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# SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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*Vinesh eyeing to make up for Rio disappointment in Tokyo*

**NEW DELHI, SEP 23 (PTI):** An Olympic berth already secured, World championship bronze medallist wrestler Vinesh Phogat says she has unfinished business to attend to in 2020 Tokyo.

The fear of 2016 Rio Olympics injury still playing on her mind, Vinesh on Monday said she is eyeing to complete her bout in next year's Tokyo Olympics.

One of India's biggest medal prospects at the Rio Olympics, Vinesh's campaign ended in agony in the quarterfinals of the women's 48kg freestyle category after suffering a career-threatening knee injury. "Hopefully in Tokyo I will play the entire six minutes of a bout. A lot was left out for me to achieve in Rio. I was not able to play my entire match. There are a lot of things going in my mind regarding the Olympics," Vinesh said on the sidelines of the launch of Zee Kushti Dangal.

"So whatever the results, whether I lose or win I want to complete my six minutes. When I do that whatever questions I have in my mind right now will be cleared," she added. However since then, the 25-year-old has made a strong comeback, winning golds in the Commonwealth Games and Asian Games last year in the 50kg category. In the-recently concluded World Championships, the star wrestler qualified for the 2020 Olympics before winning the bronze medal in the 53kg.

Relieved to have sealed an Olympic berth, Vinesh said the injury in Rio motivated her to make a strong comeback.

"After my injury in Rio I never thought I'd be able to go back to the Olympics. Somewhere in my mind I felt incomplete. That feeling always kept on driving me to do better. I am very stubborn, I motivated myself to do better and that is why I am going to the Olympics," she said. Vinesh, who was earlier competing in the 50kg category but switched to 53kg early this year, said the shift has been beneficial for her.

"The change in weight category has been advantageous for me. I have won back-to-back medals," she said. Vinesh had grabbed a gold each in the 53kg class in Grand Prix of Spain and Yasar Dogu. Asked about the competition at the Olympics, Vinesh said playing at home, the Japanese wrestlers will be top contenders.

"I feel everyone is strong in the 53kg category. Japan, of course, is the powerhouse and will also have the home advantage.

## Sikkim missing Santosh Trophy "darkest day for Sikkim football," says Bhaichung

**SAGAR CHHETRI**

**GANGTOK, 23 SEPT:**

Sikkim not participating in Santosh Trophy 2019-20 was the "darkest day" for Sikkim football, said former Indian football team skipper, Bhaichung Bhutia today.

Speaking to media persons here at Paljor Stadium, Bhaichung highlighted that Santosh Trophy was the biggest platform for footballers in Indian football so the absence of Sikkim team in this season of the tournament has affected the future of many young footballers.

Sikkim was placed in group-B of East Zone along with Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand for the qualifying round at Kolkata and was scheduled to play against Chhattisgarh in its first qualifying match today.

The State team did not participate in the tournament because a majority of the short-listed players decided to boycott it to protest what they saw as Sikkim Football Association's casual approach on the matter.

According to the payers, not enough time was given to prepare for the tournament and selection of the team members was not done

following proper process.

Sikkim has its second qualifying match against Jharkhand on 27 September.

"It [the conflict between players and SFA] was a very small issue and could have been resolved easily but unfortunately because of the ego of a few individuals, it became a big issue," Bhaichung rued.

That said, he admitted that Sikkim football and Sikkim Football Association were facing a crisis and needed to be reorganized and infused with some professionalism.

In this endeavor, clubs, players, referees, football fans and Sports department have to work together, he added.

"But that is still not an excuse for players to not play Santosh Trophy. No doubt SFA has issues but that is not reason enough. Santosh Trophy is the biggest tournament any footballer in Sikkim can play in as part of the State team and it has given platform to so many players from Sikkim in the past," he said.

Bhaichung mentioned that a player like the current Indian football team skipper, Sunil Chhetri, was initially playing football for a small club in Delhi

but after being spotted at Santosh Trophy, he was picked up by Kolkata giant, Mohun Bagan.

"Even I was just playing for East Bengal but after playing in Santosh Trophy tournament I got noticed and got selected for the Indian national team," he said.

He mentioned that lots of young players wanted to play the tournament but were denied the chance this season.

Bhaichung mentioned that the qualifying round of East Zone is going on in Kolkata this time which has the attention of media and around 20 professional clubs. He added that media and professional clubs are going to be looking for talented footballers.

He said that some players wanted to undergo long training camps before going for the tournament and SFA was willing to provide a 10-day coaching camp for the State team.

"You do not refuse to take part in a tournament because you did not get a one-month camp. That is not fair as coaching camps are decided by associations," he said.

He informed that West Bengal participates in tournaments without any camp and even Mani-

pur plays with week-long coaching camps.

"I don't think it would be fair for players to demand a one-month camp or 20-day camp as it has to be decided by the association and coaching staff," he said. He mentioned that AIFF will now penalize the State association for not playing in the Santosh Trophy.

Sporting brand Vector-X sponsors the kits of the State team and has done so for the last three years.

"This year we were supposed to renew our contract but since we missed Santosh Trophy we may face challenges and difficulties in renewing the contract," he said.

Bhaichung also said that SFA's decision to ban Sikkim Aakraman FC from the premier league was not fair.

"You can ban players and officials who manhandled the referee but not the entire team," he said.

On a police case being filed against Aakraman, he said that taking the matter to the police was uncalled for and what happens in the field should remain there.

One wrong step after another is killing football in Sikkim, he said.

## SIMFED donates Rs 10 lac for landslide victims



**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 23 SEPT:**

The Managing Director, Sikkim State Cooperative Supply & Marketing Federation Limited (SIMFED), Pawan Awasthy along with other officials called on Chief Minister, PS Tamang today at his residence and handed over a cheque of Rs 10 lakh for the Chief

Minister's Relief Fund for the landslide victims of Tsong village of Yuksom, West Sikkim, as per a press release.

Tsong village was hit by a landslide on 16 Sept causing severe damage to property and livestock.

Also present on the occasion were Political Secretary to Chief Minister, Jacob Khaling and

Secretary to Chief Minister, SD Dhakal.

SIMFED which is an Apex Marketing Cooperative Society involved in the marketing of Agriculture & Horticulture produce of the state has also diversified its business and is presently undertaking implementation of Organic farming projects across the country involving more than 70,000 farmers and covering around 56,000 hectare area in 16 states.

SIMFED has bagged the prestigious World Bank project on formation of Farmers Producers Organisations as well as Farmers Producers Companies (FPOs/ FPCs) in the state of Assam. SIMFED has ambitious plans to spread the Organic certification projects all over the country.

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## Governor flags off relief team for Yuksam



**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 23 SEPT:**

Governor, Ganga Prasad today flagged off a team carrying relief material for landslide victims of Yuksam, West Sikkim, a Raj Bhavan release informs.

Chief Minister, Prem Singh Tamang, Minister Education, Land Revenue & DM, Youth and Sports Affairs Departments, Kunga Nima Lepcha, Ad-

ditional Chief Secretary to Governor, Dr K Jayakumar and State Relief Commissioner, Ambika Pradhan were present on the occasion.

The Governor also handed over a cheque of Rs 2 lakh to Chief Minister's Relief Fund for the landslide victims.

The relief materials were dispatched today in a special vehicle carrying eatables, 100

blankets, 175 metres synthetic profile mat, ready to eat foot packets, noodles, portable water bottles, juice and biscuits among others.

The Governor has also appealed to fellow Sikkimese from all walks of life to come forward and donate in cash and kind as assistance for our brethren in distress at Yuksam. He has stated that Sik-

kimese society has always shown resilience when it comes to coping with natural calamities of this magnitude.

"Once again this is high time to come together for showing solidarity and support to our brothers and sisters in distress and also prove that in this hour of crisis, the whole State is firmly behind them," the Governor added.

## Delhi govt to sell onions at cheaper rates



**NEW DELHI, SEP 23 (PTI):**

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Monday said his government is procuring onions and will sell them at cheaper prices in fair price shops and mobile vans.

Kejriwal said the AAP government will offer relief to consumers troubled by the soaring price of onions.

According to a gov-

ernment official, onions are currently available in Delhi at Rs 60-70 per kg in the retail market.

Retail onion prices rose to Rs 57 per kg in Delhi, Rs 56 per kg in Mumbai, Rs 48 per kg in Kolkata and Rs 34 per kg in Chennai last week. The prices were quoted at Rs 60 per kg in Gurgaon and Jammu during the same period, according to data maintained by the consumer affairs ministry.

However, trade data showed retail onion prices skyrocketing to Rs 70-80 per kg towards the end of the last week from Rs 50-60 per kg in the previous week.

## Mobile app to be used for collecting 2021 census data

**NEW DELHI, SEP 23 (PTI):** The 2021 census will be conducted through a mobile phone application, moving away from traditional pen and paper to give Digital India a boost, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Monday. The mammoth nationwide exercise will be carried out in 16 languages and at a cost of Rs 12,000 crore, he said after laying the foundation stone of a new building of the Registrar General of India and Census Commissioner here.

The census will have its reference date as March 1, 2021, but for snow-bound Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand it will be October 1, 2020, Shah said.

"Census data will be collected through a mobile app. This is for the first time that the mobile app will be used for the census exercise. India will be moving from the pen and paper census to digital data, which will be a big revolution in the country's census exercise," he said.

Referring to the 2021 census, he said the data will help in future planning of the country, especially for development initiatives and welfare schemes, and it will be a 'Jan Bhagidari' (people's participation) exercise.

The census data could be used for future planning, development initiatives and welfare schemes. The utilisation of census data is multi-dimensional and will be a significant contribution to the nation's progress," Shah said. The home minister also said the census will help in demarcating boundaries of municipal wards, assemblies and Lok Sabha constituencies.

He appealed to census officials to carry out the exercise sincerely as this is an opportunity for them to do 'Punya' (holy deed), which will help in nation building.

Earlier the government used to do welfare schemes on a piecemeal basis and no comprehensive planning was done by previous governments, Shah said. "The whole approach was changed when Narendra Modi became prime minister in 2014. The approach has been changed completely, the thinking has been changed. Goals have been set to completely eradicate the problems," he said.

The home minister said on the basis of the 2011 Census, the Modi government had planned 22 welfare schemes related to electricity connection to every home, gas connections, construction of roads, houses for the poor, toilets, bank accounts and opening of bank branches among others. He cited

the example of the government's flagship 'Ujjwala' scheme of providing free LPG connection to poor families, saying it has been successful as the scheme was prepared on the basis of the 2011 census data. "By 2022, there will not be a family which will not have gas connection," he said.

Shah also said the 2011 census reflected the poor sex ratio of male and female in some states. That is why the programme of 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' was launched, he said.

"Under this scheme, the Haryana government has done so much work in the last five years that the state's sex ratio is now among the best in the country," he said.

The home minister said India's population is 17.5 per cent of the world's total population while the geographical area is just 2.4 per cent of the total geographical area of the world.

"So, naturally, India has limited natural resources in comparison to the population. Therefore, to fill up this gap of inequality, we will have to work hard," he said.

Shah also said the data for the National Population Register (NPR), a list of usual residents of the country, will also be collected along with the census exercise. Officials said the NPR could be the basis for a pan-India version of Assam's National Register of Citizens (NRC).



### No nominations today for Poklok Kamrang by-poll

**NAMCHI, 23 SEPT (IPR):** According to the Returning Officer, Ragul K no nominations were received today for the upcoming by-elections of Poklok Kamrang Assembly Constituency.

### 217 dengue cases in Delhi; 304 of malaria

**NEW DELHI, SEP 23 (PTI):** Nearly 50 fresh cases of dengue have been reported in the national capital over the last one week, taking the total number of people affected by the vector-borne disease to 217, according to a municipal report released on Monday.

The number of malaria cases recorded till September 21 stands at 304, it said.

As many as 150 malaria cases were recorded in September, 56 in August, 54 in July, 35 in June, eight in May and one in April.

Of the total 217 dengue cases, 125 were recorded in September, 52 in August, 18 in July, 11 in June, and rest between January and May, according to the South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC), which tabulates the data on vector-borne diseases in the city.

This is by far the maximum number of malaria and dengue cases recorded in any month this year.

Malaria cases have outstripped those of dengue in Delhi for the past several weeks.

According to the report, at least 74 cases of chikungunya have also been reported this year.

Last year, 2,798 dengue cases and four deaths were recorded by the SDMC.

Both the Delhi government and local bodies have been making efforts to raise awareness on precautions to ensure that there is no breeding of mosquito larvae around them.

The AAP government has started an anti-dengue campaign ‘10Hafta, 10Baje, 10Minute’ urging people to inspect their house for any standing water.

The campaign from September 1 and November 15 to combat dengue has garnered support from several personalities, including cricket legend Kapil Dev, many Bollywood actors and well-known journalists.

During a press conference on Sunday, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal had said, “In five years, the number of dengue cases reported have come down by 80 per cent. We have tried to reduce it even further. This year, fortunately, there is no spike in it and it is because all people have come together, from the Delhi government to the Centre and the MCD”.

Dengue mosquito larvae breed in clear, standing water while those of malaria mosquito thrive even in dirty water.

Doctors have advised people to take precautions and ensure that there is no breeding of mosquito larvae around them. They have urged people to wear full-sleeves clothes and use mosquito nets.

# Fifteenth Finance Commission meets ULB representatives

**NEW DELHI, 23 SEPT [PIB]:** The 15th Finance Commission headed by Chairperson NK Singh along with its Members and senior officials today met with the representatives of the Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) of Sikkim.

The Commission was informed that:

- The Sikkim Municipalities Act 2007 was introduced in March 2007 for setting up of Urban Local Bodies in the state. The ULBs in the State were formed in the year 2010-11.
- Sikkim follows a three tier structure for urban local bodies namely Municipal Corporation, Municipal Council and Nagar Panchayats.
- Sikkim has a total of 7 ULBs, of which one is Municipal Corporation, 3 are Municipal Council and 3 are Nagar Panchayats.
- Only 6 functions out of 18 have been transferred to ULBs. Steps should be taken to devolve the remaining functions to ULBs.
- The Fifth SFC of Sikkim submitted

its report in July 2017.

- Projected requirement of Rs.134.1163 crores for 5 yrs
- Additional one time grant amounting to Rs 660 crores requested for basic infrastructure, ULB office, town halls and training institutes

Meanwhile the recommendations of Fifth State Finance Commission were:

- 4.5% of State’s own tax revenue 2020-2025 should be transferred to Local bodies.
- 0.5% of net proceeds of State’s own tax revenue should be allocated

## The revenue sources of ULBs provided by the State in 2017-18 are –

Own revenues	Transfers from 14th FC	Devolution by SFC	Grant-in-Aid from State Government
8.59	7.15	2.94	1.93

Some of the issues of concern pertaining to accounting of ULB are –

- The State Government is yet to set up Property Tax Board as required by 13th FC for realisation of Property Tax despite enabling provision in the Sikkim Municipalities Act, 2007.
- Transfer of functions to ULBs have not yet been completed in full.

ed for capacity building of PRIs and ULBs and

- 0.5% of net proceeds of State’s own tax revenue should be allocated for special support to most backward PRIs and ULBs.

The Commission noted all the concerns highlighted by the representatives of the ULBs and promised to address them in its recommendations to the Central Government.

## Sikkim Student Association Delhi welcomes freshers, elects new exec body

### SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 23 SEPT:**

Sikkim Student Association Delhi organised a freshers’ party at New Sikkim House for the new students from Sikkim studying in Delhi-NCR.

This party had Additional Secretary, Finance Department, Kapil Meena, as the chief guest accompanied by SSAD advisor Sunil Pradhan who is currently teaching at Jamia Millia Islamia

Ngawang Choden and Aabishkar Thatal were declared as Ms and Mr Fresher respectively.

SSAD also felicitated two students of Sikkim who have won college elections - Raman Mohra the President of St Stephens College and Zigme



Gurung, the Joint Secretary of Ramjas College.

New executive board members were also elected on the day:

President - Rinchen Dolkar Nadikpa; Vice President-Chewang Norbu Denzongpa; General Secretary-Zuben Sherpa; Joint Secretary - Topden Tashi; Cultural Secre-

tary - Pem Uzeyla Bhutia; Treasurer- Pema Chuked; Sports Secretary -Sangay Tenzing Sherpa; North Executive -Wangchuk Tseten Tonyot; South Executive -Sagar Neopaney; East Executive -Kalden Dorjee Wangyal; West Executive -Nawraj Gurung; Hostel Executive -Albert Gurung.

## South RO holds meeting with Political Parties and Nodal Officers

**NAMCHI, 23 SEPT (IPR):**

With the announcement of By-Election for 10 Poklok Kamrang Assembly constituency for South District, a meeting with the representatives of various political parties was convened at DAC today.

The meeting was chaired by DC cum Returning Officer (RO) South, Ragul K and was attended by CPAO South, Sunil Sharma alongwith other election officials and representatives of various political parties.

Addressing, the gathering the RO briefed about the various aspects of Model Code of Conduct (MCC) and its guidelines with regards to political parties. The RO spoke about the required permission needed by the political parties from the

concerned departments.

The RO further elaborated them about the election expenditures and said that candidates are required to open a separate Bank Account in his name atleast one day prior to filing nominations specifically for the purpose of election expenditure carried out by the candidates and political parties. He also briefed about the different kinds of election materials like Form A and Form B and nomination papers that can be obtained from the DAC office.

Thereafter, the Returning Officer also chaired a meeting with nodal officers constituted for Bye Election. The meeting was attended by ADC cum Assistant Returning Officer(S), Sa-

tyen Pradhan, SDM Namchi, Vishu Lama, SDM (HQ), Chiran Rizal, SDM Yangang, Sangay Gyatso ASP South, Janapandiyan J and other nodal officers.

Addressing the meeting, the RO emphasized the nodal officers to be aware of the guidelines of MCC for the ensuing Bye Elections. While detailing on the various duties and responsibilities of the nodal officers, he also elaborated on the manpower management, training schedule, electoral roll, Media Certification and Monitoring, EVMs requirement, postal ballot, Sector Magistrates duties and responsibilities, vehicle permission and requirements, law and order and expenditure monitoring for upcoming bye-elections 2019.

## 92 pc cut in fire licence fees in West Bengal

**KOLKATA, SEP 23 (PTI):**

The West Bengal government on Monday decided to slash fire licence fees by 92 per cent, state finance minister Amit Mitra said. The minister said the state government created four categories where fire licences are required and slashed the fees uniformly across the categories, he said.

“The fire department is not a revenue earning department but a regulatory department. So if small businessmen pay hefty amounts to get the licence, they will be unable to do business. So we have decided to device

this mechanism,” Mitra said. The minister said the move will help businessmen of the MSME sector.

“There will be a uniform reduction of 92 per cent in all the four categories,” he told reporters.

The first category includes residential buildings, educational institutes, art galleries, dhar-mashalas and libraries. In 2017, the fire licence fee in these cases was Rs 53.80 per square metre of floor area. Now, it was made Rs 4.35 per square metre.

In the second category which includes hospitals, research centres, guest houses and nursing homes,

the fee was Rs 80.70 per square metre of floor area. It was reduced to Rs 6.52 per square metre, the minister said. Mitra said licence fee for ports, airports, shopping malls, offices and markets which comprise the third category was Rs 107.60 per square metre of floor area in 2017. The government decided to bring it down to Rs 8.07 per square metres.

In the fourth category comes the outlets of hazardous substances such as fireworks and the fee was Rs 161.40 per square metre. It was reduced to Rs 13.05 per square metre of the floor, he said.

## 15th Finance Commission meets PRIs

**NEW DELHI, 23 SEPT (PIB):** The 15th Finance Commission team headed by Chairman NK Singh along with its members and senior officials met today with representatives of the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) of Sikkim.

The Commission noted that the State has transferred all 29 functions listed in the 11th schedule of the Constitution to Rural Local Bodies.

**The revenue sources of ULBs provided by the State in 2017-18 are –**

Own revenues	Transfers from 14th FC	Devolution by SFC	Grant-in-Aid from State Government
8.59	7.15	2.94	1.93

Sikkim has a total of 189 PRIs, of which 185 are Gram Panchayats and 4 are Zila Parishads.

According to Pr. AG Sikkim, following are the issues pertaining to accounting of PRIs–

- Transfer of functions to PRIs were not completed in full. (However, State Government has informed that they have devolved all functions to PRIs)
- New Accounting Format issued by Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India in consultation with CAG was adopted since April 2010. However, accounts were not maintained in New Accounting Format. System of certification has not been introduced in the State, as yet.

Requirements of Panchayat Raj Institutions in Sikkim as highlighted to the Commission, include –

- RLBs in Sikkim earn no revenues on their own. State government may help the local bodies to use innovative methods like market fees, parking space etc for improving the own revenues.
- Property Tax Board has not been set up by State Government yet. This should be immediately set up to explore and enhance own revenues.

The Commission noted all the concerns highlighted by the representatives of the PRIs and promised to address them in its recommendations to the Central Government.

## Delhi minor reunited with family in J-K’s Samba

Jammu, Sep 23 (PTI): A missing boy from Delhi, who was found roaming here and was unable to divulge any information about his identity, was reunited with his parents in Samba district of Jammu and Kashmir on Monday, a police official said.

The boy was found by a police party from the Ghagwal police station during patrolling on September 15 and after strenuous efforts his family was located in Palam area of New Delhi, the official said.

He said a missing report of the boy was lodged at Palam police station and accordingly a Delhi Police team, along with the parents, reached here and the

boy was handed over to them. As the boy could not provide any information about his family, SHO Sudhir Sadotra produced him before the Juvenile Justice Board in Samba which handed him over to the Child Welfare Committee, the official said.

He said the boy was admitted in the Bal Ashram run by the Social Welfare Department at R S Pura in Jammu for better nourishment. “The strenuous joint efforts of police, the Child Welfare Committee, Samba and Bal Ashram finally managed to locate the address of the missing boy and the police station concerned in Delhi was contacted,” the official said.

### KUTSE SHEGU

The kutse Shegu of our beloved mother late Karma Doma Bhutia who left for heavenly abode on 12th August falls on 29th September, 2019.

All relatives, friends and well wishers are requested to join us for offering prayers to the departed soul at our residence Penlong Bazaar , East Sikkim.

We take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude towards those who extended their support during our time of bereavement..



**Khittu Tshering Bhutia (son) 9434127474**  
**Tenzing Bhutia (son)**  
**Sonam Nedup Bhutia (son)**  
**Tshering Dorji Bhutia (son)**  
**Lazey Bhutia ( daughter in law )**  
**Layzey Bhutia ( DAUGHTER)**  
**Chunki Bhutia ( daughter)**

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## Bhaichung and Arjun thank players, coaches and management for USFC journey



### SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 23 SEPT:

United Sikkim Football Club founder, Bhaichung Bhutia, today thanked all the coaches, former and present players and officials for their con-

tributions towards his club, United Sikkim Football Club, in the 15 years that USFC was in existence.

USFC, it may be recalled, was folded up by the founders yesterday.

At a function held

here at Paljor Stadium on Monday, Bhaichung, along with his USFC co-founders Arjun Rai and Sherap Lepcha, handed over United Sikkim FC kits to former and present players as

a mark of gratitude for their contributions to the club.

Interacting with the players, Bhaichung said, "We will continue in football so feel free to seek our support and

advice as we are always there to support in all possible ways."

He shared that it was very painful and difficult to see USFC shut down and added that there were many pressing reasons why this decision had to be made.

Likewise, co-founder, Arjun Rai also thanked all players and management officials for their contributions.

"We will continuously be involved in football and we are always ready to support all efforts for the betterment of football and to promote local footballers in every way," he added.

He urged all players not to feel disheartened and stay on course in their respective footballing journeys.

## 9 killed in bus-minibus collision in Assam

### DEMOW, SEPT 23 (PTI):

At least nine persons were killed and several others injured in a collision between a bus and a minibus in Sivasagar district of Assam on Monday, police said.

The accident took place around 8.35 am when the bus, travelling from Golaghat to Dibrugarh, collided with the minibus coming from the opposite direction, at Demow on National Highway 37, the police said.

Under the impact of the collision, both the vehicles fell into a roadside

ditch. Some bodies were recovered from the two vehicles, while some of the seriously injured passengers succumbed to their injuries on the way to hospital, said Assistant Sub Inspector K Ali, who is supervising the rescue operations.

Most of the deceased were travelling in the minibus, the police said.

The injured were rushed to Demow primary health centre from where 15 persons were referred to the Assam Medical College Hospital in Dibrugarh, PHC officials said.

## Man lynched, two injured over cow slaughter suspicion in Jharkhand

### KHUNTI, SEP 23 (PTI):

A differently-abled man was killed and two others were seriously injured when a mob allegedly thrashed them on suspicion of slaughtering a cow, in Jharkhand's Khunti district, police said on Monday.

The incident happened after local residents allegedly saw Kalantus Barla, Fagu Kachap and Phillip Horo with the carcass of a cow near a river at Jaltanga village on Sunday and beat them up, a police officer said.

While Barla died on the way to the hospital, Kachap and Horo are being treated at the Rajendra Institute of Medical Sciences in Ranchi, the officer said.

Police said five persons have been detained for questioning in con-

nection with the incident, following which villagers gheraoed Karra police station on Sunday demanding their release.

The villagers ended their gherao after Sub-divisional Police Officer Rushabh Jha assured them that the detained persons would be released if they were found innocent.

DIG Amol Venukat Homkar told PTI, "Five persons have been detained and preliminary investigation has found their involvement in the incident. The process of identification is on."

During inspection of the spot, police did not find any carcass but there was evidence that the persons were beaten up by the mob, Homkar said. However, no arrests have been made so far, he added.

## Criminal complaint against Bihar Minister, three others

### MUZAFFARPUR, SEP 23 (PTI):

A complaint has been filed against Bihar's Urban Development and Housing Minister Suresh Kumar Sharma and three others for allegedly causing harm and criminal breach of trust.

Laddu Sahni, chairman of the Block Fisheries Cooperative Society, filed the criminal complaint in the court of Chief Judicial Magistrate Suryakant Tiwary.

Muzaffarpur Mayor Suresh Kumar (Pappu), Municipal Commissioner Manesh Kumar Meena and councillor Gayatri Devi are three others named in the complaint by Sahni. According to

the complaint, Sahni was carrying out pisciculture in a Brahmpura pond under a proper "bandobasti" with the district administration, when the minister, who is the local MLA, along with the three others, demanded Rs 2 lakh per year in ransom besides using abusive language.

They allegedly threatened to destroy the fish in the pond if he failed to give ransom.

They destroyed the fish by poisoning it, Sahni alleged in the petition.

They allegedly called him on the inauguration of the renovation work of the pond and threatened him.

## Annual College Week of CAEPHT gets underway



### SUMMIT REPORT

#### GANGTOK, 23 SEPT:

The 13th Annual College Week of College of Agricultural Engineering and Post-Harvest Technology (Central Agricultural University Imphal), Ranipool, and 2nd Annual College Week of College of Horticulture, Bermiok

started from Monday.

Dean, CAEPHT and COH, Prof PP Dabral, was the chief guest of the programme and inaugurated the function.

In this one-week program, indoor and outdoor games, cultural events will also be organized. Winners of all the

events will compete in the inter-college competition that will be organized at Central Agricultural University, Imphal, informs a press release issued by Associate Professor and Chairman of the Press and Publicity Committee of the function, Dr AK Vasistha.

## Few institutions have taken steps for AI learning: Study



### BENGALURU, SEP 23 (PTI):

A mere one-third of education institutions in Asia Pacific region have initiated measures for Artificial Intelligence (AI) learning, reveals a study by Microsoft Asia and IDC Asia/Pacific.

It was released on the sidelines of the Sixth Asian Summit on Education and Skills, a three-day event in Bengaluru starting from Monday.

"Only 32 per cent of education institutions in Asia Pacific have embarked on their AI journey," said Larry Nelson, Regional General Manager Education, Microsoft Asia at the release of the study titled, 'Future

ready Skills: Accessing

APAC Education Sectors Use of AI.'

"We found that three out of four education leaders agree that AI will be able to drive competitiveness in the next three years," he said.

As many as 207 education leaders and 150 education staff from the education sector participated in the study.

The study found that the education sector in Asia Pacific is currently lagging in data, strategy and investment as well as culture when compared to Asia Pacifics overall AI readiness.

It also evaluated the three skills, which will face a shortage of supply in the next three years.

## SAKO felicitates medal winners



### SUMMIT REPORT

#### GANGTOK, 23 SEPT:

Sikkim Association of Kickboxing Organisations [SAKO] today felicitated its team members for winning 14 medals at the recently held WAKO India National Kickboxing Championship 2018 at Dr BR Ambedkar Sports Indoor Stadium, Karimnagar in Telangana from 17 to 20 September.

An eight-member SAKO team returned with eight gold medals, two silver and four bronze medals for Sikkim.

Meeke Hangma Limboo, Anjali Subba and Mingso Hang Limboo

won 2 gold medals each, while Rohit Poudyal bagged 1 gold medal and 1 silver medal. Suyem Limboo also won 1 gold medal and 1 silver medal, while Srijana Subba won 2 bronze medals and Mukkum Subba and Bishal Limboo won 1 bronze medal each.

The team was accompanied by Bishnu Kumar Limboo as team coach and Mona Hang Limboo as team member.

The Sikkim squad was made up of kick-boxers from Hee Karate Academy, West Sikkim, started by international kick-boxer Bhim Baha-

dur Subba in 2013 to promote kickboxing in rural parts of the State.

At a felicitation programme held here at the Paljor Stadium conference hall this evening, SAKO felicitated the medal winners. Secretary, Sports & Youth Affairs Department, Kuber Bhandari was present as the chief guest.

SAKO chief technical director, Bidhan Ballav Subba mentioned that kickboxing was introduced in Sikkim in 1998 and has witnessed substantial success and achievement in this long journey.

## Training on Intensive Dairy Farming and Energy Management

### SUMMIT REPORT

#### GANGTOK, 23 SEPT:

A three-day training program on Intensive Dairy Farming and Energy Management was organized at College of Agricultural Engineering & Post Harvest Technology, Central Agricultural University, Ranipool, Gangtok, from 19-21 Sept.

The training had Assistant Professor, Department of processing and food engineering, Dr Rakesh Kumar Raigar as Course Director, Professor & Head, Department of Renewable Energy Engineering, Prof Mahendra Singh Seveda, as Course Coordinator and Assistant Professor, Department of Irrigation and Drainage Engineering as Course Coordinator, Dr GT Patle.

The training was sponsored by CCS-National Institute of Agricultural marketing (NIAM) Jaipur, Rajasthan. The training was attended by 25 progressive farmers and unemployed youth from different districts of Sikkim. The training was inaugurated by Dean College of Agricultural Engineering & Post Harvest Technology, Prof PP Dabral as chief guest and Director, Dairy & Cattle, Govt of Sikkim, Dr BM Chettri, as guest of honor on 19 Sept.

Dr BM Chettri mentioned about the qual-



ity of milk production with high SNF and fat content. The main aim of the training program was to familiarize the North East Farmers with knowledge in principles, planning and technical approach for establishing viable dairy farms, processing of milk and sustainable dairy farming at farm level.

The training program covered different topics i.e. cleaning milk production, cattle feed management, disease control, water management for fodder production, breeding and reproduction, utilization of renewable energy sources such as solar and animal waste, animal house structure and design, sanitary and hygienic conditions of dairy farm, quality, safety, processing and value addition of milk and milk products at farm level and 2 filed visit i.e. Sikkim Milk Co-operative Milk Producers' Union Limited,

Tadong and Dairy farm of ICAR-NOFRI, Tadong.

The valedictory function was organized on 21 Sept with General Manager, Sikkim Dairy, SK Pradhan, as chief guest and Prof PP Dabral as chairman.

Dr Rakesh Kumar Raigar briefed about the training program and mentioned that in the technical sessions, participants were made aware of technical approach on dairy farm.

Mr Pradhan mentioned in his address that the milk production of Sikkim is 80,000 liters is per day and consumption is 1 lakh liters and there is still 20,000 liters of milk shortage.

He also mentioned that more milk production is required in Sikkim to meet the demand.

Course Coordinator, Prof MS Seveda extended the vote of thanks to the chairman, chief guest participants, faculty members and other guests.

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## Divided in Suspicion

*Anyone can deal in whispers, it takes leaders to deliver coherence*

It is worrying how discussions on communalism continue to remain in circulation and of how often different sections and groups keep crying wolf, painting monsters only they see and hyper-ventilating over threats only they perceive. After all, into how many slivers can a population of barely 6 lakh people be divided? Of course, with some sections, the divisions are a simple two-way process of “us” and “them”, and that is a disturbing condition to suffer because that reduces every disagreement into an attack, every counter argument into an attempt to deny or subvert.

To begin with, let us not deny that divisions exist within the Sikkimese society. That much is natural, but what has also been exceptionally reassuring about the State is that the privately held prejudices have not been allowed by the people to pour out in public displays of communal posturing; at least not a scale that causes any more damage than hurt feelings. The State, despite some close calls, has never suffered a communal clash. Its politics and several politicians have often succumbed to communalism, but the people have performed much better. The politics of social engineering, of stitching together winning vote-bank combinations have also been tried, and have, thankfully failed as well in Sikkim.

But, if people are resistant to communal confrontations, why is the bogey raised so often in Sikkim? Perhaps because it is an easy divide to hack away at and experience elsewhere has shown that the people’s defenses eventually crumble in the face of persistent communal scare-mongering. Given that everyone belongs to some community or the other, it is an accepted fact that people are also inherently communal, at least in as much as having a soft corner, if not hate, is concerned. Also, because we are social animals, this inherent communal streak seldom develops into paranoia or gets directed against other communities because in a small place like Sikkim everyone needs everyone else. This conditioning of social grooming, however, gets stressed when the leader of a pack smells blood – the possibility of making an issue emotive and convincing a people that they are threatened. Few things move off the counter faster than a fabricated conspiracy theory. The more dramatic the fabrication, the more looming is the threat perception. Years of shepherding a disinterested public has honed the skills of these leaders and they are only aided by the blunted perspicacity of the people. People share the blame of allowing space for such voices which keep growing in belligerence because no one holds them to account.

One must realise that India has perhaps the best, most detailed Constitution at hand for the protection of its minorities. Ironically, the minorities still feel perpetually threatened in our country. It is unlikely that any minority was ever threatened as a state policy in the past; it was the majority they feared. As time passed, this suspicion fermented into animosity and now teeters on the brink of hatred. When one weighs in the current environment where hate crimes result often from the not so subtle nudging from the new powers in Delhi, one shudders to think what madness still awaits the country. In that light, one is almost relieved that the ultra-nationalist brigade has rediscovered an enemy in Pakistan because that just might keep their paws off the victims back home. But, like always, we digress here. One needs to ask who allowed such hate and such suspicions to get so normal? Surely not the people, because they are too preoccupied with aam-aadmi concerns. It’s the leaders who failed us. This deduction holds as true for Sikkim as it does for the nation.

Those claiming to represent communities started becoming instigators instead of counselors. These leaders forget that democracy offers people the right to self-determination, the right to negotiate, the right to harmonise. Instead, they allowed their supporters only the options of complaint, bickering and suspicion. Someone who speaks for a community should bridge the communication gap between communities. Anyone can deal in whispers, but it takes a leader to represent a cause and mediate.

# Howdy Modi in Houston: Why Narendra Modi puts so much effort into wooing the diaspora

IAN HALL  
*theconversation.com*

With President Donald Trump as his “warm up act”, India’s Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed a rally of 50,000 members of the Indian diaspora at Houston’s NRG Stadium on September 22.

Dubbed Howdy, Modi!, the event kicks off a busy week in the US for Modi, with no fewer than 40 meetings to attend. Apart from bilateral talks with Trump, he is due to speak at the UN General Assembly, attend a celebration of the 150th anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi’s birth, and appear at the UN’s Climate Action Summit. Modi will also collect a “global goalkeeper” award from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for his government’s Swachh Bharat or “Clean India” initiative.

It is the Howdy, Modi event that will attract attention, however, and not just because of the praise Modi and Trump heaped upon each other. Few leaders hold these kinds of events when they travel. But Modi has a long history of speaking to gatherings of the Indian diaspora when travelling overseas.

In 2014, after the landslide election win that first brought his government to power, he appeared before a crowd of 18,000 at Madison Square Garden in New York, and then at another gathering, attended by a similar number, at the AllPhones Arena in the Olympic Park in Sydney, Australia. A year later, Modi was joined by his British counterpart David Cameron in front of an estimated 60,000 members of the Indian diaspora at Wembley Stadium in London.

### CAMPAIGN MODI

Gatherings like Howdy, Modi are effectively campaign rallies, albeit organised abroad and involving people who, for the most part, cannot vote

in India’s elections. They are organised by Modi’s Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), working with diaspora civil society groups, and not primarily by officials from the local embassies or consulates. They allow Modi to be seen by viewers back home in as positive a light as possible, fêted by an overwhelmingly supportive crowd made up of people whom ordinary Indians would consider savvy and successful. In this way, such events are part of Modi’s broader, ongoing effort to consolidate his position as the most dominant Indian politician of his era.

There is, however, more to these events than just public relations. In recent years, India’s elections have become colossally expensive. In 2014, an estimated US\$5 billion was spent by the candidates. In 2019, some estimate that figure grew to at least US\$7 billion. Modi’s Hindu nationalist BJP almost certainly accounted for the majority of the spending. Prior to the poll, it had reportedly amassed a considerable war chest.

A sizeable proportion of this money came from big corporations and some from ordinary BJP members and supporters in India. But it’s likely that a significant amount came from the Indian diaspora, despite the fact that many cannot vote in India, either because they are no longer citizens or, if they are, because they were unable to travel back home to cast their ballot, as they must do under current electoral law.

The Delhi High Court found that both the BJP and the opposition Congress Party accepted foreign donations, including from foreign-based companies, prior to the 2014 elections. Since then, the Modi government legislated both to make it harder to trace the sources of campaign financing and to make it easier for foreign individuals and entities to donate money. Rallies such as Howdy, Modi are designed to thank past

donors and to solicit future contributions, rather than to appeal for diaspora votes.

### UNITING THE DIASPORA

These events also serve as instruments of political consolidation. India’s diaspora is as heterogeneous as India. And abroad, people of Indian origin and Indian citizens often coalesce into groups that reflect regional, linguistic, caste and religious identities, as well as national, “Indian” organisations. These sub-national groups help preserve those identities, but arguably also weaken the diaspora as a political force. Forging India lobbies in places such as the US that might influence governments on New Delhi’s behalf is hard under such circumstances.

The BJP uses events like Howdy, Modi to try to address that problem, as a focal point around which various smaller groups can gather. The prime minister’s Twitter feed made that clear, posting video of Modi meeting the representatives of particular communities, such as the Shia Muslim Dawoodi Bohras, the Kashmiri Pandits, and local Sikhs. It is telling too that the organisers managed to attract sponsorship for Howdy, Modi from more than six hundred diaspora groups from across the US.

Since 2014, the India diaspora has been one of Modi’s biggest supporters, politically and financially. Whether this backing will persist through his second term will be a key test. As India’s economy began to falter in 2017, some thought that the diaspora would grow disillusioned, and withdraw their backing. During the recent election campaign, however, there were no signs of a mass defection from the cause, with diaspora Indians continuing to contribute time as well as money to ensure Modi’s BJP were returned to office.

*[the writer is Deputy Director (Research), Griffith Asia Institute, Griffith University]*



# An Origin Story for the Queer Community

DANIEL PFAU  
*theconversation.com*

I came out to a Christian counselor during a therapy session in 2001 when I was 14. He convinced me to engage in conversion therapy, a pseudoscientific practice to change an individual’s sexual orientation based in the assumption that such behaviors are “unnatural.” He produced an article describing a talk at that year’s American Psychological Association conference that indicated the therapy worked.

This painful experience encouraged me, when I started my scientific career, to examine queerness in biology.

### THE QUEER COMMUNITY, 25 MILLION YEARS (OR MORE) IN THE MAKING

Understanding how complex human relationships developed requires a complete picture of our social behavior during evolution. I believe leaving out important behaviors, like same-sex sexual behavior, can bias the models we use to explain social evolution.

Many researchers have postulated how queer behaviors, like same-sex sexual behavior, may have developed or how they are expressed. Recently, scientists at the Broad Institute of Harvard and MIT published a paper suggesting a genetic component to same-sex sexual behavior expression in modern humans.

However, no studies provide an argument of when queer behavior may have arisen during humans’ evolution. Such research would push

back against the assertions I encountered during my youth, that queerness is a modern aberration.

A new paper I was the principal researcher on, published in the Archives of Sexual Behavior, argues that queer behavior appeared well before humans.

My paper relies on a systematic review of published literature to lay out a relationship between the loss of a gene called TRPC2 and same-sex sexual behavior.

No modern humans carry a working copy of the TRPC2 gene. TRPC2 was functional in a primate-like animal 65 million years ago. This animal would evolve into two lineages. One branch would lead to new world monkeys and another to old world monkeys and apes. The ancestor of new world monkeys never lost the TRPC2 gene. However, the primate-like ancestor of humans and our closest primate relatives – apes and old world monkeys – lost function of TRPC2 some time between 23-40 million years ago.

New world monkeys do not, or very rarely, display same-sex sexual behavior. However, same-sex sexual behavior is routinely expressed by individuals in virtually all primate species that did not receive a functional TRPC2 from their ancestor.

One way to test this hypothesis would involve removing TRPC2 from animals with an intact gene and observing how their behavior changes. Fortunately, this experiment has been done and, indeed, loss of TRPC2 induces same-sex sexual behavior in mice.

I find it interesting that same-sex

sexual behavior is also common in other animal groups that have lost TRPC2 such as bats and whales.

In my article, co-authored with Cynthia Jordan and Marc Breedlove, I suggest that TRPC2 gene loss introduced queer behavior into our evolution. I connect the loss of TRPC2 to published changes in the nervous system of primates and the emergence of same-sex sexual behavior and have examined this connection in the brains of mice in which TRPC2 has been disabled.

As part of my own research, I utilized mice lacking TRPC2 and showed that their unique behaviors are accompanied by altered cell populations in the brain. A fascinating finding given TRPC2 expression lies outside the central nervous system. Perhaps these changes to neural pathways in the brain contribute to same-sex sexual behavior in mice. It is fascinating to imagine similar changes may have occurred in the brains of human ancestors after they lost TRPC2, allowing the same behavior.

Importantly, TRPC2 is not a “gay” gene – the largest population without the gene are heterosexuals. TRPC2 loss presents one possible origin for same-sex sexual behavior: the time point when it first appeared during our evolution. In the absence of TRPC2, species appear to have more diversity in sexual partners, which certainly shaped the evolution of primate sexuality. This leads me to hypothesize that same-sex sexual behavior is expressed by some humans in part because our ancestors lost

TRPC2. Still, the ability to express same-sex sexual behavior represents only a small step toward developing the complex human identities that exist today.

### QUEER IN SCIENCE

When I first heard of the TRPC2 knockout mice in 2009 and that no human has the gene, I was immediately captivated.

While studies have shown that the environment in STEM fields can be homophobic and transphobic, I was persistent and found supportive mentors. I started working with Emily Taylor and Christy Strand examining hormones, the brain and behavior. I felt drawn to the field of sex differences and I joined a graduate neuroscience program to study them with Cynthia Jordan and Marc Breedlove.

I introduced TRPC2 knockout mice to the Breedlove/Jordan lab for neuroscience research. While investigating previous work on these mice, I examined the information through the lens of my own queer experiences and needs. Eventually, I produced my argument on the origin of same-sex sexual behavior in human ancestry, which led to the recently published paper in the journal Archives of Sexual Behavior.

Some queer individuals may find this study affirms their experiences and I hope to continue supporting the queer community in my future career by addressing our unique health concerns through translational research.

*[the writer is PhD candidate Department of Neuroscience, Michigan State University]*



# UK travel giant Thomas Cook collapses, stranding tourists

**LONDON, SEP 23 (AFP):** British travel group Thomas Cook on Monday declared bankruptcy after failing to reach a last-ditch rescue deal, triggering the UK's biggest repatriation since World War II to bring back stranded passengers.

The 178-year-old operator had been desperately seeking 200 million pounds ( USD 250 million, 227 million euros) from private investors to save it from collapse.

"Despite considerable efforts, those discussions have not resulted in agreement between the company's stakeholders and proposed new money providers," Thomas Cook said in a statement.

"The company's board has therefore concluded that it had no choice but to take steps to enter into compulsory liquidation with immediate effect." The government said it had hired planes to fly home an estimated 150,000 holidaymakers to the UK, in an operation starting on Monday.

"Following the collapse of Thomas Cook



and the cancellation of all its flights, Transport Secretary Grant Shapps has announced that the government and UK Civil Aviation Authority has hired dozens of charter planes to fly customers home free of charge," a separate statement said, describing it as the largest repatriation in peacetime history.

"All customers currently abroad with Thomas Cook who are booked to return to the UK over the next two weeks will be brought home as close as possible to their booked return date." Thomas Cook chief executive Pe-

ter Fankhauser called it a "deeply sad day". "It is a matter of profound regret to me and the rest of the board that we were not successful," he said.

"This marks a deeply sad day for the company which pioneered package holidays and made travel possible for millions of people around the world," he added in the group's statement. The firm's creditors held a marathon meeting on Sunday to try and work out a deal, followed by a meeting of the board of directors.

Reports said a collapse of the group would mean the repatriation of 600,000 tourists, in-

cluding around 150,000 seeking government help returning to the UK.

Two years ago, the collapse of Monarch Airlines prompted the British government to take emergency action to return 110,000 stranded passengers, costing taxpayers some 60 million pounds on hiring planes.

As well as the grounding of its planes, Thomas Cook has been forced to shut travel agencies, leaving the group's 22,000 global employees -- 9,000 of whom are in Britain -- out of a job.

Holidaymakers had already reported problems, with guests at a ho-

tel in Tunisia owed money by Thomas Cook being asked for extra money before being allowed to leave, according to a tourist interviewed by AFP. Chinese peer Fosun, which was already the biggest shareholder in Thomas Cook, agreed last month to inject 450 million pounds into the business as part of an initial 900 million pounds rescue package.

In return, the Hong Kong-listed conglomerate acquired a 75 per cent stake in Thomas Cook's tour operating division and 25 per cent of its airline unit. Thomas Cook in May revealed that first-half losses widened on a major write-down, caused in part by Brexit uncertainty that delayed summer holiday bookings.

The group, which has around 600 stores across the UK, has also come under pressure from fierce online competition.

Cabinet maker Thomas Cook created the travel firm in 1841 to carry temperance supporters by train between British cities.

## ABVP's march to Jadavpur University stopped by police



**KOLKATA, SEP 23 (PTI):** ABVP activists on Monday pelted stones at police officers and tried to break barricades after their protest rally to Jadavpur University here was stopped midway, sources said.

The right wing students' organisation took out the rally from Gariahat area in south Kolkata to

protest against the September 19 attack on Union Minister Babul Supriyo on Jadavpur University campus. As soon as the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) activists reached Jodhpur Park, around 2km away, police stopped them by putting up barricades on the road, the sources said.

The protesters then

pelted the police with stones and tried to break the barricades, while raising slogans against the Trinamool Congress government, they added.

Supriyo was last week heckled and held up for several hours by the students of Jadavpur University, where he had gone to attend a seminar organised by the ABVP.

## New book to tell stories of 50 Indian women role models

**NEW DELHI, SEP 23 (PTI):** An octogenarian sharpshooter, a priest, a spy and a warrior princess are some of the awe-inspiring Indian women whose stories will be part of a new book, "Girl Power: Indian Women Who Broke The Rules".

Written by author Neha J Hiranandani, the book details the struggles and achievements of 50 remarkable women, complemented with illustrations by Niloufer Wadia.

"Their stories give a lesson to every one

on how they can make dreams come true," said publisher Scholastic in a statement.

It features contemporary women like Olympic medalist PV Sindhu as well as historical figures like the warrior queen Abbakka of Chowta dynasty who singlehandedly defeated the Portuguese six times.

Actress Priyanka Chopra too gets a spot in the list, as do real-life heroines such as Subhasini Mistry, who worked as a maid before winning a Padma Bhushan for

healthcare, and Chandro Tomar, the octogenarian sharpshooter, popularly known as 'Revolver Dadi'.

"Viewed as individual vignettes or as an anthology, this book is the definitive rebuff to the 'damsel in distress princess story'.

"Far from waiting to be rescued, this collection celebrates women who decided to be the heroines of their own stories and write their own fate, unafraid of getting their hands dirty or swimming against the tide," they said.

## Cong accuses PM of campaigning for Trump, says it violates 'time honoured principle'

**NEW DELHI, SEP 23 (PTI):** The Congress has accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of violating Indian foreign policy's "time honoured principle" of not interfering in the domestic elections of another country by campaigning for US President Donald Trump at the Howdy-Modi event in Houston.

In a series of tweets, Congress senior spokesperson Anand Sharma said Modi was in the US as India's prime minister, and not a star campaigner in the US elections.

"Mr Prime Minister, you have violated the time honoured principle of Indian foreign policy of not interfering in the domestic elections of another country. This is a singular disservice to the long-term strategic interests of India," Sharma said on Twitter after the Howdy Modi event in Texas on Sunday night.

"Our relationship with the United States of America have throughout been bipartisan, vis- -vis Republicans and Democrats. Your actively campaigning for Trump is a breach of both India and America as sovereign nations and democracies," he added. Sharma's party colleague, P Chidambaram, who is in Tihar jail on charges of alleged corruption, also took a dig at the prime minister over his "Everything is fine in India" remark in Houston.

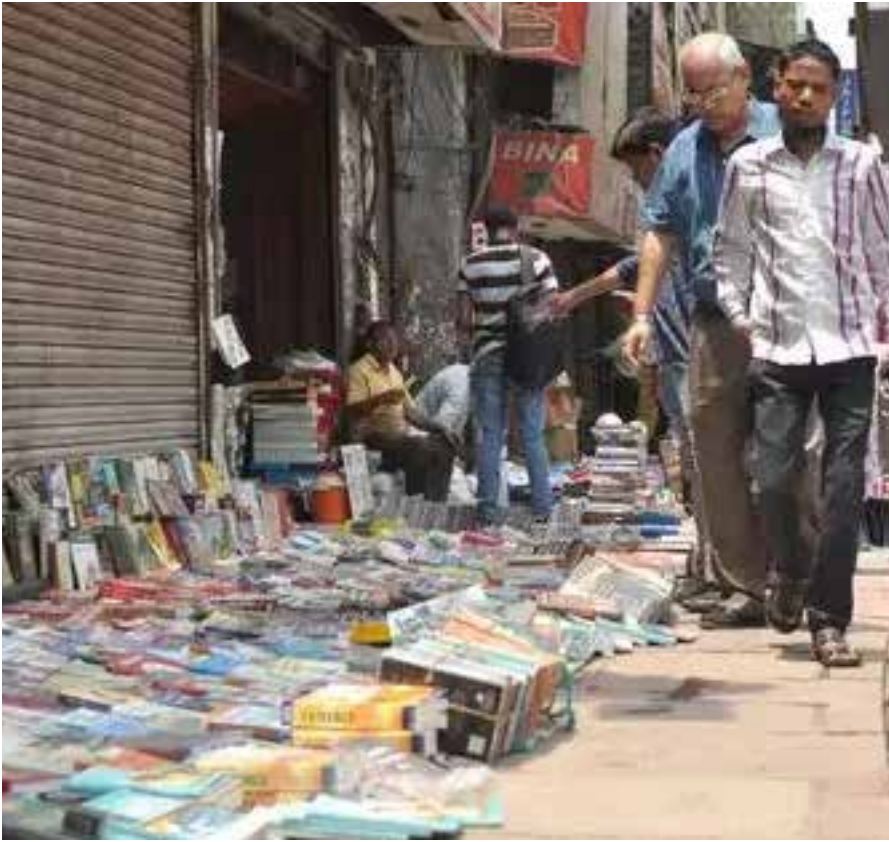
"Bharat mai sab achha hai. Except for unemployment, loss of existing jobs, lower wages, mob violence, lockdown in Kashmir and throwing Opposition leaders in prison," Chidambaram tweeted through his family.

# Daryaganj book market and the tough act of letting go

**NEW DELHI, SEP 23 (PTI):** Leaving home is never easy, even when it's across the road and cleaner. Ask the hawkers of the city's Daryaganj Sunday book market, who have a new address at the Mahila Haat ground.

After 50 years of operating from the crammed, congested pavement between Delite and Golcha cinemas, the book bazaar has moved to the elevated Mahila Haat ground on Asaf Ali Road nearby.

And the shopkeepers -- as well as buyers -- are beset with mixed feelings.



"Apna ghar chod kar nayi jagah jaana kis ko accha lagta hai (Who feels good about leaving their old house for a new one)," 67-year-old Niyazuddin, who has been selling books in the market for the last 40 years, said on Sunday, a week after the shift.

"Letting go is always difficult. I don't know how it will feel after some time, but right now it surely does not feel good," Niyazuddin said.

The famed Sunday book bazaar is where one can land a rare copy of New Yorker, or even a first edition of Margaret Mitchell's "Gone With the Wind" for just Rs 20.

The book bazaar was closed for several weeks, ever since July 2 when the Delhi High Court vacated a stay on a direction declaring Netaji Subhash Marg (also including the road between Delite and Golcha) a "non-vending zone".

Each vendor has a designated 4 feet by 6 feet space in the new space allotted by the North Delhi Municipal Corporation (NDMC) in the Mahila Haat ground. The rent has gone up from Rs 15 to Rs 185 per week and the space has been giv-

en on a two-year lease.

Sumit Verma, a member of the Daryaganj Patri Sunday Book Bazaar Welfare Association, alleged that the administration had violated the Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) Act (2014), and accused them of ruining the heritage status of the book market.

"What kind of barter is this? You take our 50-year-old heritage market and give us a new piece of land on two years lease. What is the surety that you won't take this away as well?" Verma asked as some vendors protested outside the ground.

Despite their misgivings, he said many hawkers are taking up space in the new ground because it is a question of their livelihood. Of the 276 stalls, over 200 were occupied this Sunday. Last week, the first Sunday at the new venue, there were only about 100 stalls, he said.

According to the Act, "Natural markets where

street vendors have conducted business for over fifty years shall be declared as heritage markets, and the street vendors in such markets shall not be relocated".

For regular visitors, it is the idea of letting go of the original market's old world charm that is most painful. Many admit having had a long-term relationship with the market that spans years, even decades.

They can't help but be nostalgic about the innumerable times they have rummaged through giant piles of dusty books to find old and rare titles, including first editions of classics or a vintage gold foil embossed leather bound book.

"It was in Daryaganj where I first discovered the works of legendary playwright Oscar Wilde and it has stayed with me since then. Then a naughty teenager, and now an old grumpy grandmother, a trip to this place on Sundays has been a one constant thing in my life," said 52-year-old Renu Uppal.

Uppal, who was visiting the new market this Sunday with her granddaughter, said she hoped it would be moved back to its original location.

"It is so out of place in this location. It looks like as if we have been robbed of our childhood," she added.

A major disadvantage of the new location is that the Mahila Haat ground is not covered unlike their earlier space, Niyazuddin said.

"It is all open out here with no shed to protect us from rains," he said.

Not all vendors, however, are unhappy.

Many said the new space with facilities such as a nearby park, toilets and parking is far better.

"There were too many drawbacks of having bookstalls on the roadside. The books would get very dirty because of the dust. Then there were constant thefts taking place too. Here, the place is clean and much better organised," Nitin Kumar, who has been selling books here for the last two decades, said.

## Guj 'fart competition' fails as no one passes wind

**AHMEDABAD, SEP 23 (PTI):** A 'fart competition' held on Sunday in Gujarat's Surat, touted as the country's first, turned out to be a lot of hot air, though not literally, as only three participants managed to overcome shyness and inhibitions to take a shot at the three trophies on offer.

They too, however, failed to pass muster after being unable to pass wind, an organiser said.

While sixty people had registered to display their prowess in letting out "longest", "loudest" and "most musical" farts

at a banquet hall in Vesu area, only twenty turned up on Sunday, said organiser Yatin Sangoi.

Of these, only three took to the stage, in front of 70 people in attendance along with a few media channels, and ended up failing to "perform", said Sangoi.

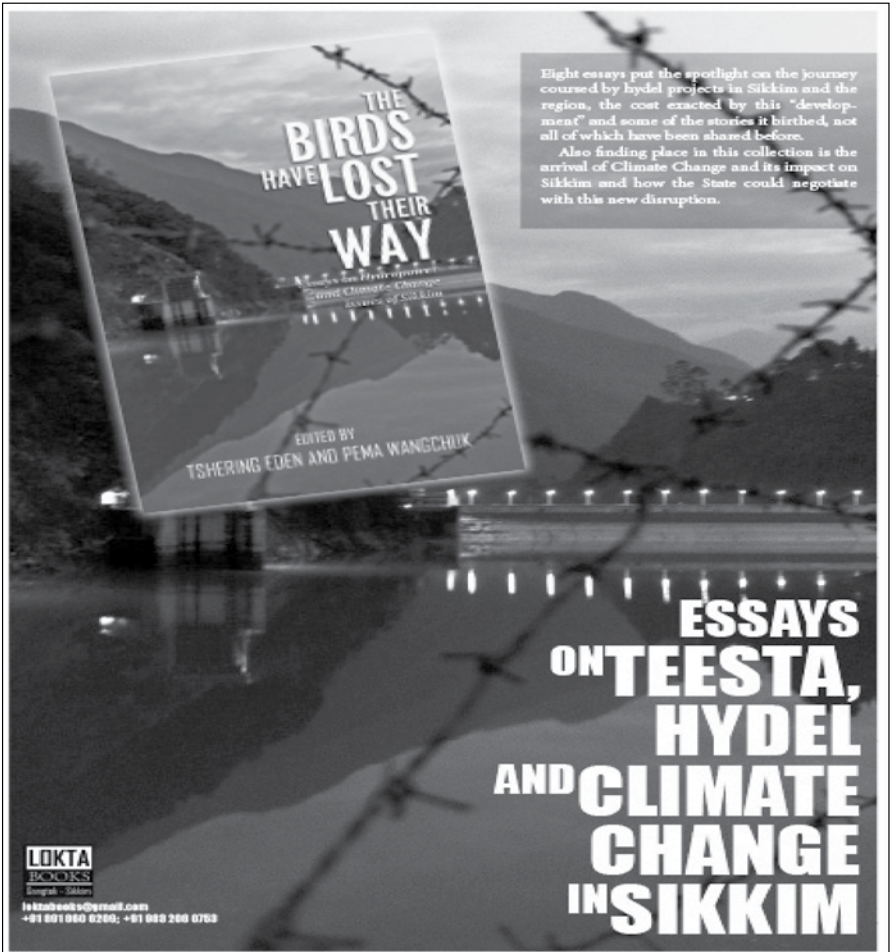
None of the three trophies were distributed, he said, though the participants were given gift hampers for turning up.

"The participants were reluctant to go on stage as they were possibly shy and had inhibitions due to the pres-

ence of news channels, photographers, people etc. We had even roped in a firm to build a special device to measure the fart parameters," he said.

Unfazed, Sangoi said he planned to hold the competition next in Mumbai, complete with chambers to allow participants to pass wind without the glare of the audience.

He identified the three "fartists" who took the stage on Sunday as Sushil Jain of Bardoli, Alkesh Pandya of Patan and Vishnu Heda of Surat.





## Panghal counts on strenuous training to win medal at Tokyo Olympics

**AMIT KUMAR DAS**  
**NEW DELHI, SEPT 23 (PTI):** World Championships' silver medal-winning boxer Amit Panghal reckons securing an Olympic spot at next year's Asian qualifiers will be a tough task but vowed to leave no stone unturned in his quest for glory at the Tokyo Games. Panghal (52kg), an Asian Games and Asian Championships gold-medallist, became the first Indian male boxer to win a silver at the World Championship, which concluded in Ekaterinburg, Russia on Saturday.

The 23-year-old Indian Armyman said he was sure of a podium finish after putting in the hard yards ahead of the prestigious tournament.

"It is a great feeling to win this medal. Given the preparation that I had, I was confident that I won't return without a medal. No Indian boxer has gone beyond the bronze, so I wanted to do something different, change the colour of the medal," Panghal told PTI after returning to the country here on Monday.

"I want to keep repeating what is working for me and keep improving on my weaknesses. I want to practice so much, put in so much effort in my training that I not only return with a medal but also change the colour of the medal at Tokyo," he added referring to bronze medal won by Vijender Singh back in 2008.

The world championships in Russia no longer have Olympic qualifier status after the International Olympic Committee (IOC) suspended the International Boxing Association (AIBA) from conducting the event in the 2020 Tokyo Games.

"At least 3-4 of us would have qualified if World Championships were still the Olympic qualifiers. It would have been a big achievement. Now the Asian Olympic qualifiers is the next big tournament for us. All the focus will be on that," said Panghal.

The Olympic qualifiers will start in February next year with the Asia/Oceania zone qualifiers in China.

"For us who are in the lower weight category, the level of competition at Asian qualifiers is same as world championships. Most of the Asian boxers win medal at the Olympics or World Championships. So it will be tough," Panghal said.

"Of course, the World qualifiers will be tougher as US and European boxers will also participate."

Panghal, who had shifted to the 52kg category after a stellar run in the 49kg division, said he needs to work on his strength and power.

"I will work on my strength and stamina. We will improve as we inch towards the qualifiers. We have to hold on to our top form, we can't effort to let it slip a bit till the Olympics."

Talking about his next assignment, Panghal said: "I am participating at the World Military Games next month. Also I will compete at the Indian Boxing League.

## N'Golo Kanté is Chelsea's dynamic all-rounder in a team lacking structure

**JONATHAN WILSON**  
*theGuardian*

How much can be expected of a single player? That N'Golo Kanté is an exceptional footballer is no revelation but there is still something remarkable about the fact that the best holding midfielder in the world has become a totemic Roy of the Rovers figure at Chelsea. There he is darting across his own box to stifle a Liverpool attack. There he is slipping a pass in to the edge of the box and looking for a return. And there he is, drifting in from the right and finding the top corner with an ungainly but nonetheless precise finish. He is their alpha and their omega, their beginning and their end. He is all things to all men and by that means he might save some games – but not this one.

Kanté was exceptional against Liverpool, in the second half a blur, the force driving Chelsea forward. Only one Chelsea player made more tackles than him, only one more interceptions than him, only one had more shots than him and nobody completed more dribbles than him. He has, against expectations, transformed himself into a complete midfielder.

But seeing him play like that it is impossible not to feel a certain ambivalence. Why is he having to do this? Ultimately, for all that it fits football's love of narrative and its continuing obsession with individuals, Roy of



the Rovers football is for comics. Steven Gerrard pulled off more implausible feats than was reasonable and gave defining performances in the finals of the FA Cup and Champions League but, as his time at Liverpool showed, that is no way to mount a consistent challenge in the league.

Chelsea had a supremely gifted holding midfielder, somebody who had been instrumental to two title wins with two different sides and had then lifted the World Cup, but opted to bring in a very different player who operated in his position to satisfy the demands of Maurizio Sarri. The result has been Kanté operating in a more advanced position that has forced him to learn new tricks.

Profoundly gifted and

diligent as he is, he has. He may have skewed one chance wide from the edge of the box on Sunday but he then scored with a little scuttle in-field and precise shot into the top corner. But, remarkable as that strike was, it was only his 15th league goal in a career now in its eighth season of regular senior football.

Since Chelsea signed Jorginho their transfer ban has made it harder for them to rectify the situation. And so the issue persists: Jorginho, frail and neat, playing his cerebral passes and looking a little bewildered by the tumult around him, Kanté charging forward rather than controlling the area just in front of the defensive line as he used to.

With Kanté in the side from the start for

only the third time this season, Chelsea looked a little more secure than they have done, less vulnerable to attacks through that central area. But still, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that fielding him and Jorginho together creates needless complications.

That Liverpool's two goals here came from free-kicks, following the concession to a free-kick against Valencia last Tuesday makes defensing from set-plays a specific and immediate concern. The first was a ferocious drive from Trent Alexander-Arnold but it was noticeable that Jorginho, whose job was to charge down the taker after it had been laid off, ended up making himself as small as possible. Defending, it is fair to say, does not

come naturally to him.

To criticise Frank Lampard for that is perhaps a little unfair. The issues of personnel predate him and are a result of Chelsea's piecemeal approach to recruitment. But conceding 16 goals in eight games this season is a problem that requires urgent attention.

Kanté is clearly a large part of the solution but he cannot be all the solution. An all-round performance such as he produced on Sunday, particularly in the second half, is a paradoxical kind of excellence. On the one hand a display as remorseless and intelligent as that must be admired; on the other the fact that it was necessary, perhaps even that it was possible, speaks of profound structural deficiencies.

## Aditi best Indian at Ladies French Open golf

**PARIS, SEPT 23 (PTI):** India's Aditi Ashok was the best Indian at the Lacoste Ladies Open de France as she shot even par 71 in the final round to finish Tied-26th here.

While Aditi ended with a total of 289, Diksha Dagar (72) was Tied-43rd and Tvesa Malik (74) was Tied-63rd.

American Nelly Korda shot a four-under 67 to win her first Ladies European Tour title.

Korda has won two titles on the LPGA Tour and one on the Symetra Tour.

Heading into the final round with a one-shot lead, Korda carded six birdies and two bogeys on a blustery final day for a total of 15-under-par to win by eight at Golf du Medoc near Bordeaux.

C line Boutier fin-

ished second while her European Solheim Cup teammate and last year's winner Caroline Hedwall was tied for third with Jo-anna Klatten.

European Solheim Cup player Azahara Muñoz, a two-time winner of the event, tied for fifth place with Laura Fuenfstueck, Julia Engstrom, Olivia Cowan and Manon De Roey, while Jessica Karlsson and Charlotte Thompson tied for tenth.

With a tie for 12th place, Esther Henseleit moved to the top of the Order of Merit and now faces the prospect of becoming only the third player in history, following Dame Laura Davies and Carlota Ciganda, to win both the LET Order of Merit and the leading rookie award, in the same year.

## Tuchel must curb hype after Neymar completes PSG's perfect week

**ADAM WHITE & ERIC DEVIN**  
*theGuardian*

PSG must act as if they've achieved nothing despite a pitch-perfect week.

"If anyone asks if we are going to win the Champions League, I'm leaving," Thomas Tuchel's opening line at Wednesday night's post-match presser was said in jest, but he may have unwittingly stumbled upon the right idea. The 3-0 drubbing of Real Madrid was a high water mark for the German's reign so far, but the club have been here before. On those occasions the 6-1 'remontada' at the Camp Nou and the soul destroying exit to Manchester United, which L'Équipe's front page called "even worse", eventually arrived to humiliate PSG. As Sunday night's encounter with Lyon underlined, simply managing this latest heightening of expectations could be pivotal to Tuchel's success.

Two years ago this week, PSG opened their home European campaign with a landmark three-goal victory, with Bayern Munich roundly beaten at the Parc des Princes. In Kylian Mbappé's first truly sparkling display for the club, David Alaba was terrorised, a Munich team including Robert Lewandowski, Thomas Müller, Thiago Alcántara, Arturo Vidal and James Rodríguez were easily dispatched and, soon afterwards, Bayern manager Carlo Ancelotti was sacked. It was the first high profile outing for 'MCN' and the performance showed, many thought, that PSG had finally arrived as a Champions League force.

Goalkeeper Alphonse Areola said the win represented "our true level" while Mbappé put in an 'XXL performance' according to L'Équipe. This week L'Équipe again got rather excited. 'Dance with angels' and 'Paris were angelic' were the sports daily's headlines in reference to Angel Di María's man-of-the-match display. Tuchel spoke of "a very complete performance". PSG were outstanding in both games, but it is hard to ignore that the opposition were not of the standard one might expect.

Two years ago, as Ancelotti's Bayern reign faltered, his more relaxed style – devoid of the rigour and discipline Bayern players were accustomed to under Pep Guardiola – produced draws with Wolfsburg and Hertha Berlin alongside a defeat to Hoffenheim in the club's first five Bundesliga games. Madrid meanwhile, led by a barely fit Eden Hazard on his first competitive start for the club, continue to search for balance and spark following Zinedine Zidane's return. Neither win, although suitably impressive, was quite the flag planting, coming of age, usurping of champions story that the French media wanted them to be.

That cloying desire to be accepted, to be taken seriously, to be seen as equals by Europe's established elite has consumed the club and French press more and more after every eventual disaster. It is their greatest issue; beyond endemic mental frailty, fractious squad dynamics and often pandering to their biggest stars. PSG are the clingy, needy members of the group who try way too hard. That is not to say they have not slowly improved of late. Tuchel has made at least marginal gains in those areas, while the win over Real can be added to last season's group-stage victory against the eventual champions, Liverpool, and professional displays in the first leg at Old Trafford as well as in two draws with Napoli, as demonstrations of rising to the big occasions. But in truth these are mere steps, and small ones at that.

A turgid encounter with Lyon on Sunday night, usually a bombastic affair, was another sign PSG remain deeply flawed. Despite being enhanced on paper by swapping Presnel Kimpembe and an unfit Mauro Icardi for Abdou Diallo and Neymar for a game that Tuchel said was like "another Champions League match", PSG were solid but lacked fluency and, for 87 minutes, any inspiration. Much as they were against Strasbourg last Saturday. But, just like that eventual 1-0 win, Neymar's individual brilliance snatched three points PSG scarcely deserved. An outrageous injury-time bicycle kick winner last week preceded some lightning quick feet and an even sharper shot that caught Lyon goalkeeper Anthony Lopes cold to fizz into his far corner and win the latest game.

## Fixing can't be totally controlled, greed has no cure: Gavaskar



**NEW DELHI, SEP 23 (PTI):** Former India captain Sunil Gavaskar feels it is difficult to completely get rid of match-fixing in cricket as there will always be an odd person swayed by greed, which cannot be cured.

Gavaskar's comments came in the wake of accusations that players and officials of the Tamil Nadu Premier League (TNPL) have been involved in match-fixing. An investigation is currently underway in the matter.

"Greed is a thing which no amount of education, guidance, seminars with anti-corruption guys is going to help. Greed is something that is human," Gavaskar was quoted as saying by 'Cricbuzz' website.

Gavaskar reportedly made this comments at an event in Bengaluru.

"The best of societies, the most developed of societies still have criminals. In cricket also you will always have the odd person who will be swayed by greed. (It) could be some other reason that might force him to do something. That's

something I don't think you can totally control," he added. The batting legend, however, asserted that it is no longer possible for the wrongdoers to get away with it.

"I would imagine sometimes the circumstances make a player think 'I can get away with it'. But you can't get away. Because it is so covered by television, every little aspect... you will be exposed as having done something wrong," he said. The former right-hander, nonetheless, backed domestic leagues such as the TNPL, saying they do throw up fresh talent.

"For example, the Karnataka Premier League, the number of people who have come from the interiors which otherwise even the best of Karnataka scouts couldn't have been able to see," he pointed out.

"Same with TNPL and all the other leagues that are happening (in India). I think these leagues are very, very good. It is giving more talent to India cricket, talent which would have otherwise gone untapped," he added.

## No risk, no gain: Kohli's mantra heading into T20 World Cup

**ABHISHEK HORE**  
**BENGALURU, SEP 23 (PTI):**

His eyes trained on next year's T20 World Cup, skipper Virat Kohli is willing to take risks in order to mould his India players into an "unfazed" unit, one that is able to "take toss out of the equation".

His bold but surprising decision to bat first in a venue always known to favour the chasing teams may have backfired during the third T20I against South Africa, but Kohli said they will have to take risks to find the best combination.

"Look, we will have to take risks. Even when you want to win a game of cricket you have to take risks, so nothing is a given, nothing is a guarantee before you start playing," Kohli said at the post-match press conference here late on Sunday.

"I think as a team if we are willing to get out of our comfort zone a lot more, then we will be unfazed with what happens at the toss. That's our basis idea: trying to take the toss out of the equation as a side."

His long batting lineup gives him the leeway to experiment but India still lost the series' final game by nine wickets to settle for a 1-1 stalemate.

"That's why we are trying to play the best combination we can, (with) people batting till nine. So that if you bat first or bowl first, you know we are in a good position," Kohli

said. "Mentally, if we put ourselves in a situation where we are ready to do anything rather than wanting to do one thing, we will be in a better position as a side to capitalise on any situation that we are in.

"Unless you do that, unless you start taking those risks, you are always going to be put under somewhere or the other. We want to make sure that we iron all those out before we head into the World Cup." No team had ever chosen to bat first in six previous T20Is at this ground, but Kohli wants his team to also become stronger in defending totals.

134 was not a good score on this surface, admitted Kohli but refused to be harsh on his bowlers after the big nine-wicket drubbing.

"Bowlers coming out of their comfort zone mean at least they get 160 (to defend). You can't defend 130, we didn't get it right with the bat and you can't be too harsh on the bowlers in a T20 game with this kind of total when there is a bit of dew as well. "They should not be analysed or criticised on defending this low total. We didn't have enough runs on the board, so the bowlers are always under pressure knowing that one or two overs can take the game away from you.

"But I think they have done decently well (in the series overall), we will have to be patient

with the combination we are playing at the moment. We will have to strengthen one or two things." At the toss, in the presentation as well as the post-match media conference, Kohli said he doesn't want his team to be in a comfort zone.

"... But quickly we realised the pitch didn't allow us to keep doing that. So I think the kind of start we got, 63 for one after that, I think we could have reassessed, thing about 170 rather than 200."

He acknowledged the South Africans executed their plans better.

"Not to take anything away from South Africa, they hit the right areas, they bowled really well, understood the pitch. So it was a combination of good bowling, not great decision-making but, as I said, these kinds of games will keep happening," Kohli said.

"As long as we are wanting to come out of our comfort zone and putting ourselves in situations which could be the case in a big tournament."

The focus now shifts to the three-match Test series and Kohli expressed confidence, which stemmed more so from the bowling attack at his disposal.

"Our Test team is as strong as it gets in world cricket, especially in our conditions we are one of the best teams. We know exactly what we need to do," he said.



# Israelis await president's PM choice after crucial talks end

**JERUSALEM, SEP 23 (AP):** Israel's president wrapped up his second and final day of crucial talks to find a new prime minister and a way out of political deadlock, after meeting Monday with the smaller parties elected in last week's vote.

After hearing the recommendations from the remaining party for who should head a government, President Reuven Rivlin must now select the candidate he deems most able to form a stable coalition. He is set to make his decision by Wednesday.

The post-election consultations are usually a formality, but the largely ceremonial president is now playing a key role after an almost tied election result.

"There is one thing that the people are largely united over and that is the desire that there won't be third elections," Rivlin said.

The smaller parties' recommendations were split between Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Blue and White's Benny Gantz.

That would suggest that, coming out of the talks, Netanyahu holds a



small edge over Gantz.

Rivlin will likely pick the candidate with the most recommendations who will then have 28 days to try to cobble together a government.

If the first candidate chosen fails within that time, the second is given the opportunity. If he too doesn't manage, the country could head to a third, unprecedented election.

In Rivlin's first round of talks on Sunday, the Joint Arab List threw its support behind Gantz,

the first time the Arab parties had recommended a candidate since 1992, saying it was doing so in a bid to topple Netanyahu, whose anti-Arab rhetoric has infuriated and offended Arabs in Israel during his decade in power.

The backing promised to give Gantz a slight edge in support.

But on Monday, the Joint Arab List said it was withdrawing some of its members' recommendations for Gantz, trimming his support to

below Netanyahu's.

Last week's repeat election produced no clear winner, with Blue and White receiving 33 seats in Israel's 120-member parliament and Netanyahu's Likud garnering 31 seats.

Both sides fell short of the majority needed to form a government and therefore must seek the support of other parties.

Neither party can form a coalition without the eight seats won by firebrand former Defense Minister Avigdor

Lieberman, who on Sunday declined to endorse either candidate for prime minister.

Lieberman has pushed Gantz and Netanyahu to agree to sit with him in a broad, secular unity government, and both have agreed in theory but disagree over who should head it.

The vote last week was a never-before held second election which was triggered after Netanyahu was unable to forge a coalition and then dissolved parliament.

## Trudeau returns to campaign with promise of lower taxes

**MONTREAL, SEP 23 (AFP):** Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau resumed his re-election campaign on Sunday with a promise to lower taxes, but once again had to apologise for a photo showing him in blackface makeup.

Trudeau, 47, was already under fire for an ethics lapse and other controversies, and the decades-old photos and videos that resurfaced last week of him engaging in activities he has acknowledged as "racist" dealt a fresh blow to his chances.

After taking Saturday off, Trudeau travelled to Brampton on Sunday, in the central province of Ontario, where he announced two concrete measures aimed at wooing middle-class voters, the main targets of both his Liberal party and opposition Conservatives in the October 21 elections. If he is reelected, Trudeau said middle-class Canadians would not pay taxes on the first 15,000 Canadian dollars (USD 11,300) they earn.

He also promised to cut Canadian cell phone plan costs, which he called "among the most expensive in the G7", by 25 per cent. These two

measures would "put more than 1,500 Canadian dollars a year back in the pockets of Canadian hard-working families", he said. His main opponent, Conservative Andrew Scheer, has also promised his government would "put money back into Canadians' pockets". Trudeau then gave a press conference during which he faced a barrage of questions about the photos and videos that appeared in media outlets Wednesday, showing him dressed in blackface or brownface on multiple occasions in the 1990s and in 2001.

"As a country, we need to keep working for diversity, working to fight racism and intolerance," he said. "As an individual, I have to keep having extremely important conversations about choices made in the past and how I earn, once again, the trust of Canadians that I hurt."

The opposition has heavily criticised Trudeau, who as prime minister has presented himself as a champion of multiculturalism and a fighter of racism and discrimination. Accused of hypocrisy, Trudeau has apologised for the images

blaming the costume choice on youthful ignorance. According to multiple opinion polls published this weekend in Canadian media outlets, the Conservatives appear to have taken a slight lead over Trudeau's Liberals since the scandal.

Although the two parties were neck-and-neck at the start of the campaign, the Nanos Institute on Sunday tipped in favour of the opposition, with 35.5 per cent of Canadians saying they would vote for the Conservatives, versus 32.9 per cent for the Liberals.

Results from the same poll, however, show Trudeau remains the top choice to become the next prime minister, with 31.5 per cent of Canadians favouring him compared to 29.2 per cent for his main opponent.

Public broadcaster CBC's poll aggregator also showed a spread of 34.6 per cent for the Conservatives versus 32.9 per cent for the Liberals, while a Forum Research study conducted after the images surfaced and published Sunday by the Toronto Star puts the two main parties on equal footing at 33 per cent each.

### Afghan officials: 24 civilians killed in anti-Taliban raid

**KABUL, SEP 23 (AP):** At least 24 civilians were killed Monday during a raid conducted by Afghan special forces on Taliban hideouts in the southern Helmand province, provincial officials said. Abdul Majed Akhund, deputy provincial councilman, said that initial reports showed 24 civilians were killed, but the number "possibly would rise" when a final toll was available. Attahullah Afghan, head of the provincial council, said the majority of dead were women and children who were at a wedding ceremony in Musa Qala district.

He added that 12 other people were wounded. There were conflicting reports on the numbers of killed and wounded from different sources as the area is under Taliban control. According to Afghan, there were two separate raids in different areas of Musa Qala.

The first operation killed six foreign fighters, while the second raid "mistakenly" hit civilians, he said. Akhund said authorities are investigating reports civilians attending a wedding died in the raid Sunday night in Musa Qala. Omar Zwaq, the provincial governor's spokesman, said 14 insurgents including six foreigners were killed during the raid. They were investigating reports of civilian casualties. This comes as earlier a drone attack in eastern Afghanistan's Nangarhar province blamed on US forces killed at least 16 and wounded tens of others, most of them civilians.

The US forces in Afghanistan said they carried out a strike in eastern Nangarhar targeting Islamic State positions. The violence has further rattled the country as it prepares for national elections later this month.

## Modi to articulate India's plans for renewable energy, other climate action proposals at UN Summit

BY YOSHITA SINGH

**UNITED NATIONS, SEP 23 (PTI):** Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to articulate his government's ambitions on renewable energy and make a call for a coalition for disaster resilient infrastructure at UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres' High-Level Climate Action Summit on Monday.

Modi is among the first set of speakers at the Summit's opening ceremony, a highly significant gesture given that only those Heads of State, Government and Ministers are invited to speak at the summit who will have any positive development to announce on climate action. India's important role and contribution to global climate action efforts have been underlined by the fact that Modi is the fourth speaker at the Summit, after Guterres, New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern and President of Marshall Islands Hilda Heine. German Chancellor Angela Merkel will speak after Modi.

India's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Syed Akbaruddin told PTI here that India's approach to climate action is multifaceted because anything that we do has an impact, which is global in nature.

He said the Indian Prime Minister could articulate his ambition towards renewable energy as well as propose a coalition of nations for disaster resistant infrastructure, similar to India's leadership of the International Solar Alliance.

So we are not looking at one area, one segment, we are looking at certainly renewable energy because energy is a key component. Also we are an energy-thirsty country so our needs of energy are huge and renewables are increasingly going to play a key role in that. What PM Modi will perhaps articulate is his ambition for renewables in the future beyond what was promised in 2015, Akbaruddin said.

The Paris Climate Agreement was signed in 2015 and aims to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change by keeping a global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius. Modi



has said that India has a capacity of 4GW and the country has set a target of adding 100 GW of solar power by 2022.

Guterres, while speaking to a select group of journalists at a special luncheon last week, said that in the Climate Action Summit only those Heads of State and Government and members of coalitions will speak who come with positive steps. So there is a kind of a ticket. You can speak only if you have come to announce something positive, he said.

Guterres said while the UN is not making judgments about climate action efforts by nations, he asked them if they are ready to announce a positive development at the summit before inviting them to speak at it.

If you have positive things to announce, you will be given the floor (at the Climate Action Summit). That was the criteria.

Those who are ready to increase their efforts, we want them to speak. Those that do not want to increase their efforts, have nothing to announce, they can speak in other meetings, Guterres said.

It is noteworthy that only around 63 nations have been invited to speak at the summit. The US, Brazil and Japan are not speaking at the high-level event.

Akbaruddin further said that India is expected to talk about the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure, a group of about 30 plus countries that will work towards common goals of having infrastructure, which is resilient to climate and disaster. India is working with countries like the UK and small island states like Fiji and Maldives who face problems of climatic nature. "So (In-

dia) will bring to the table this coalition as a tangible demonstration of our willingness to work in partnerships, he said.

Akbaruddin added that India has the ability to convene people or countries that are not only geographically different but economically diverse as well. India, a member of the G-20, has many friends who are developing countries.

So what we intend to do is to leverage that ability to work across the board and to bring to the table a group of countries who are ready to address issues of infrastructure. Whenever there is a cataclysmic climate event, infrastructure gets undermined and overwhelmed very quickly, and it becomes very difficult for developing countries or countries who do not have economic wherewithal to address these, he said.

Further, India is expected to address issues about water preservation and sustainable use of energy by the transport sector.

India is a water stress country and efforts we will do about preservation of water, how we will try and address water related issues is another major aspect, he said.

Akbaruddin further said that transport and heavy transport are key users of energy and India will see how it can address the challenges and make them more sustainable.

There are a whole host of issues that we will address in a holistic manner, but all will be tangible, very action-oriented and will be focused, he said.

The Climate Action Summit will see leaders make national statements, followed by statements of coalitions and national statements again.

## US emphasises diplomacy in standoff with Iran

**WASHINGTON, SEP 23 (AFP):** The United States said Sunday it will make its case against Iran at the United Nations this week, insisting it wants to give diplomacy "every opportunity to succeed" in the wake of a devastating attack on a vital Saudi oil complex. Setting the stage for President Donald Trump's address to the annual UN General Assembly on Tuesday, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo put aside threats of US military retaliation against Iran for the attack.

"President Trump and I both want to give diplomacy every opportunity to succeed," Pompeo said in an interview with ABC's "This Week".

"Our administration's taking this on in a serious way and we are working diligently to see that this has a diplomatic outcome," he said. "But make no mistake about it, if we are unsuccessful in that and Iran continues to strike out in this way, I am confident that President Trump will make the decisions necessary to achieve our objectives." The United States has accused Tehran of carrying out the sneak air attacks that set aflame Saudi Arabia's Abqaiq plant and the Khurais oil field on September 14, knocking out half the kingdom's oil production.

Pompeo called it "one of the largest attacks on the global energy supply in history". But despite initial warnings by Trump that US forces were "locked and loaded", the US president quickly softened his rhetoric, brushing off Republican hawks who warned that the absence of a forceful response would be read as weakness in Tehran. Trump

has so far ordered stepped up sanctions against Iran and a relatively modest deployment of US troops to the Gulf, primarily focussed on defensive missions like air and missile defense.

On Fox News, Pompeo said the administration was "deeply aware of the risks" of a miscalculation leading to conflagration in the tinderbox region.

"It's why we want to resolve this in a way that doesn't resort to kinetic action if it's at all possible to achieve that," he said. On Sunday, before leaving the White House on a trip to Texas, Trump once again left open the possibility of an unscheduled meeting on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly with Iranian President Hassan Rouhani.

"Nothing is ever off the table, completely, but I have no intention of meeting with Iran and that doesn't mean it doesn't happen," Trump said. "I'm a very flexible person, but we have no intention. It's not set up."

When asked if there would be any discussions between Pompeo or another American representative with the Iranian delegation at the UN General Assembly, a high-ranking American official said there was "nothing planned".

But CNN's Christiane Amanpour tweeted that Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif told her in an interview that Rouhani was willing to meet with Trump in New York this week "provided that President Trump is ready to do what's necessary" by exchanging sanctions relief for "permanent monitoring of Iranian nuclear facilities."

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**BIKINI BABE!** Newlyweds Ashley Iaconetti and Jared Haibon hosted a party at the Go Pool Dayclub at the Flamingo Hotel & Casino Las Vegas.

## Jharrel Jerome becomes first Afro-Latino to win lead actor in limited series Emmy

**LOS ANGELES, SEP 23 (PTI):** Jharrel Jerome has two Emmy records to his name -- the actor now holds the title as the youngest person and the first Afro-Latino to win the trophy in a limited series acting category for Netflix's "When They See Us".

The 21-year-old actor gave a blistering performance in the Ava DuVernay-directed series, based on the 1989 case of Central Park Five. The four-episode show is based on the case of five teenagers of colour who were wrongly convicted for the rape of a jogger. When they were exonerated many years later, they sued the city for their time in prison.

Jerome played Korey Wise, who, as an adolescent, was wrongfully convicted of the crime, which led to a 14-year incarnation stint.

The overwhelmed actor thanked his parents, DuVernay, and "the Exonerated Five" Raymond Santana, Kev-

in Richardson, Yusef Salaam, Antron McCray, and Wise who were in attendance at the ceremony and received a standing ovation from them.

"I should be home in the



Bronx waiting for my mom's cooking or something. But I'm here in front of my inspirations, in front of people who I'm so motivated by and the people that I was nominated with in this category," he said in his acceptance speech. "But

most importantly, this is for the men who we know as 'the Exonerated Five'" Jerome said as he went on to name them and received a round of applause from the audience.

"When They See Us", which started streaming on Netflix from June 12, features Michael K Williams, Vera Farmiga, John Leguizamo, Felicity Huffman, Niecy Nash, Blair Underwood and Christopher Jackson, among others.

## 'Game of Thrones' wins big at Emmys 2019

**LOS ANGELES, SEP 23 (PTI):** "Game of Thrones" won the award for Outstanding Drama Series for its eighth and final season at Emmys 2019.

HBO's epic fantasy drama dominated the Emmy Awards nominations with 32 nods including best drama series.

"These last 10 years have been the best years of our lives, I can't believe we did it, we shall never see it's like again... It's amazing you are all still alive," showrunner David Benioff said in his acceptance speech.

"Thank all of our lovely and amazing cast you make everything we write better. We love you and loved every minute we have spent with all of you," added showrunner Dan Weiss.

"GoT" defeated seven other contenders for the best drama crown: BBC America's "Killing Eve", Netflix's "Ozark", AMC's "Better Call Saul", NBC's "This Is Us", FX's "Pose", Netflix's "Bodyguard" and HBO's "Succession".

Apart from the top honour, 10 actors from the show, including Peter Dinklage, Kit Harington, Emilia Clarke, Gwendoline Christie and Sophie Turner, were nominated in performance categories.

Dinklage won best supporting actor for the record fourth time for the series, but other actors from the show did not

take home the trophies.

"I count myself so fortunate to be a member of a community that is nothing but all about tolerance and diversity. Because no other place could I be standing on a stage like this," the actor said post his win.

"It's been about 10 years, all said



and done, since the moment I met David and Dan until right now. I had no idea what I was getting myself into, but I knew David and Dan were quite brilliant. We did nothing but sweat, we did nothing but laugh. David and Dan, we literally walked through fire and ice for you, literally. And I would do it all again in a heartbeat," he added.

Through out the show's run, Dinklage was nominated eight times for his role as Tyrion Lannister, the youngest of Tywin Lannister's three children.

The actor beat out his "GoT" co-stars Alfie Allen and Nikolaj Coster-Waldau, as well as "Better Caul Saul" actors Jonathan Banks, Giancarlo Esposito, Michael

## Phoebe Waller-Bridge and 'Fleabag' shine at Emmys 2019

**LOS ANGELES, SEP 23 (PTI):** Phoebe Waller-Bridge emerged a triple winner at Emmys 2019 as the writer-actor took home the prize for lead actress in a comedy series, best comedy series and best comedy writing for her very personal dark comedy "Fleabag".

Waller-Bridge won the best actress trophy for the series on an angry, confused and sexually active woman in her 30s, besting Emmy favourite Julia Louis-Dreyfus ("Veep") which came as a surprise.

"No! Oh my God, no!" she exclaimed as she took the stage.

The actor recognised the contribution of her fellow nominees, show's director Harry Bradbeer and producers Amazon and BBC.

"I find acting really hard and really painful. Thank you to be nominated with these unbelievable actresses who I've looked up to and watched and laughed with for so many years it means so much. I mean that in a nice way. And this means a huge amount to me. Huge thanks again the 'Fleabag' gang, there they are, thank you so much.

"I'm so supported on the show. As Harry said, it's sickening how much we all love each other. I'm so supported by this wonderful cast. A big shout-out to my acting agent, who has been rooting for me literally from the very beginning," she said.

As she accepted the award of best comedy writing, she said it was wonderful and reassuring to know that "a dirty, perky, angry and messed-up woman can make it to the Emmys."

According to The Hollywood Reporter, the actor quipped the possibility of winning awards was the reason she wrote the series in the first place.

"I find writing really hard and re-

ally painful, but I'd like to say from the bottom of my heart that the reason that I do it is this. So it's made it all really worth it guys, thank you so much," she said. On winning the Emmy for best comedy series, Waller-Bridge went up the stage with her "Fleabag" team and couldn't stop herself from saying, "This is getting ridiculous!"

"Fleabag" started as a one-woman show at the Edinburgh Festival in 2014, and the journey has been absolutely mental to get here. I just want to say a huge thank you to everyone whose involved, everyone whose standing behind me here. Some unbelievable team," she said.

She also gave a shout-out to Andrew Scott's 'Hot Priest', the love interest of Fleabag in the second and final season of the Amazon show.

"Season two would not have exploded in the way that it did if it wasn't for Andrew Scott, who came into our 'Fleabag' world like a whirlwind and gave a performance of such depth and complexity it elevated the whole thing."

Bradbeer bagged the Emmy for best director for a comedy series for "Fleabag".

"I think for a director, something like 'Fleabag' only comes along once in your life. Thank you Phoebe for coming into my life like some kind of glorious grenade. Scientists are still trying to work out how someone so incredibly talented can be so utterly lovely," Bradbeer said in his acceptance speech.

Jodie Comer won best leading drama actress for playing Villanelle in Waller-Bridge's "Killing Eve".

The show has emerged second-ever comedy series win or Amazon, after "The Marvelous Mrs Maisel".

## Parambrata Chatterjee is new Byomkesh in film steeped in 70s

**KOLKATA, SEP 23 (PTI):** 'Kahaani' actor Parambrata Chatterjee has said his role as iconic detective 'Byomkesh Bakshi' in upcoming Bengali film 'Satyanweshi Byomkesh' will chronicle socio-political developments of the 1970s, from the Naxal violence to the Bangladesh Liberation War.

Chatterjee is the main protagonist in the film by Sayantan Ghosal which is based on Byomkesh creator Saradindu Bandyopadhyay's 1963 thriller 'Mogno Moinak'. Actor Rudranil Ghosh will essay the role of Bakshi's assistant, Ajit Bandyopadhyay.

"I think Byomkesh in this movie is far more political than the previous flicks and has a standpoint on different issues," Chatterjee told PTI on Saturday. The film will hit the screens this Durga Puja. "I think adapting the story of the 60s to the period of early 70s, when Bengal was going through a turbulent period, was a major challenge," he said.

Asked about being compared with actors such as Abir Chatterjee, Jishu Sengupta, Dhritiman Chatterjee or Sushant Singh Rajput, who have all acted as the iconic detective in Bengali and Hindi flicks, Chatterjee said, "I have done it in my way." As a viewer, I believe Abir Chatterjee has left his mark on the character of Byomkesh Bakshi in the films of Anjan Dutt and Arindam Sil, Parambrata Chatterjee said.

Rudranil Ghosh, who acted as 'Ajit' in the upcoming film, said Byomkesh Bakshi movies reflect the contemporary period of the story unlike flicks on Satyajit Ray's creation 'Feluda', "which does not reflect the socio-political tension of the time and concentrates on the narration of the plot".

Director Anjan Dutt, who penned the script of 'Satyanweshi Byomkesh' and worked as the creative advisor in the movie, said, "Young director Sayantan Ghoshal has done a very good job. I gave my inputs to the movie whenever needed.

**ARIES:** You have just set things in motion. It is too soon for you to find out the results. If you're that eager, consult your gut. There is a reason why you pursued this opportunity in the first place. Going with the flow is underrated, Aries. Some of you might be experiencing a stronger connection with your intuition. Let the wise woman within help you make crucial decisions.

Tip: Find ways to strengthen your connection with your intuition.

**TAURUS:** Keep your eyes and ears open this week, Taurus. There seems to be some shady business going on around you that requires you to be alert at all times. Investigate anything that looks like a potential red flag. There are two kinds of people in this world: those who move forward by helping others move forward, and those who do so by leaving others behind. You seem to be surrounded by the latter. Don't let them bring you down though. Trust that the mysterious forces above are protecting you.

Tip: Investigate every potential red flag.

**GEMINI:** Laying awake at night, stressing

about your future, is no way to live. A Sadhguru quote to help you see the truth: "You cannot suffer the past or future because they do not exist. What you are suffering is your memory and your imagination." Consciously reroute your thoughts, Gemini. Make a habit of focusing on all that is positive. Enjoy what you are creating as you go forth on this roller coaster ride.

Tip: Bring your attention back to the present.

**CANCER:** Start off the week by sticking to what you know. Don't try to deviate too much from your job description. Experimenting with something new is likely to cause more anxiety than satisfaction. Competition at work is with an equal, so use this as an opportunity to grow. If you are feeling confused about how to progress further, take the time to sit and contemplate your decision.

Tip: Trust your gifts.

**LEO:** "Generosity is giving more than you can, and pride is taking less than you need." Let this Khalil Gibran quote inspire the good Samaritan in you. Support the community you are a part of, Leo. Extend a helping hand

in whichever way you can. When you give with an open heart, the Universe gives back in a multitude of ways.

Tip: Give back.

**VIRGO:** "Stop chasing the money and start chasing the passion." A Tony Hsieh quote that promises to change your life. Today brings with itself the reminder that it's never too late to pursue your calling or dare to do things differently. Don't let age deter you from taking the kind of risks you have in mind. Those working in media or other creative industries are mostly likely to benefit from this va-va-voom energy.

Tip: Take risks.

**LIBRA:** Expect a change in your finances, Libra. But you didn't get here overnight. Practice, patience and persistence have helped you arrive at the given destination. Continue to think and act in accordance with your long-term goals. You are building a life that will support you in every way. Entrepreneurs are most likely to benefit from this energy. Take this as a sign that you are moving forward in the right direction.

Tip: Invest in your long-term goals.

**SCORPIO:** Charging down with blinders on isn't doing you any good, Scorpio. There is a thin line between being strong-willed and being stubborn. The latter could become the reason you create roadblocks for yourself. Be aware of the language you resort to as well. You don't want to make enemies where you should be cultivating friendships. Last word: nobody is irreplaceable.

Tip: Choose kindness over everything else.

**SAGITTARIUS:** The road to hell is paved with good intentions, Sagittarius. So ask yourself if this is the road you want to take. What if self-destruction is the final destination? Look at the people you have chosen to surround yourself with. Are they worthy of your trust? Will they act from a space of justice and fairness? Setting a few boundaries never hurt anybody.

Tip: It's time to rethink the game.

**CAPRICORN:** Victory is a big theme this week. Expect many breakthroughs. You'll find solutions to the things you have been

struggling with as well. But don't let the spotlight get to you. Stay grounded. Help those who could benefit from your guidance. At the same time, remember to be grateful for all the blessings that are pouring in. This is just the beginning, Capricorn.

Tip: Ready for your moment in the sun?

**AQUARIUS:** Stagnation is something you've never been a fan of. The Universe is giving you a chance to shake things. Be grateful for the sudden changes. You are not uprooting your life. You are making place for a new tomorrow. For some, the shift could take place on a physical level.

Tip: Everything happens for a good reason.

**PISCES:** If you don't like the cards destiny deals out to you, you have the option to reshuffle. No more playing the victim card. What happens from now on is in your control. Make the most of your circumstances. Taking charge of the situation is a theme both personally and professionally. Things at work may or may not fall in place easily.

Tip: Take charge of your circumstances.