38), Alapuzha (34) and Malappuram (30).

With over 8.69 lakh people still in 2,287 relief camps, it is a subdued 'Onam', the harvest festi-

val, in the state.

However, despite the massive setback, many people who, have lost their homes and all their belongings, marked the occasion, though it was low key.

For some who returned to their homes, cleaning up their dwellings was the uppermost in their mind.

Ten year-old Nandana was busy drying her books in front of her home in Kochi. "There is no floral carpet in my home," she said.

While in another camp, children gath-

ered together, made new friends and played football and cricket in an effort to take their mind off the trauma.

A government release issued late last night said the flood-hit areas would be recorded using a mobile app, with the help of voluntary organisations and local bodies and compensation would be distributed after this process.

A total of Rs 10,000 each would be transferred to the bank accounts of 3.91 lakh families affected by the flood and Rs 242.73 crore has

been earmarked from the Chief Minister's Disaster Relief fund (CM-DRF) for the purpose, the release said.

Plans are also afoot to retrieve certificates and lost documents of the flood-affected people from the database of various departments in the state, it said.

The information technology and other departments were in the process of developing a software for the purpose. Adalats would also be held from the first week of September to facilitate recovery of the docu-

ments, according to the release.

With the government emphasising sanitation activities to prevent outbreak of water-related diseases in flood-affected areas, a total of 1.31 lakh houses, about 31 per cent of total flood-hit buildings, have so far been cleaned.

The state government was also mulling interest-free loans of up to Rs 10 lakh for the flood-affected small scale industries.

Earlier, a moratorium was declared for agriculture loans by the government.

Distribution process of land to landless ambiguous: BJP Sikkim

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 25 AUG:

Bharatiya Janata Party Sikkim Pradesh has said that the State Government is not clear on the process of distributing lands to landless people of Sikkim. While criticizing the government for the same, the party has stated that genuine beneficiaries under this scheme have not received land despite submission of names of beneficiaries from every Ward and GPU recommended by concerned

Panchayat along with required documents.

A BJP press release alleges that MLAs and Panchayats have been playing politics of votes for recommendations from their concerned Wards and Constituencies. On the same, the party has demanded that genuine beneficiary should get their right at the earliest.

The party has further demanded that the government serve justice to genuine landless Sikkimese by addressing this long pending issue.

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Pravachan on Bitak and Tartam Sagar at Pranami Mandir from 26 Aug

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 25 AUG:
Sri Krishna Pranami Dharma Sewa Samiti of Pani House, Gangtok will be organizing week-long pravachan [religious discourse] on Bitak and Tartam Sagar at Pranami Mandir in Lower Pani House from 26 Aug to 01 Sept to commemorate the 4th birth centenary of founder of Sri Krishna Pranami Nijananda Sampradaya, Sri Prannath Swamiji Maharaj.

The pravachan which will be conducted by Maharaj Sri Gita Prasad Sapkota from Thekabung, East Sikkim between 5 p.m and 8 p.m every day till 01 Sept, a press release informs.

Further, the Samiti has also decided to celebrate Janmasthami and Sri Krishna Prakatya Mahotsav with great religious fervor and gaiety on 02 Sept which will be marked by bhajans, dandiya nritya, raamat, pravachan, quiz competition and other events.

The Samiti has invited all to attend the Bitak Charcha and Sri Krishna Prakatya Mahotsav to receive divine blessings and experience spiritual awakening.

It may be mentioned here, Sri Krishna Pranami Dharma Sewa Samiti, Pani House is a spiritual and social organization which works for peace and communal harmony by spreading the teachings and love of Lord Sri Krishna as enshrined in the holy scriptures of Gita, Shrimad Bhagwat and Tartam Sagar.

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Nepali Bhasa Manyata Diwas observed in Tadong SSS

ARPAN PRADHAN
GANGTOK, 25 AUG:

Tadong Government Senior Secondary School observed Nepali Bhasa Manyata Diwas at the school auditorium hall today. The function had the presence of Deputy Director [Language], Human Resource Development Department, PM Khanal, as chief guest and writer/ lyricist, Deoraj Sharma, as guest of honour.

Students of Tadong SSS along with students and staff of Syari Government Secondary School, Upper Syari Junior High School, Tiny Pearls



School, Sai Gurukul Academy and Lumsay Junior High School participated in the programme.

An inter-school origi-

nal poem recitation competition was held wherein participants presented poems in Hindi, Nepali, Bhotia and Lepcha languages.

Sisir Subba and Anjali Sharma bagged the first position while Apsara Rai, Prisila Khatai, Rajendra Dhakal and Muskan

Sunar came in second position. Yuvraj Darjee, Sunita Makrati and Dipesh Jogi stood in the third place. All winners were from Tadong SSS.

Similarly Junior High School level original poem recitation competition had Rupen Chettri of Upper Syari Junior High School in the first position, Ayushman Adhikari of Tiny Pearls School in second place and Manisha Pradhan of Lumsay Junior High School in third place.

The winners and participants of the competition were presented with trophies and certificates

by the chief guest and guest of honour.

Chief guest, Mr Khanal, was felicitated for his contribution in preparing and editing academic books of the State.

Likewise, Sapna Chettri and Raju Chettri, who secured highest marks in the 2018 Board Examination in Nepali Language from East district, were presented with Raghunath Trilochan Dhakal Memorial Award.

Addressing the gathering, Mr Khanal expressed his gratitude to the school for inviting him for the event and highlighted the technical

aspects of preparing academic text books.

Principal of Tadong SSS, DL Zimba, stressed on the importance of Nepali Bhasa Manyata Diwas and encouraged students to inculcate the habit of studying and reading in their mother language.

Bhotia Language teacher, Norden Bhotia, highlighted the importance of regional languages and said that everyone should contribute towards the conservation of language, culture and heritage.

SLSA conducts debate competition for Legal Literacy Clubs in East



SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 25 AUG:

Sikkim State Legal Services Authority under the directions of Acting Chief Justice, High Court of Sikkim, Justice Meenakshi Madan Rai, who is also the Executive Chairperson of Sikkim SLSA, and as per the State Plan of Action, organized a debate competition on "Whether farmers should adopt organic farming or continue with conventional methods of farming" for students of Classes VIII-XII of Legal Literacy Clubs of eight schools established in the East district at Chintan

Bhawan in Gangtok today.

The programme commenced with the welcome note presented by Member Secretary, Sikkim SLSA, Suraj Chettri, who gave a brief introduction on the topics of the debate and apprised the gathering that the debate competition is one of the many initiatives undertaken to spread awareness amongst masses.

The debate competition had Senior Advocates, High Court of Sikkim, B Sharma and A Moulik, along with two officers from Horticulture & Cash Crop Development Department namely Executive

Director, Sikkim Organic Mission, Dr S Anbalagan, and Additional Executive Director, MK Pradhan, on the panel of judges.

Dr Anbalagan elucidated on the plus points of organic farming stating that organic agriculture is a unique production management system which promotes and enhances agro-ecosystem health.

Forty student members each from the LLCs of Tashi Namgyal Academy, Tashi Namgyal Senior Secondary School, Enchey SSS, Modern SSS, West Point SSS, Paljor Namgyal Girls SSS, Deorali Girls SSS and Tadong SSS participated in the

competition.

Speaking for the motion, Disha Bhujel of Palzor Namgyal Girls SSS secured the first position with Pushkar Bhujel of Tashi Namgyal SSS who also spoke for the motion coming in second. Preeti Biswakarma of Enchey SSS spoke against the motion and secured the third position in the competition.

The first, second and third place holders were awarded with cash prize of Rs 6000, Rs 4000 and Rs 2000, respectively along with certificates while other participants received certificates of participation.

ELC awareness programme held at Namchi Girls School

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 25 AUG:

Election Department, South district conducted awareness cum sensitization programme today at Namchi Government Girls' Senior Secondary School in South Sikkim which is also the Model Electoral Literacy Club [ELC] School, a press release informs.

Under Secretary, Election Department, Tripti H Subba, who was the resource person for the programme, informed the gathering of teachers and students about ELC and its functions and roles. She also discussed Electronic Voting Machines [EVMs],



Voters' Verifiable Paper Audit Trail [VVPAT], National Voter's Day and its theme 'Accessible Elections for the year 2018' and Systematic Voters' Education & Electoral Participation [SVEEP].

Ms Subba encouraged students to join hands with the Election machinery in spreading awareness amongst young and future voters,

women voters and PwDs [persons with disabilities]. She added that students of Model ELCs are preparing a theme based song which will be performed in various localities all across South district.

The programme concluded with feedback session for the participating students and teachers.

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Legal services camp on NALSA Scheme held in West district

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 25 AUG:

District Legal Services Authority [DLSA], West Sikkim in coordination with Sikkim State Legal Services Authority [SSLSA] under the aegis of National Legal Services Authority organized legal services camp on NALSA [Legal Services to Disaster Victims through Legal Services Authorities] Scheme 2010 at Toyang in West Sikkim today, a press release informs.

The programme was chaired by Secretary cum



Chief Judicial Magistrate, Subarna Rai, member of Quick Response Team from Disaster Risk Management, West Sikkim, Dadi Ram Chettri, Panel Advocates, Bikash Gurung and Aita Hangma

Subba, and Panchayat President, Kala Chettri.

Applications were collected from people who have not received compensation for damages suffered by them in natural calamities. More

than 20 houses have been damaged during this on-going monsoon season in West district, the release adds.

During the camp, applications were also drafted for filing cases in the Lok Adalat.

The gathering was also informed about various provisions of law including Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act [POCSO] 2012, Sikkim Anti Drugs Act [SADA] 2006 and free legal aid services.

Suicide Prevention Awareness...

contd from pg01

informed that the awareness programme is being observed since 2015 with proactive participation of 07 PHCs and 49 PHSCs in East Sikkim.

"Stigma, ignorance and lack of education surrounding mental health and mental illnesses are the biggest barriers for effective mental health service delivery system. Therefore, it is very important to de-stigmatize mental health with consistent educational pro-

grams for dissemination of proper information for behavioral modifications among the general population," said Dr Laden.

Nodal officer, DMH, East, Dr Satish Rasaily, highlighted that Singtam DMH Cell conducted 1202 mental health programmes in East Sikkim and imparted training to approximately 2800 manpower between 2015 to Apr 2018 to develop capacity/skills in early recognition of mental disorders, brief counseling

and motivating families to seek help at PHC/DH.

"The Singtam District Counseling Cell in collaboration with seven PHCs will conduct 48 mental health camps in East Sikkim by launching 10 women's mental health programmes at ICDS centers, five outreach mental health clinics at PHCs, five winning ways to well-being programme in schools and 28 community mental health camps to reach out to rural population," Dr Rasaily in-

formed.

It is further informed that the team has already conducted such programmes at Burtuk JHS, Lingding JHS, Enchey School, Arithang ICDS, Namnang ICDS, Vajara ICDS, Swastik ICDS, Middle Arithang ICDS, Bishal Gaon ICDS and Forest Colony ICDS in Gangtok and at Dara Gaon ICDS in Singtam, Nimachen ICDS, Phademchen ICDS, Padamchey PHSC, Basilakha ICDS and Pakyong PHC among others.

MEMORIAL SERVICE



"Father, into your hand I commit my spirit".

Luke 23: 46

Late Elder Thom Tshering Rufus (Lepcha), Former Joint Secretary of IT & ST, GoS, passed away peacefully on 22nd August 2018 (Wednesday). His Memorial Service will be held on 27th August 2018 (Monday).

All friends, relatives and well wishers are requested to join in the Memorial Service at our residence, Below Paljor Stadium, Near Police Barrack, Upper Sichey, Gangtok.

We would also take this opportunity to extend our heartfelt gratitude to all those who stood by us in the time of Bereavement.

Lhamching Bhutia (Wife)

Tshering Dorjee Rufus & Rinzing Chanzom Bhutia (Son & Daughter-In-Law),

Gaiimit Rufus & Simen Luckson, Tshering Choden Rufus & Yegendra Kumar Thapa, Tsering Zangmu Rufus & Anup Jyoti Baniya (Daughters & Sons-In-Law) and Grandchildren: 9933456122, 7407181380

SummitTIMES

Suicidal Still

When will the numbers become too many to ignore?

Suicides might not make it to headlines as often as they used to, but that is more because this newspaper has come to terms with the fact that mere reportage was serving no constructive purpose anymore. A news-report on a suicide was never about just informing people about another self-inflicted death, it was more importantly about flagging a concern about the frequency with which such fatalities were occurring. So no, fewer news reports do not mean that lives are not being lost to this distressing phenomenon. On Wednesday alone, three suicides were reported in Sikkim - a 16 year old daughter of Sikkim marked one end of the age spectrum and on the same day, another 17 year old girl committed suicide in another part of Sikkim and word also arrived of a 34 year old man ending his life by suicide as well. At the other end of the age spectrum was 67 year old grandfather who also gave up similarly.

A sixteen year old committing suicide should be an aberration. In fact, it should never happen, and even if it does, it should be such a rarity that the entire state goes into mourning, wracked by guilt for having allowed a teenager to slip into such deep levels of depression that she ended up taking her own life. Unfortunately, such news does not even shock any more, with even newspapers reporting it in passing, pulling sanitised details from police records, reporting about a suicide, but not about the life that was lost or the situations which led that final moment when a child tied a noose with a nylon rope, hung herself and then suffocated to death.

Just as it is worrying to learn that the psychological distress can overcome the exuberance of youth to such an extent, it is also disconcerting to learn that even the obvious maturity of age has failed to overcome the trauma of mental distress, as must have been the case with the 67 year old.

Too many people are succumbing to suicide, a problem which grips all age groups, social strata and locations in the State. Suicides are always a worry and even more so when it claims lives so young. The phenomenon is so routine nowadays that most readers probably don't even read the reports any more. It is also troubling to learn that the society at large has become so inured to this condition without even having tried to understand or address the problem.

It is obvious that depression is a common ailment among suicide victims, but what cannot escape notice is the fact that one does not even associate such problems as depression and stress with the teen years [at least not of an intensity that would lead to suicide]. Yet, a disturbing number of Sikkim's young have taken their own lives. There might be even more who have survived a suicide attempt. While one can theorise endlessly on why the present day youth is so troubled, it is urgent to start caring for them. Urban pressures, peer pressures, hormonal pressures, academic pressure - these are only some of the tensions which one goes through growing up. Until newspapers started reporting about suicides and the police started documenting such unnatural deaths more diligently, Sikkim lived in an idyll believing that suicides could not happen in the relaxed environs of the hill state. That idyll now stands shattered, not because suicides have started happening only now, but because now we are learning about it regularly. So, let us not get complaining that the times have changed or that the past was better; suicides were always happening... accept it. And now, let's start addressing the problem. Begin with having experts sensitising teachers and community groups on recognising and handling such psychiatric symptoms as stress, depression and trauma in school-going children. Yes, some efforts were made towards this end some years ago, but the effort was not as well coordinated as it should have been, and worse still, has not even been sustained. Since no concerted effort has yet been launched to address suicides, an initiative should now begin which cushions the young better.

While psychiatry might be an iffy science for most, it has been proven that if symptoms are recognised in time there are options to address every psychiatric ailment. Let us accept the fact that the younger generation is growing in conditions much different from earlier times. They need special care and understanding. As teachers, parents and elders, we have to change our approach towards addressing juvenile issues. Also, as the generation at decision-making levels, we should also approach the problems of senior citizens with more empathy. Why do people, especially such young people and such senior citizens, commit suicide? Sikkim needs to engage itself more closely to identify the triggers, address them and save more lives.

There is nothing new that has been said here, but hopefully, there will be some new initiatives soon.

JOVANA STANISLJEVIC
theconversation.com

No more chocolate by 2050? Several articles have pointed recently that we are heading to a major chocolate crisis.

Global chocolate market value keeps reaching new highs, potentially doubling by 2025 compared to its 2015 level. Consumption is mainly driven by perceived health benefits such as anti-aging, antioxidant effects, stress relieve, blood pressure regulation and others.

So where are the biggest chocoholics located? Traditionally, more than half of all chocolate produced is eaten in Western Europe and North America. Country with the "sweetest tooth" in the world is Switzerland, with more than 8kg per capita of chocolate consumed in 2017.

NEW CHOCOLATE MARKETS

But even though developed markets are at the forefront of chocolate indulgence, future growth opportunities could be elsewhere. One way to look is toward China and India, with populations over 1 billion people each. Rapid urbanization, growing middle class and changing consumer tastes have triggered increasing appetite for chocolate.

India is currently one of the fastest-growing chocolate markets, with demand steadily rising over the past years. In 2016, over 228,000 tons were consumed, an increase of 50% in comparison to 2011. Indians have a fling for anything sweet and chocolate has become one of their favourite treats as they perceive it as healthy, hence they do not hesitate when it comes to snacking.

As for China, in the wake of economic reforms in early 1980, chocolate was considered as a rare delicacy. Since then, the country has lagged behind others in chocolate consumption, with less than 1kg consumed per year by an average Chinese.

But things are changing as new trends like "coffee culture" emerge, affecting ways chocolate is used and consumed. Also, millions of affluent Chinese shop online for high quality foreign delicacies, pushing retailers such as Alibaba to rethink their business models in order to stay on top of their game.

ENDANGERED CHOCOLATE PRODUCTION

Yet chocolate producers are struggling. Cocoa, the delicate plant behind chocolate needs humid tropical climates and shades of rainforests, which limits areas where you can grow it. Leading regions are found in West Africa, with Ivory Coast and Ghana alone contributing to more than 50% of the entire world's production.

However, as a result of global warming, cocoa cultivation in these areas is expected to literally

move uphill to maintain optimal growing conditions. The challenge remains in the limited areas of land available, as many of these locations are currently banned from cultivation or might not be suitable for it.

CONTAGION AND ALTERNATIVE PRODUCTS

Enemies of cocoa trees come in different shapes and sizes, two being disease and pests. Estimates indicate that these nuisances cause yearly losses of 30% to 40% of the total global cocoa production.

In June of this year, Ivory Coast announced it will have to take out an entire cocoa plantation of 100,000 hectares contaminated by swollen-shoot plant virus to stop it from spreading further. It will take at least five years before the area can be it replanted again.

As a result of "natural" hazards coupled with price fluctuations, cocoa farmers consider switching to alternatives potentially more profitable and easier to produce.

Indonesia, the world's third largest cocoa pro-

ducer, experienced declining cocoa output since 2010 due to poor weather and ageing cocoa trees.

Consequently, some farmers shifted production to crops such as corn, rubber or palm oil.

PRODUCERS LOOK EAST AND SOUTH

These general threats and high demands from new markets send a clear signal to major cocoa producers.

Ghana, world's second largest cocoa supplier, has its eyes on Asia and specifically China as the next "big thing". To boost its yearly cocoa production, Ghana is trying to secure a \$1.5 billion loan from Chinese Eximbank. Collaboration is backed by governments of both countries as mutual interest is obvious, reflected in the potential the Chinese chocolate market.

Other "hot" destinations are found across Middle East and Africa. United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia are leaders in chocolate spend per person, well above the regional average. Consumers in these markets perceive chocolate as a wealth sym-

bol, driving demand for premium brands.

Chocolate confectionery in Algeria has a healthy performance as well, driven by different rationale. According to Euromonitor, Algerians consider chocolate to be an energy booster making individual consumption thrive particularly among youth, while it is less present in gift giving.

IS SUSTAINABLE CHOCOLATE REAL?

The largest chocolate producers take active part in sustainability initiatives such as Rainforest Alliance, UTZ and Fairtrade.

US-based Mars Wrigley Confectionary, leading global candy maker by net sales in 2017, dedicated \$1 billion funding to help create more heat-resistant cocoa. Moreover, in 2009 Mars was the first major chocolate company to commit to 100% certified cocoa by 2020, followed later by its competitors Hershey's, Ferrero and Lindt.

Mondelez International wants all of its cocoa sustainable as well. Milka is the latest one of its brands to join Cocoa Life, launched in 2012, aiming to empower cocoa farmers.

While these initiatives are a great leap forward, main supply-chain stakeholders admit that they're not sufficient to bring cocoa farmers out of poverty, which is one of the major problems they face. An example is Ivory Coast, a primary cocoa producing country. A UTZ-certified cocoa farmer will only earn additional yearly income of 84€ to 134€ - approximately 16% more in comparison to the non-certified one.

Other constraints emerge, such as limited reach of certification. Farmers should be members of co-operatives to benefit fully from the process. In the case of Ivory Coast only around 30% of them are currently in. Another difficulty is to ensure that no child labour is used over the entire supply chain, something that's basically impossible to control.

Local cocoa producers in Africa have plans of their own, with an announced OPEC-like initiative. They want to have more influence over global cocoa prices by better coordinating production levels and sales policies between countries. This could better protect small cocoa farmers who are vulnerable to price swings in global market.

While claims of a looming "chocapocalypse" might be overblown for the time being, risks are real and we need to be mindful of them.

It is optimistic to see that main stakeholders in the process of chocolate manufacture are pitching in with their own contribution. Whether it will be enough to secure the future of chocolate remains to be seen.

[the writer is Professor in International Business, Department People, Organization, Society, Grenoble École de Management (GEM)]



Social Media's Not all Bad – it's saving lives in disaster zones

PAUL REILLY & IOANNA TANTANASI
theconversation.com

Social media was recently credited with reducing the number of casualties caused by air strikes in the Syrian civil war. The early warning system, developed by tech startup Hala Systems, uses remote sensors to detect aircraft flying over the opposition-held northern province of Idlib. Alerts are then sent via Facebook and instant messaging apps such as WhatsApp to civilians and aid workers in affected areas. These messages give relevant information such as the areas likely to come under heavy bombardment and the duration of these raids.

Since its launch in 2016, the system has reportedly reduced the number of casualties in the region caused by air strikes by as much as 27%. The system also triggers traditional air raid sirens that might actually be more effective than social media in reaching key demographics in affected areas. Nevertheless, this example shows why social media has become big news for emergency managers seeking to provide accurate and timely information to people affected by disasters.

Incidents such as Hurricane Sandy in September 2012 have shown how disaster response teams can leverage the "power of collective intelligence" given by social media. Members of the public use these platforms to share critical information that helps build a bigger picture of the situation. They also play a key role in correct-

ing misinformation and dispelling rumours that have the potential to hinder efforts to restore critical services in affected areas.

Twitter hashtags in particular function as "fire spaces", transforming data generated by citizens into information that helps first responders allocate resources to the people who need them most. Emergency managers frequently use information-gathering platforms such as Ushahidi and Twitcident to help them sift through the large volume of data available on these sites at each stage of the incident.

They have also mobilised "digital volunteers" who offer their time without having to leave home to assist with this task. Groups such as the Virtual Operations Support Teams and the Digital Humanitarian Network helped analyse the social media data generated during natural disasters such as Hurricane Harvey, as well as terrorist incidents such as the November 2015 Paris terrorist attacks.

Social media can also be used by citizens to provide emotional and

material support to those living in disaster-affected areas. Our research projects CascEff and IMPROVER found several examples of such citizen-led social media campaigns. These included #hasseltelp, which provided shelter to those festival goers who had fled the 2011 Pukkelpop festival disaster. And #PorteOuverte, which fulfilled the same function for those caught up in the Paris terrorist attacks.

These hashtags appeared to empower local communities to join in disaster response, theoretically increasing their resilience towards such incidents in the future. Yet social media users typically disengaged from these online groups once their questions about the incident had been answered. And we found that they didn't necessarily show a stronger commitment to responding to the disasters. What's more, emergency management organisations are likely to remain the most influential and reputable sources of crisis information for the foreseeable future.

The problem with relying on digital

media for disaster response is that not everyone has access to it. Many people are still sceptical about the trustworthiness and reliability of information posted online. Research shows that members of the public are still more likely to perceive traditional media such as newspapers, radio and television as more credible than social media.

MIXING OLD AND NEW

Because there's always a risk of mobile networks also going down, any communication strategy has to involve a mix of traditional and digital media. Our research found that radio was still seen as the most resilient communication channel that could help reach large numbers of people when power supplies were disrupted.

Our work also suggests there aren't any ways social media is used that make it indispensable to emergency managers. Instead, they need to assess how people are behaving and the information they need to work out the best way to communicate in any scenario, including by learning lessons from previous disasters.

Overly optimistic views of social media as a panacea for the problems in crisis communication often ignore the importance of a mix of traditional and digital tools. Perhaps that's why the Syrian air strike warning system, which sounded conventional alarms based on data gathered by social media, has proved so successful.

[Paul Reilly is Senior Lecturer in Social Media and Digital Society, University of Sheffield; Ioanna Tantanasi is Research Associate, University of Sheffield]



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Kerala Flood Lessons

CK LEPCHA

I was out of the country when a colleague texted: "Shimla got destabilized today due to very very heavy rain... train service stopped, schools closed for three days".

I laughed a little because only a few months back we had no water and now the same water in the form of continuous downpour had brought life to a stand still. Heavy rain, landslides and broken bridges were the order of the day as I started browsing news but it was not the Shimla situation that garnered my

the world. From the Babylonians to the Chinese, the Peruvians and the Polynesians, they all have their own versions of the flood story. Myths often seek to explain one's worldviews and the natural phenomenon and it is only natural to find the flood myth in ancient societies.

But the Kerala flood story is no myth. It is a modern day reality that has revealed the ugliness of human society today. In addition to heavy rains, the dams were opened as the water levels had risen and flooding was inevitable. Madha Gadgil, an ecologist has called this situation a

"man-made calamity" and Arundhati Roy calls it a "gentle warning" as she highlights how the mountains and coastal areas are vulnerable to global warming and climate change. And in this time of anthropocene, it is no wonder that human induced actions have paved way for the kind of devastation and loss in Kerala.

Unfortunately it is not just our human-nature indifference and the ecological crisis that is unacceptable. It is but the ugly development of groupism/ tribalism/ communalism (whatever you call) in religious, caste and political lines that

not to donate to Kerala because half the state is Muslims and Christians, and there was a particular tweet appealing for donation to help only the Hindus because Muslims and Christians have their own people and agendas... One video emerged that mentions relief won't be given to those who eat beef.

The relief situation only seemed to be setting stage for the othering and creating of boundaries in a drowning Kerala society. We as a country have failed terribly at being responsible citizens as we set out to help someone only because he/she is of the same belief, same religion and same food preferences as Kerala has taught us. While most of these comments have been made by people outside of Kerala, what was heartbreaking was when I read news about how an upper caste Brahmin refused help from a Christian fisherman even if they had no other way to get out of the situation. Why have we become so rigid with our spaces? I had previously read about how the advent of missionaries in Kerala meant that they had to have parallel churches separate for the upper and lower caste Christians. Missionaries have long gone but the castism still seems alive even during flood situation.

It feels almost helpless and therefore becomes important for us to see beyond immediate group loyalties if we are to make a difference because our actions and encounters matter in the bigger scheme of things.

But as human beings we have to be hopeful too. Yesterday I chanced on a photo exhibition in Shimla and the host was a young man from Kerala who mentioned that they were also selling the photographs so they could raise money for Kerala flood. From the looks of it, he had managed to gather friends from different backgrounds and was making effort for a better tomorrow.

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



attention. Death toll was rising as god's own country was drowning in the flood.

I always see August as a flood month –and this imagination has mostly been fed by the fact that Tendong Hlo Rum Faat is celebrated in August every year. And if we are to trace why it is a holiday, it tells us the Tendong flood story –the time when the waters rose and flooded the land and it was when people climbed Mt. Tendong that they could save themselves. Of course the flood myth is not a new story; it is an oft repeated legend in societies across



has been appalling and scary.

One of the first pieces I read in these lines was people saying the flood was because of the beef eaters in Kerala. I thought it was outrageous but it was only the beginning of so many attacks and abuses on people's personal choices, religion, identity and humanity in general. There were those who appealed

ATK, Kerala Blasters to face off in ISL season 5 opener

MUMBAI, AUG 25 (PTI): The fifth edition of the Indian Super League (ISL) will commence with two-time champions ATK taking on Kerala Blasters FC at Kolkata's Vivekananda Yuba Bharati Krirangan (Salt Lake Stadium) on September 29.

The ISL today announced the fixtures for 2018-19 until the mid-season break, featuring 12 rounds and 59 games.

On September 30, the last season's runners-up Bengaluru FC will be up against defending champions Chennaiyin FC at Sree Kanteerava Stadium in Bengaluru, a media release said.

The organisers said the upcoming season will have three breaks, two for FIFA windows (8th-16th October 2018/ 12th-20th November 2018), and one starting from 17th December 2018 for the Indian national team's preparatory camp ahead of the AFC Asian Cup in United Arab Emirates.

They also said that the fixtures for 2019 will be announced later.

The League has moved away from double headers on weekend this season and kick-off for all matches will be at 7.30 pm.

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Centenary of Bengali cinema to be celebrated in Dubai

KOLKATA, AUG 25 (PTI): The centenary of Bengali cinema will be celebrated through a musical event at the 'Bongo Probashi Milap 2018' in Dubai on November 30, 2018, Bengali film superstar Prosenjit Chatterjee said.

The musical event will be presented by artists from the Bengali entertainment industry and is "aimed at showcasing the contemporary best of Bengal," he said yesterday.

Chatterjee said Punjabi soundtracks have become the rage for rhythm, pace and beats in the country and globally though many did not understand the lyrics. Bengali music should strive to get that kind of popularity

among the non-Bengali speaking people.

"We must ponder how to make Bengali music equally popular among a cross-section of Indians. We have everything - from lyrics to foot-tapping rhythm - we have such a rich reserve of different genres of music with which people can easily connect. We have to take Bengali music to the world," Chatterjee said adding events like the 'Bongo Probashi Milap 2018' can serve the purpose of taking our culture to the diaspora.

Besides Chatterjee, popular radio jockey-actor-emcee Mir, actors Biswanath Basu, Kanchan Mullick, actress Pallavi Chatterjee, Poulami

Das and director Kaushik Ganguly have supported the initiative.

As part of the event, besides hosting the show to commemorate special celebration for '100 years of Bengali Cinema', a film festival showcasing six Bengali feature films and six short films will be held on December 1 and 2.

There will also be a trade exhibition on December 1 and 2, 2018 involving exhibitors from Bengal and UAE to showcase designer apparels, specialty foods and savories, travel and tour options, education opportunities and many more.

"Bongo Probashi Milap 2018 is a celebration of the rich Bengali Art

and Culture on a single platform. It is an attempt to create a warm confluence of cinema, music, business, art and culture,

handicrafts, fashion and specialty food from Bengal," actress Pallavi Chatterjee said on behalf of the organisers.

Presidency Univ impasse: Agitating students to undertake signature campaign

KOLKATA, AUG 25 (PTI): A section of students of Presidency University, who have been demanding accommodation in the Hindu hostel which is presently under repair, today said they will launch a signature campaign apart from continuing with their sit-in to bolster their demand.

Around 50 students have been agitating in the university campus since August 3.

A spokesman of the agitating students, Subho Biswas, told PTI, the boarders will launch a signature campaign among the university students from Monday to raise awareness about the difficulties faced by the boarders of the Hindu Hostel and the reasons behind the current stir.

"While continuing the sit-in, we will take the battle among the students in general and seek their opinion about the future course of action by undertaking a signature campaign.

We will then organise a mass convention in the first week of September and based on the feedback from these two campaigns, we will decide whether to approach any higher authority to address our demand," Biswas, one of the 50 boarders, said.

Ayan Chakraborty, an activist of students' body Independent Consolidation (IC), said a part of the corridor of the university building has been turned into a makeshift hostel without causing any difficulty to anybody.

He said there had been no further communication with Vice Chancellor Anuradha Lohia or any varsity official on the

issue after the V-C talked to them on August 8.

"The V-C talked to the students last week but on a different issue and the hostel agenda did not figure," he said.

A university spokesman said, "We have already explained the situation to the students. We had promised to them that the Hindu Hostel can be thrown open to them only after PWD declares it fit for use after renovation. We can only hope they will understand the situation."

A group of 36 teachers of the university had earlier urged the agitating students to withdraw their stir promising them to monitor renovation work of the Hindu Hostel building and go back to the rented premises at New Town, about 18 km away from the university campus, for the time being.

"We are not disrupting the academic or administrative work. We are just staying at a particular place in the campus," Chakraborty said.

The students claimed that renovation in two of the six blocks of the Hindu Hostel building has already been completed and they should be accommodated in these two blocks.

The Hindu Hostel, adjoining the College Street institution, had been shut down for repairs on July 29, 2015 and 150 boarders were shifted to a rented accommodation at New Town.

The Presidency authorities had last year assured the students that all the six blocks of the hostel would be opened for the boarders after completion of renovation work by the first week of August this year.

Nooyi to be honored with Asia Society's Game Changer of the Year 2018 award

YOSHITA SINGH

NEW YORK, AUG 24 (PTI): PepsiCo's India-born CEO Indra Nooyi will be honoured with the Game Changer of the Year award by a global cultural organisation in recognition of her business achievements, humanitarian record and advocacy for women and girls around the world.

The 2018 Asia Game Changer Awards will be



given in October to individuals and institutions

who have broken barriers, defined courage, worked miracles, and in turn inspired their fellow citizens of the world.

"Indra Nooyi is truly a transformational leader," said Asia Society President and CEO Josette Sheeran. In my United Nations work, I have witnessed firsthand her humanitarian leadership, as she steered Pepsi's life-saving collaboration

with the United Nations on food, nutrition, global water, climate, and women's empowerment issues.

Nooyi leads a group of other revolutionary women as Asia Society's Game Changers at a time when their issues and voices are at the forefront of public discourse: the Afghan Girls Robotics Team who has made waves at international robotics compe-

titions; and Mira Rai, a record-shattering runner from a small village in Nepal, who is also an inspiration for millions of girls and young women.

Nooyi, who this month announced she would be stepping down as CEO of PepsiCo after 12 years at the helm, has driven one of the world's most iconic global companies into the future, leading the way when it comes to deliver-

ing strong financial performance, while making more nutritious products and advancing women's access and excellence in Asia and around the world.

Sheeran said it is a crucial moment to honour women from Asia who have battled the odds to shatter glass ceilings, opening pathways for a new generation of women to thrive and prosper.

Penguin, TTT join hands for collection of bite-sized poems

NEW DELHI, AUG 25 (PTI): Over 40 contributors have come together for a short collection of compelling poems for every mood and to resonate with millennials.

Titled "Ninety-Seven Poems", the book features contemporary poetry that packs a punch and is reflective of our times.

Penguin Random House India and Terribly Tiny Tales (TTT), the micro-fiction platform, have come together once again for this collection.

This book is about pictures, of a park bench and a prescription, and a toothbrush in a mug. It talks of half-lit cigarettes and broken geysers. There's a fortune cookie, some pigeons in cages and stars tumbling from the sky.

Anuj Gosalia and Chin-tan Ruparel are the founders of TTT.

After CWG high, teenage prodigy Bhanwala disappoints at Asiad

PALEMBANG, AUG 25 (PTI): A gold-medallist at the Commonwealth Games, 15-year-old Indian shooter Anish Bhanwala produced a below-par performance to finish without a medal in the men's 25m rapid fire air pistol event at the Asian Games here today.

Bhanwala, who had made history by winning a gold at the CWG in Gold Coast earlier this year, could not repeat yesterday's fine qualification performance on the second day of qualification here today.

He eventually failed to qualify for the finals, finishing ninth overall with a score of 576. Another Indian in the fray, Shivam Shukla, suffered a washout and ended 11th with 569.

The top six qualified for the finals where China's Zhaonan Yao won



the gold with a Games Record score of 34. Silver also went to China with Junmin Lin shooting 33 and bronze went to South Korea's Kim Junhong, who shot 29.

Bhanwala, who is from Karnal, was in third spot after the qualification yesterday.

The competition has been a mixed bag for India's promising teenagers. Saurabh Chaudhary, 16, and Shardul Vihan, 15, brought laurels to the country with their sensational performances, winning gold and silver respectively.

Manu Bhaker and Bhanwala, however, could

not live up to the expectations after the CWG high. Bhaker had competed in three events at the Games.

"I was under pressure yesterday but not today. I just shot badly. It can happen sometimes. I am disappointed but need to move on," Bhanwala told PTI looking ahead

with the World Championships beginning in Changwon on August 31.

"There were expectations but like I said, in shooting it is all about how you perform on the day. I could not do it today and I will try to do better at the Worlds," added the teenager, who took the failure sportingly.

India has so far won nine shooting medals at the Games, including two pistol gold medals from Chaudhary and Rahi Sarnobat.

The men's and women's skeet qualification were also held today. Ganemot Sekhon and Rashmi Rathore were in ninth and 10th place respectively.

In men's skeet, Sheeraz Sheikh and Angad Vir Singh Bajwa were placed 10th and 13th after day one.

Another qualification session and the finals will be held tomorrow, the final day of the competition.

Indo-Pak athletes make peace at Asian Games

BHARAT SHARMA

PALEMBANG, AUG 25 (PTI): The diplomatic hostilities make India-Pakistan peace seem like a pipe dream but it does turn into a reality at sporting events like the ongoing Asian Games where athletes from the two countries mingle freely and even cheer for each other.

The Pakistani tennis contingent was there to back Rohan Bopanna and Divij Sharan during the men's doubles semifinals at the Jakabaring Tennis Center. The top-seeded Indian pair went on to win the gold medal yesterday.

Pakistani players were seen making a beeline for a picture with Bopanna, who reached a Grand Slam final with Aisam-ul-Haq Qureshi back in 2010.

The Bopanna-Qureshi pair used to called the 'Peace Express' for never missing a chance to stress on the need for peace between the two nations.

"I have played some of the best tennis of my life in India, made great friends there, especially Delhi. I remain in constant touch with them. Whenever I played in Delhi, it was like home away from home," Pakistan tennis veteran Aqil Khan, who won a host of ITF Futures titles in India between 2000 and 2010, told PTI.

"I have also been to Hyderabad, loved the food there. It is exactly what I eat in Karachi. Delhi is the place I miss the most. After matches at DITA, we used to go out to eat in places like Green Park and South Ex.

"It was as if I was playing in my own city," said the 38-year-old, whose

last of the many memorable visits to India came during the 2010 Commonwealth Games.

Khan is in the twilight of his long career but like him, the Pakistani youngsters, including Muhammad Abid and Muzammil Murtaza, would love to play in India "if they get the visa".

The same warmth between the athletes of two countries was visible at the shooting range, where India has had a productive campaign so far.

Pistol shooter Gulam Mustafa Bashir, who qualified for the Rio Olympics, says it is only natural that they get along well with their Indian counterparts.

"There is instant connection with the Indians. We speak the same language so there is not even a language barrier which we might face with shooter of other countries. We are always friendly with each other," the 31-year-old Bashir told PTI.

He often discusses his game with India pistol coach Jaspal Rana, a four-time gold medallist at the Asian Games.

"We talk about shooting and we talk about other things also," added Bashir, who is a marine in Pakistan Navy.

But there are times, when one has to be careful, especially in the shooting fraternity.

"Most of the shooters in Pakistan come from the defence forces. We get along well but you have to maintain a distance. Otherwise, there are no issues. I remember going to Karachi once. We were treated very nicely," said Rana.

India A tour to England helped me prepare for Test debut: Pant

CHETAN NARULA

NOTTINGHAM, AUG 25 (PTI): Young wicket-keeper batsman Rishabh Pant has credited India 'A' stint in England this summer for his impressive showing on Test debut, saying it helped him to cope with pace and bounce at Trent Bridge.

The 20-year-old made a confident start to his Test career at Trent Bridge, scoring an attacking 24 in the first innings and then taking seven catches, the latter a record for Indian keeping debutante.

"Keeping in England is always difficult because the ball wobbles a lot behind the wicket. The thing is that I have been playing India-A cricket since last two-and-a-half months in England, so it has been helpful for me," Pant said after India beat England by 203 runs in third Test.

"I am practicing in the nets on how to deal with that and it is working now," added Pant, who played for India A against England Lions and West Indies A before being named in the Test squad.

During his debut Test, Pant spilled a few chances, particularly against Jasprit Bumrah, but he said it was owing to the angle that the pacer creates at time of delivery.



"It is a big challenge, but the thing is that when Bumrah bowls, he bowls with a different angle. So, sometimes we react to it. That day I reacted too much on that ball and the edge came off. I'm not saying that it was not too difficult a catch; I could have pulled it off," he said.

"As a keeper you have to wait for the outside edge. That is the only thing I can do, and that is what I have learnt after that thing. I am going to wait for the outside edge. That is the only solution."

On his Test debut, Pant said: "It is a great experience, actually. I have played with all the people (team members) in IPL and domestic cricket but when you play for the country, it is a different feeling. It was a dream for me to play

Test cricket."

More than his skill behind the wickets, India needed solidity and gumption in batting as Dinesh Karthik was struggling to stay long at the wicket.

Pant, who scored crucial 24 in the first innings, showed maturity in countering the English attack when India lost their way late on day one.

The standout moment for Pant came when he smacked Adil Rashid for a six off the second ball that he faced in Test cricket.

"I was nervous. Everyone is nervous when they play their first match. When I see the ball I don't think too much, just see the ball and react to it. That is what happened. I was just playing normal cricket - that is all," he said.

It has been a heady rise for the youngster from Roorkee. Making waves in Delhi's domestic circuit, then scoring big runs in Ranji Trophy, garnering eyeballs in the IPL and then performing at the international stage.

He credited his time as Delhi limited-overs' captain, while also attributing his meteoric rise to India-A coach Rahul Dravid and his childhood coach Tarak Sinha.

"It helps a lot as captain because you have to take the responsibility for the team as well, playing IPL also helps you a lot. Everyone in the team supports you and you perform, then it builds your confidence. Then you watch players who are around you, and learn. All these factors have been very helpful (in my career

growth)," Pant said.

"It has been a really good experience, because starting from zero is not easy. But I started from zero. There is struggle in everyone's life, but you realise that if you work hard with dedication in anything, you will definitely achieve the goal.

"I'm very thankful to Rahul Dravid sir, and also my coach, who has seen me from my childhood Tarak Sinha. He has helped me at every point in my life. For my technique, everything, the credit goes to Tarak Sinha sir."

Durgawati looks like Sunny Leone in UP voters' list

BALLIA (UP), AUG 25

(PTI): Film actor Sunny Leone is a voter in Ballia but goes by the name of Durgawati, if the voters' list that was being prepared for the 2019 Lok Sabha elections is to be believed.

An elephant, a pigeon and a deer were also on the list.

The errors were detected and set right during the process of verification of the list, an official said today, blaming a disgruntled data operator.

Actor Sunny Leone's picture was pasted against the name of vot-

er Durgawati, Kunwar Ankur Singh was represented by a deer and Kunwar Gaurav Singh looked exactly like a pigeon, according to the list.

Another victim was Narad Rai, a former minister in the Mulayam Singh Yadav and Akhilesh Yadav governments in Uttar Pradesh.

He had a picture of an elephant pasted besides his name in the updated voters list.

District officials blamed a data operator for the mischief and have recommended his dismissal.

"A data operator on contract, Vishnu Verma ,

was sore over his transfer and indulged in this," Additional District Magistrate Mukul Kumar Singh told PTI.

"Out of mischief, he pasted such pictures against the names of seven voters," the ADM said.

He added the Election Commission was informed and the errors corrected.

The mischief was discovered during the verification of the list, he said.

Ballia Superintendent of Police Sriparna Ganguly said an FIR has been lodged against the data operator at Ballia Kotwali police station.

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Rohingya emergency a year on: UN says thousands of lives saved, but challenges remain

YOSHITA SINGH
UNITED NATIONS, AUG 25 (PTT): Significant progress has been made in protecting hundreds of thousands Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh since they fled violence in Myanmar, but lives “will once again be at risk” if funding is not urgently secured, UN officials have said on the eve of the first anniversary of a military crackdown that forced them to flee their country.

Nearly 700,000 Rohingya, most of them Muslims, have been displaced from Rakhine since the military began a crackdown on militants last August. Most have crossed the border into Bangladesh, joining the 200,000 refugees already there.

Deputy Director-General of Emergency Preparedness and Response for the UN World Health Organisation (WHO) Peter Salama told journalists in Geneva that deadly disease outbreaks had been held at bay in Bangladesh’s Cox’s Bazar despite “all the conditions being in place for a massive epidemic”.

Outbreaks of measles, diphtheria, polio, cholera and rubella have been contained, he said, noting that “thousands of lives” had been saved so far, thanks to the joint efforts of the Bangladesh Government,



WHO and partners.

“We need to sustain the vigilance for early warnings of infectious diseases,” Salama said. “That is still a major risk due to the environmental situation, the poor sanitation, the massive overcrowding, the way these people are being housed and we need to maintain our ability to scale-up outbreak response as required.”

His call to scale up help was echoed in Geneva by IOM, the UN migration agency, spokesperson Joel Millman.

“This was the fastest growing refugee crisis in the world and the challenges have been immense, he said, high-

lighting comments by the agency’s Chief of Mission in Bangladesh Giorgi Gigauri. Countless lives have been saved thanks to the generosity of the Government of Bangladesh, the local community and donor s and the hard work of all those involved in the humanitarian response. But we now face the very real threat that if more funding is not urgently secured, lives will once again be at risk.”

One year on from the exodus sparked by a military operation likened to ethnic cleansing by UN human rights chief Zeid Ra’ad al Hussein, more than 720,000 Rohingya people have arrived in

Cox’s Bazar in southern Bangladesh.

They have joined an estimated 200,000 Rohingya refugees who were previously displaced.

One of the camps, Kutupalong, shelters more than 600,000 refugees, making it the largest and most densely populated refugee settlement in the world, according to the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

In addition to the challenge of providing people’s basic needs shelter, water and sanitation and healthcare the agency has carried out huge engineering work to reduce the risk of landslides

and flooding. This also involved mobilizing and training hundreds of refugee volunteers to serve as first responders in the event of a natural disaster, although the camps have largely withstood the adverse weather.

Another key area of concern is the health of some 60,000 pregnant Rohingya women in the camps. Many of them suffered gender-based violence either prior or during the course of their flight from Myanmar, WHO’s Salama said, adding that only one fifth of them will give birth in a suitable healthcare facility.

Partner agency UNHCR also underlined the

calls for the international community to step up support for the Rohingya, who are stateless and unable to return to Myanmar. This is despite the UN’s signing of an official Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of Myanmar in June, to help establish conditions conducive for the safe, dignified and sustainable repatriation of the Rohingya.

According to OCHA, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the mainly Muslim Rohingya communities that have stayed in Rakhine state require urgent and in some cases lifesaving - help.

Some 660,000 people are in need across Rakhine state including more than 176,000 in Northern Rakhine, OCHA spokesperson Jens Laerke said.

“We stand ready to go there as soon as access allows,” he added.

“Most humanitarian organisations that have been working in Northern Rakhine state for years have still not been able to resume programmes and services for these population which are some of the most vulnerable in the world.”

To date, the USD 950 million Rohingya 2018 appeal is only just over 30 per cent funded.



26 children killed by coalition strikes in Yemen: UN

UNITED NATIONS, AUG 25 (AFP): Two Saudi-led coalition air strikes in Yemen have killed at least 26 children, UN officials have said, renewing calls for an independent investigation of attacks targeting civilians in the three-year war.

At least 22 children and four women died in an attack on Thursday while fleeing fighting in the Al-Durayhimi district, south of the rebel-held city of Hodeida, UN aid chief Mark Lowcock said yesterday. In addition to that strike, four other children were killed in a separate air strike in Al-Durayhimi, also on Thursday.

“This is the second time in two weeks that an air strike by the Saudi-led coalition has resulted in dozens of civilian casualties,” Lowcock, the undersecretary-general for humanitarian affairs, said in a statement.

A coalition attack on a bus in the northern rebel stronghold of Saada on August 9 killed 40 children, prompting UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres to call for an independent investigation.

Lowcock renewed

the UN appeal for “an impartial, independent and prompt investigation” and said “those with influence” over the warring sides must ensure that civilians are protected.

The rebel-run Saba news agency said the air strike on Thursday hit a bus and a house but the United Arab Emirates, a key partner in the coalition, blamed the Huthi rebels for the attack.

Al-Durayhimi lies some 20 kilometers south of Hodeida, and has seen two weeks of fighting between the rebels and pro-government forces backed by the UAE.

“I had hoped that the outrage that followed the Saada attack in Yemen two weeks ago would be a turning point in the conflict. Yesterday’s reported attacks in Al-Durayhimi, killing 26 children, indicate that it was not,” said Henrietta Fore, the director of the UN children’s agency UNICEF.

Fore urged the warring sides, their foreign backers and the Security Council to “take action and end this conflict once and for all”.

Six dead, thousands evacuated in Taiwan floods

TAIPEI, AUG 25 (AFP): Six people have been killed by floodwaters in Taiwan, officials said today, after days of heavy rain forced thousands to evacuate their homes.

A tropical depression has been dumping torrential rain in central and southern Taiwan since Thursday, with some districts receiving close to 1,000 millimetres of rainfall.

Six have died in the storm so far, according to government figures, including three who were killed by a falling scaffold in the southern city of Kaohsiung. Almost 100 more were injured.

More than 6,000 people were evacuated with more than 1,100 still in shelters on Saturday morning, officials said.

Images showed residents in Kaohsiung and nearby Tainan wading in knee-deep water, as well as soldiers in central Chiayi county carrying elderly residents and children from their flooded homes.

Television footage also showed scooters and cars half-submerged in water and roads blocked by landslides.

Although the depression has already moved northwest away from Taiwan, floods have yet to recede in many areas.

Taiwan’s weather bureau said the severity of the downpour was “extremely rare”.

The island is frequently hit by typhoons in the summer. Last year more than 100 people were injured when Typhoon Nesat battered the island, causing flooding and widespread power outages.

COX’S BAZAR, AUG 25 (AFP): Thousands of Rohingya refugees staged protests for “justice” today on the first anniversary of a Myanmar military crackdown that forced them to flee to camps in Bangladesh.

About 700,000 of the Muslim minority poured across the border after attacks by the Myanmar military and Buddhist groups that the United Nations has likened to ethnic cleansing.

Thousands held peaceful marches and attended rallies chanting “We want justice from the UN.” At the Kutupalong camp, a giant banner proclaimed: “Never Again: Rohingya Genocide Remembrance Day. 25 August, 2018.”

Some wore bandanas emblazoned with the slogan “Save Rohingya” while others waved flags.

Other marches and gatherings were planned across what has become the world’s biggest refugee camp, activists told AFP.



Rohingya militants staged attacks on Myanmar police posts on August 25 last year sparking the crackdown in which an unknown number of Rohingya were killed. Many have arrived in the Bangladesh camps with stories of rape, torture and villages

burned to the ground.

Myanmar authorities have insisted their forces only targeted radicals.

They have made an agreement with Bangladesh to take back refugees but no progress has been made on returns and the Rohingya insist they will

not go back unless their safety is guaranteed.

Mohammad Hossain, a 40-year-old protester at Kutupalong, said “We are here remember to August 25. We want justice.

“We want them to recognise us as Rohingya. We are very sad because we

are not in our native land. Everyone wants justice. We are complaining about this to the world.”

Another protester, Noor Kamal, added: “We faced genocide. Last year, August 25, we faced genocide in Myanmar. We want justice for that.”

Rohingyas protest for ‘justice’ on crackdown anniversary

US cuts more than USD 200 million in aid to Palestinians

WASHINGTON, AUG 25 (AFP): The United States has said that it had cancelled more than USD 200 million in aid for the Palestinians in the Gaza Strip and West Bank, leading their ambassador to accuse President Donald Trump’s administration of being “anti-peace”.

A senior State Department official said yesterday that the decision, made “at the direction of the president”, came after a review of aid programs to the Palestinian territories. The funding previously allocated for programs in the West Bank and Gaza will “now address high-priority projects elsewhere”, said the official.

The move “takes into account the challenges the international community faces in providing assistance in Gaza, where Hamas control endangers the lives of Gaza’s citizens and degrades an already dire humanitarian and economic situation,” he said.

In January, the United States had already made drastic cuts to its contribution to the UN agency for Palestinian refugees UNRWA. Relations between the US administration and the Palestinian Authority took a nosedive after Trump announced the US decision to recognise Jerusalem as Israel’s capital.

The Palestinians have suspended contacts with the administration and consider that it can no longer play a mediation role in the Middle East peace process. “This administration is dismantling decades of US vision and engagement in Palestine,” Husam Zomlot, head of the Palestinian General Delegation to the United States said in a statement.

The decision to cut Palestinian funding comes amid a humanitarian crisis in Gaza, which has seen a surge of violence since Palestinian protests began in March.

Trump calls off Pompeo North Korea trip, blasts China

WASHINGTON, AUG 24 (AFP): US President Donald Trump today pulled the plug on a weekend trip to North Korea by his top diplomat, while taking a swipe at China over efforts to disarm the nuclear state.

“I have asked Secretary of State Mike Pompeo not to go to North Korea, at this time, because I feel we are not making sufficient progress with respect to the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula,” Trump said by tweet.

“Additionally, because of our much tougher Trading stance with China, I do not believe they are helping with the process of denuclearization as they once were (despite the UN Sanctions which are in place),” Trump said.

In another tweet, the president added Pompeo would still head to North Korea “in the near future,” saying this would likely occur when the US-China trading relationship is “resolved.”

“In the meantime I would like to send my warmest regards and respect to Chairman Kim. I look forward to seeing him soon!” Trump said.

Pompeo had yesterday said he would return to North Korea next week for the next stage in ensuring the “final, fully verified denuclearization of North Korea.”

The trip would have been Pompeo’s fourth to North Korea.

SAJJAD HUSSAIN
ISLAMABAD, AUG 25 (PTT): Pakistan wants to improve ties with India and resolve all outstanding issues including Kashmir through talks, and is not shy of engaging with New Delhi despite the current impasse in relations, Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi has said.

“But it takes two to tango. You cannot clap with just one hand. We have a positive stance and will remain hopeful,” said Qureshi, who was sworn-in as Pakistan’s Foreign Minister on Monday.

He also said the “current position of the ties be-

tween Pakistan and India was not a secret as peace talks are suspended, but we have to see how we can move forward”.

Ties between India and Pakistan nose-dived in recent years with no bilateral talks taking place, following a spate of terror attacks on Indian military bases by Pakistan-based terror groups since January 2016. India has made it clear that it will not hold dialogue with Islamabad as terrorism and talks cannot go hand-in-hand.

“Pakistan wants to improve ties with India and resolve all outstanding issues, including Kashmir

through talks. The government is not shy of engaging with India despite the current impasse in the talks,” Qureshi told reporters yesterday after Pakistan’s new Prime Minister Imran Khan visited the Foreign Ministry and was briefed on the country’s foreign policy.

He also mentioned Khan’s July 26 victory speech, in which the former cricketer-turned-politician had said that his government would like leaders of the India and Pakistan to resolve all disputes, including the “core issue” of Kashmir, through talks. Khan had said that if they (India) takes one step towards us,

Pakistan will take two steps.

Qureshi also denied having said that Pakistan would win the Kulbhushan Jadhav’s case in the International Court of Justice (ICJ).

Jadhav, 47, was sentenced to death by a Pakistani military court on spying charges in April 2017. India moved the ICJ in May the same year against the verdict. The world court has put an stay on Jadhav’s execution on India’s appeal pending the final verdict by it.

Both India and Pakistan have already submitted their detailed pleas and responses in the world court. Qureshi, while ad-

ressing media in his home city of Multan, had said yesterday that Pakistan has “solid evidence” against Jadhav and was hopeful of winning the case against him at the ICJ.

“How I can say that we will win when the matter is sub-judice. I only said that we will put forward Pakistan’s point of view effectively,” he said.

Talking about his previous press conference, Qureshi said he had asked a question to his Indian counterpart “whether Pakistan and India have any other option other than holding talks to resolve the issues”.



SQUAD GOALS! Selena Gomez rocks a bright red lip with Cardi B in a red swimsuit and floral duster as they tease music collaboration with DJ Snake.

"I'LL MISS ALL MORE THAN I CAN SAY," WRITES AN EMOTIONAL JIM PARSONS AS HE LEAVES THE BIG BANG THEORY

It's been a rough week for The Big Bang Theory fans with the news of it coming to an end after more than 12 years. Even actors after months of speculation, Warner Bros. Television and CBS announced on Wednesday that the upcoming season will be the series' last.

With 279 episodes, it will be the longest-running multi-camera comedy in TV history, Warner Bros. TV said in a release. But it has only started to hit home now with its cast bidding their good-byes. Earlier, Kaley Cuoco, said she's been "drowning in tears" over the past few days. And now comes a blow from the Sheldon Cooper himself!

That's right, Jim Parsons recently took to Instagram and shared a long, emotional letter about the end of TBBT and it's heart-breaking to be honest. Along with a group photo taken on set with co-stars Johnny Galecki, Kaley Cuoco, Simon Helberg, Kunal Nayyar, Mayim Bialik and Melissa Rauch, the 45-year-old actor captioned it as "Swipe for my caption to this picture which was too long to just write here (not surprising given the circumstances)."

But the post goes on and it begins with, "It is hard (nearly impossible, actually)



to really accept that this is a picture of the first of the final 24 episodes we will shoot for The Big Bang Theory. I feel very fortunate that we have another 23 episodes to shoot this season because I am hopeful that with each and every one, my level of RE-ALLY accepting this fact will sink in."

He also expressed his feelings about the upcoming finale, loyal fans of the show and added, "...something else I feel grateful for—and this gratitude needs no time

to 'sink in' or become more 'realized, this grateful-feeling is always with me but is multiplied in this moment of us announcing our final season—but I feel such intense gratitude for our devoted viewers who are the ACTUAL reason we have been graced with the opportunity to explore these characters for 12 years of our lives."

Parsons also thanked the crew, whom he said "are in many ways the real and steady heartbeat that keeps this body of work alive and

breathing," and the writers, "who found ways to keep coming up with organic, entertaining ways to keep the life of this show going."

Parsons concluded, "I will miss all of you and all of this more than I can say and more than I can know at this time."

The actor's statement comes after the report that it was he who pulled the plug and declined the show's sign-off, a deal with CBS worth more than \$50 million in order to leave and, ultimately, ending the series run.

Courteney Cox to join cast of Shameless for season IX

Courteney Cox will be joining the cast of Shameless. Entertainment Weekly has reported that the 54-year-old actress will appear on season nine of the Showtime series.

The Friends alum is set to play an actress on the hit Showtime series.

According to the entertainment outlet, she is set to play 'a famous actress' that hires Lip-played by Jeremy Allen White - as a sober companion.

This will be Courteney's first notable role since Cougar Town wrapped in 2015 after six seasons.

Shameless is currently Showtime's highest-rated series, and is set to return on September 9.

Courteney is not the only



new actress set to appear on the premium cable network's top series. Katey Sagal of Sons of Anarchy fame will also be joining the series.

The 64-year-old actress will play Ingrid, who appears to catch the interest of Wil-

liam H. Macy's character, Frank. According to the outlet, she will play 'a crazed psych patient'.

Courteney has been focusing on her love life since the end of Cougar Town. Her and her Snow Patrol band

member fiancé Johnny McDaid have been almost inseparable after reconciling in 2016.

Courteney and Johnny have been dating since late 2013, and got engaged in 2014 before hitting the rocks with a 'brutal' split in 2015.

It was reported at the time that Johnny was determined to get away from Tinseltown and move back to his native United Kingdom, while Courteney did not want to leave Los Angeles, and they couldn't resolve their living plan.

They've been back on track since April 2016, after the ex-wife of David Arquette reportedly agreed to spend more time in the U.K.

Nick Jonas' new love song Right Now about fiancée Priyanka Chopra

An artist's best work comes from their real-life experiences. And Nick Jonas released a new song 'Right Now' that appears to be about the love of his life, Priyanka Chopra, 36.

The track, created along with Robin Schulz, debuted on Friday. Nick, 25, took to Instagram Stories to give a sample of the track.

"You are my water, my sun, my moon and stars. Your heart is all I need," began the song.

Further lyrics include: "I could try to fill the space with someone else tonight, but I don't want to... I don't want to. Right now, you know I miss your body, so I won't kiss no-



body...until you come back home," according to Genius.

If the lyrics are indeed about Priyanka, the song will remind fans of a track penned for one his ex-girlfriends.

In 2014, Nick co-wrote his

hit single, Jealous, about beauty queen Olivia Culpo. The former Jonas Brothers member discussed his feelings over the attention that she received while they dated. The duo split in 2015.

Guardians of the Galaxy 3 production put on hold

According to The Hollywood Reporter, production of the sci-fi film has been paused temporarily so that Marvel and Disney can regroup following the dismissal of some crew members. These latest dismissals come about a month after director James Gunn was fired when old tweets that made light of pedophilia and rape resurfaced.

THR sources say the small group of crew members was told they were free to look for new work. They had been assembled to start prepping for pre-production on the third installment of the hugely successful franchise



that stars Chris Pratt, Dave Bautista and Zoe Saldana.

rected Guardians of the Galaxy

Another person called the move a 'regrouping' so that Marvel and Disney can find a new director for the film. Studio heads are reportedly taking a 'measured approach' to finding a replacement for Gunn, who di-

rected Guardians of the Galaxy (2014) and Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2 (2017).

The film was originally scheduled to begin principal photography in either January or February.

The two previous films earned a combined \$1.6 billion dollars worldwide.

Most of the controversial tweets were shared between 2008 and 2011.

In one, Gunn wrote, "The best thing about being raped is when you're done being raped and it's like when this feels great, not being raped!"

Galaxy star Dave Bautista,

who plays alien warrior Dax, expressed his disappointment with the firing of Gunn right after the move was made public.

Pratt signed an open letter released ten days after Gunn's firing, saying the cast fully supports the director and the character he showed both on the set of the first two movies and in the wake of his firing.

Zoe Saldana, Bradley Cooper, Vin Diesel and five other main stars of the franchise also signed the letter.

Disney has never set a release date for Guardians of the Galaxy 3.

by listening to others.

LEO: Make sure that the battle you fight today is yours, Leo. There's a great deal of tension in the air that might erupt when you least expect it. It may behoove you to stay detached from the war that's apt to ensue. Keep things light and try not to take things too seriously. Your philosophical viewpoint and strong spirit are the very combination needed to resolve the situation.

VIRGO: Wake up on the right side of bed, Virgo. This will set the tone for the rest of the day. Keep things positive and you'll find that the aggressive energies of the day work for instead of against you. Don't try to fight people who are so obstinate that they refuse to see another perspective. At the same time, make sure you stay open to other

people's points of view.

LIBRA: You may feel a strong connection with your fanciful, romantic side today, Libra. Dreams and illusions are apt to enter the scene and take you into the clouds. Be careful, because you might find that a strong aggressive force opposes these dreams. Your wit and connection with new technology and electrical gadgets will be your greatest assets on a day like today.

SCORPIO: Give people the benefit of the doubt today, Scorpio. Even though you may not agree with everything going on around you, people have their reasons for the way they act and the way they are. This doesn't mean that you need to act in exactly the same manner. Stick to your routine and don't get thrown off track by the aggressive warrior in others.

SAGITTARIUS: Some action you took yesterday may be opposed today, Sagittarius. Unclear facts and romantic fantasies could get in the way of your taking decisive action. You may feel the need to act anyway. Keep in mind that communication could be tainted by pockets of uncertainty. Try not to rock the boat. Today's energy is a delicate balance between war and peace.

CAPRICORN: If you find yourself in a slump today, Capricorn, don't worry. It could be that nothing fits right or that a certain nervous, restless energy urges you to take action but uncertainty prevents you from knowing which way to turn. This combination could result in a locked-up feeling that keeps you incapable of any movement at all.

AQUARIUS: Use the day's boister-

ous energy to take charge and make things happen, Aquarius. You'll find that actions you take today resonate in the coming days. Don't worry about the consequences. Simply go for the gusto. Strong forces are at work encouraging you to seek freedom in your creative endeavors and giving you more room to explore your inner sanctuary that you hold so dearly.

PISCES: There's apt to be powerful aggression today that may leave you feeling like you want to declare war on everyone, Pisces. You may get the feeling that everyone else is completely nuts and you're the only one who really knows what's going on. Beware of misinformed people and false information. Fights could erupt over facts that seem true at first but are just someone's misguided dreams.