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SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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Another COVID death takes death toll to 32



SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 26 SEPT:

A 55-year-old woman died at STNM Hospital this morning at around 5:30 am. She is the 32nd COVID casualty of the state.

As per health authorities, the woman was brought from Naya Bazaar, West Sikkim to STNM Hospital on Friday. She was suffering from diabetes and hypertension.

Speaker tests positive, Forest Minister recovers

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 26 SEPT:

Sikkim Legislative Assembly Speaker, LB Das has become the 9th legislator to test positive for COVID-19. The facebook page SKM Darpan, associated with the ruling party, shared his message announcing that he has tested positive for the virus.

He informs that he had undergone an RTPCR test on Friday and the results arrived on Saturday.

Meanwhile, Forest Minister, Karma Loday Bhutia has tested negative for COVID-19 in a test conducted on Friday. The minister had earlier tested positive on 19 Sept prior to the Assembly session.

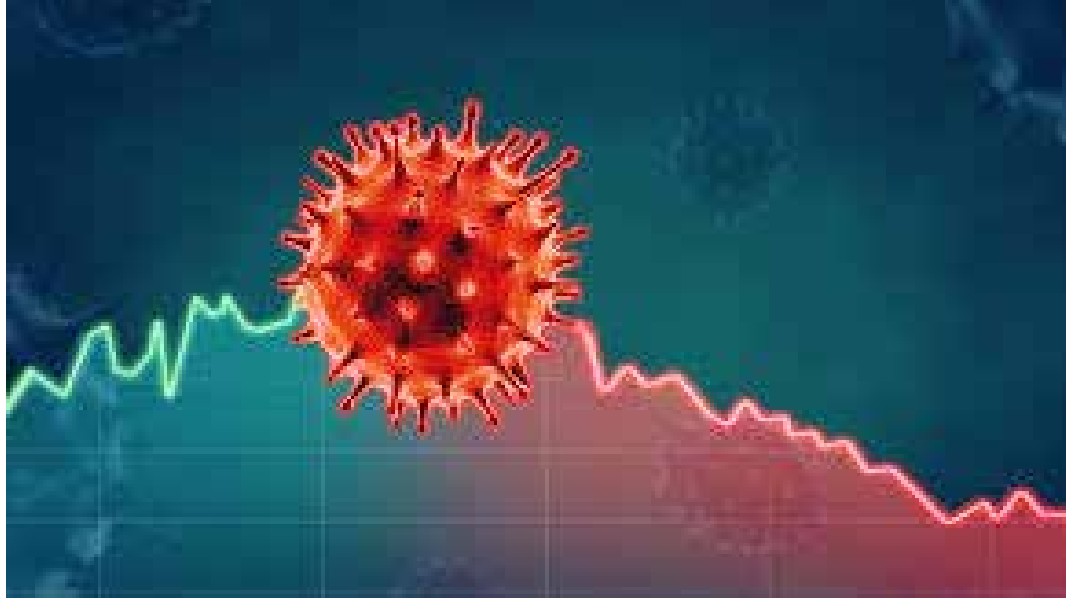
48 new cases take tally of active COVID cases to 705

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 26 SEPT:

The State has registered 48 fresh cases of novel coronavirus as of 8 AM Saturday taking the number of active cases of COVID-19 to 705 and the tally of confirmed cases to 2752. Out of 48 new cases in the State, 41 were reported in East District, 06 West District and 01 in South District.

The number of COVID-19 patients who have been discharged from isolation facilities in Sikkim has crossed the 2000-mark and stands at 2016 with 22 patients being discharged from isolation facilities on Friday. The recovery rate of COVID-19 patients in the State is now 73.25%.

In the daily health bulletin on Saturday, Health Department State IEC Officer, Sonam G Bhutia mentioned that in the testing of 319 samples by RT-PCR at VRD Lab in STNM hospital on Friday, 36 returned positive for COVID-19, while seven of 90 samples tested by TrueNat



reported positive.

He added that five persons were also found COVID-19 positive in the rapid antigen testing of 35 samples. Six patients are currently admitted in ICU ward of STNM hospital.

While giving the break-up of new cases, State IEC Officer mentioned that Sikkim Legislative Assembly Speaker, LB Das has also tested positive for COVID-19 in RT-PCR testing along with one staff

from VIP colony. Eight staff of SammanBhawan were also found COVID-19 positive.

Ten health workers have tested positive since Friday with four more testing positive today. A doctor of STNM hospital, who had just completed COVID duty, one staff of Central Referral Hospital, Tadong from Metro Point and two staff of Singtam District Hospital tested positive for COVID-19 in RT-

PCR testing.

Likewise, one person from Deorali, two from Daragaon, Tadong, one from MG Marg, one from Ranipool, one from near Sir TashiNamgyal SSS, two from PNG road, two from below Paljor Stadium, two from 6th Mile Tadong, one from Chongay and one from Majhitar, Rangpo were found COVID-19 positive.

In West Sikkim, Mr Bhutia informed two personnel

from SSB camp at Yuksom, one resident of Yuksom, one from Gerethang and two from Gyalshing were also tested positive for COVID-19 in RT-PCR testing.

He added that in TrueNat testing, samples of three persons from CPWD quarantine facility, one from Naya Bazaar in West District, one from Manzing in South District and two from quarantine facility at Railway guesthouse, Sichey were returned positive for COVID-19.

Similarly, one more person from Manzing in South District and one from Lower Arithang, one from near Shiva Mandir, Daragon in Assam Lingzey, one from Lingding government school and one from Tashiling were found positive in the rapid antigen testing.

He mentioned that two persons, whose samples were tested positive for COVID-19, could not be contacted over the phone. He urged 49-year-old SS Basnet from Gangtok and 53-year-old RatnaTamang from Development Area to immediately call the toll-free number of the department.

Sikkimese artist wins art contest by ELF



My Grandma by Deo Prasad Rai.

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 26 SEPT:

Sikkimese artist Deo Prasad Rai's artwork "My Grandma" has won the art contest organized by the European Lung Foundation [ELF]. The theme of the contest was women with Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), a chronic inflammatory lung disease that causes obstructed airflow from the lungs.

The 24-yr old from Rimbi in West Sikkim received more than 7000 votes for his artwork "My Grandma" to win the contest. The results were



Deo and his grandmother, Chandra Maya.

announced on 25 Sept on the occasion of World Lung Day.

Deo Prasad's work was shortlisted from among 57 entries by a judging panel including women with COPD, world-renowned artists and respiratory healthcare professionals. He will receive a cash prize of 5000 Euros, which has been donated by McIvor Medicine Professional Corporation.

Additionally, he will be commissioned to create a series of images of women with respiratory disease

which will be unveiled in December 2020.

The artwork represents the artist's grandma - 74-year-old Chandra Maya, who has been suffering from shortness of breath and chronic cough as a result of her COPD for many years. She was a long-term smoker, but while playing with her grandchild Ningwa she avoided smoking so that she did not put Ningwa at an increased risk of developing COPD in later life. The grandma's unwell face in the painting portrays the suffering of women with COPD.

Two North Bengal tea gardens to reopen Sunday

KOLKATA, SEP 26 (PTI): Two tea gardens of Alipurduar in North Bengal -- Kanchini and Raimattang -- will resume operations from Sunday after 11 months, a senior state government official said.

Additional Labour Commissioner of North Bengal, Md Rizwan, said the two estates together employ around 3,200 people.

Both the tea gardens were put under suspension of work late last year.

Rizwan said a tripartite meeting

had been convened by the Labour Commissioner's Office of North Bengal, and it was agreed to reopen the estates by the respective managements.

He said the workers and employees will receive no pay during the period of suspension, but service continuity will be maintained in respect of statutory dues like provident fund and gratuity.

The workers will also receive bonus at 12 per cent for 2019-20, the official added.

932 STUDENTS RECEIVE DEGREES AT SMU'S E-CONVOCATION

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 26 SEPT 2020:

932 students of Sikkim Manipal University received degrees in various graduate, post graduate and PhD programmes during the e-Convocation of the university held on Saturday. This was SMU's twentieth convocation.

Gold and silver medal awardees, including students from the MBBS, MD, MS, B.Tech, M.Tech, BSc & MSc Nursing, Bachelors & Masters in Physiotherapy, Biotechnology & Business Administration, BCA, MCA, MSc Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics and other courses, including PhD scholars in various disciplines participated in the ceremony from their homes as they were bestowed with their degrees and medals online.

The ceremony was planned and anchored by an SMU team comprising of faculty and staff members from various SMU constituent colleges and units. The organisers have made special mention of support rendered by the IT team led by Anand Ruhela, Head IT, SMU and also the engineering and other departments.

Rajen Padukone, Pro-Chancellor, SMU,



in his welcome speech expressed his gratitude towards Governor Ganga Prasad for his guidance and also thanked the State Government of Sikkim for the continued support to SMU.

Complimenting the University, he added "It gives me great pride in saying that SMU and its constituent units have quickly adapted to the challenges posed by the pandemic through online teaching, webinars and examinations during COVID-19 lockdowns and constraints. We have successfully added digital learning platforms to our existing



methods of imparting quality education to our students." Governor Ganga Prasad, who is also the Chancellor of SMU, presided over the online function and congratulated the students, faculty, staff and management.

"Since 1995, guided by the vision to achieve global leadership in human development and excellence in education and healthcare, Sikkim Manipal University has made praiseworthy achievements in its remarkable journey of over two decades," he remarked.

Earlier, Lt Gen Dr Rajan S Grewal,



Vice-Chancellor, SMU, while presenting the highlights, of the university recounted the various momentous milestones since its inception.

He shared, "SMU is the first successful PPP model in higher education between the Government of Sikkim and the Manipal Pai Foundation". Today, we can proudly say that we have contributed significantly in the field of high quality education and specialised health care in Sikkim and the North East region of the country. 56% of our employees are locals and the gender ratio is an impressive 52%

in favour of women employees. We have made significant strides in the field of research, innovation and digitization he added.

The chief guest on the occasion, Abhay Kumar Vaish, Senior Vice-President, Head of Business Unit MS IT & ADM, Ericsson Global India, in his Convocation address, talked about the various challenges faced by students and educational institutions across the globe, calling it "unprecedented times."

He spoke about the virtues of courage, perseverance and loyalty that were essential in character building. He urged the students to give back to the society by being humble and grateful to all those who have contributed to their lives, in big or small ways.

The programme ended with vote of thanks proposed by Dr Karma S Sherpa, Registrar, SMU. The entire event was webcast for the students, alumni and public viewing through all virtual media platforms like Microsoft Team, Facebook and YouTube, which was made possible by the state of the art IT platform available at Sikkim Manipal University.

India registers 85,362 new COVID-19 infections in a day; single-day discharges surpass fresh cases

NEW DELHI, SEPT 26 (PTI): India's COVID-19 tally sprinted past 59 lakh on Saturday with 85,362 fresh cases being recorded in a day, while 93,420 people recuperated from the disease during the same period taking total recoveries to over 48 lakh, according to the Union Health Ministry data.

The data updated at 8 am on Saturday showed that

the coronavirus caseload has risen to 59,03,932 with 85,362 infections being reported in a day, while the death toll mounted to 93,379 after 1,089 people succumbed to the disease in 24 hours.

Total recoveries surged to 48,49,584, pushing the country's recovery rate to 82.14%. The COVID-19 case fatality rate was recorded at 1.58%.

There are 9,60,969 active cases in the country which comprise 16.28% of the total caseload, the data showed.

India's COVID-19 tally had crossed the 20-lakh mark on August 7, 30 lakh on August 23, 40 lakh on September 5 and it went past 50 lakh on September 16.

According to the ICMR, in total 7,02,69,975 samples have been tested up to

September 25, with 13,41,535 being tested on Friday.

The new fatalities include 416 from Maharashtra, 86 from Karnataka, 84 from Uttar Pradesh, 72 from Tamil Nadu, 68 from Punjab, 59 from West Bengal, 48 from Andhra Pradesh, 30 from Madhya Pradesh, 25 from Chhattisgarh and 24 from Delhi.

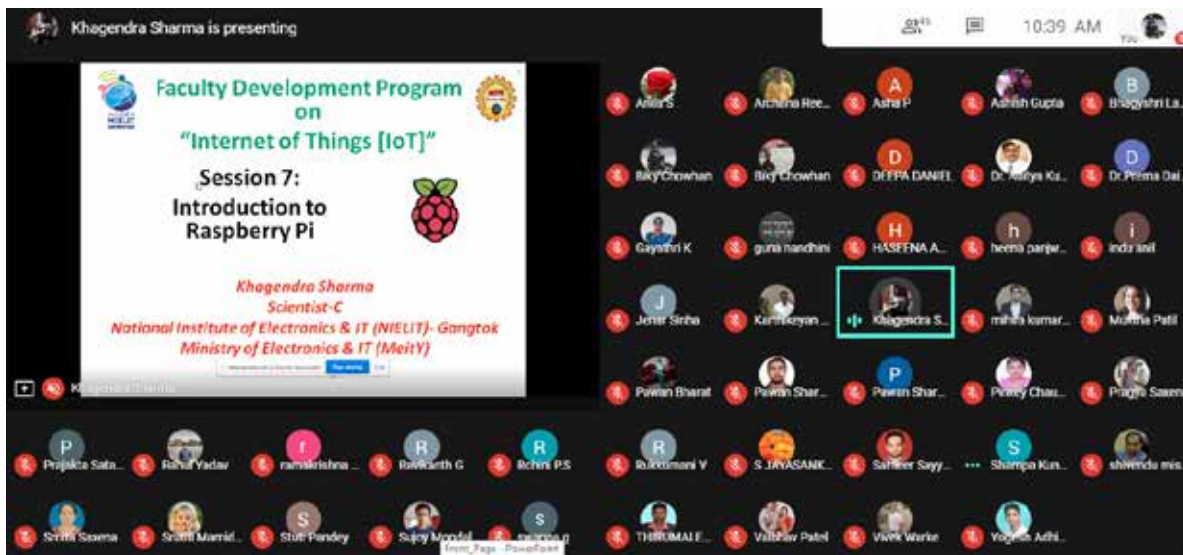
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NIELIT conducts Faculty Development Program on IoT

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 26 SEPT:

National Institute of Electronics and Information Technology (NIELIT) Gangtok has successfully completed 5 days Faculty Development Program (FDP) on Internet of Things (IoT) which is one of the emerging technologies in the modern technology landscape, a press release informs.

The program was sponsored by AICTE Training and Learning (ATAL) Academy with an objective to train Faculties, Post-Graduate students and Research scholars across the nation on emerging technologies. The Faculty Development Program on IoT imparted by NIELIT Gangtok



was inaugurated on 21 Sept, 2020 virtually by Chairman AICTE, Prof Anil D Sahasrabudhe along with 68 other online Faculty Development Programs on various other emerging technology areas which were being conducted by other reputed institutes

across the country.

Director-Incharge, Arup Chattopadhyay, NIELIT-Gangtok represented NIELIT Gangtok in the inauguration session.

A total of 161 participants from 20 states of India registered for the above Faculty Development Program

conducted by NIELIT-Gangtok, the release mentions.

The training was conducted in Online mode covering a total of 14 different sessions on different technical aspects of Internet of Things and its Applications led by Scientist, Khagendra Sharma, NIELIT-

Gangtok and his team members namely Pawan Kumar Sharma, Anugra Wangchuk Lepcha and BikyChowhan. Associate Director, HariBabu, CDAC-Bangalore was the external expert for two of the technical sessions.

Further, experts from Art of Living-Raj Sharma

Prayers held at RakdongTenzung Monastery



WANGCHUK BHUTIA
GANGTOK, 26 SEPT: RakdongTenzung MonasteryinEastSikkim performed rituals of dharma protector (MamoThrugkhang) & feast offering (Tse-Chu Tsog) for the benefit of all sentient beings today.

The puja was

performed from 24 till 26 Sept as per the advice of KyabjeDhodrupchen Rinpoche and circular issued by the Ecclesiastical Department of Government of Sikkim vide circular no.1177/GOS/106/EA/1995, dated 23/09/2020.

Home Minister to inaugurate “Destination North East-2020”

GANGTOK, 26 SEPT (PIB): Union Minister for Home Affairs, Amit Shah, who is also the chairman of the North Eastern Council will inaugurate “Destination North East-2020” tomorrow through virtual medium. Destination North East is a calendar event of the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region conceptualized with the objective of taking the North East Region to other parts of the country and bringing them closer together in order to strengthen national integration. Union Minister of State (Independent Charge), Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh will be the Guest of Honour in the event.

For Destination North East 2020, the theme is “The Emerging Delightful Destinations” which speaks of the tourism destinations emerging stronger and more attractive when the Sector picks up momentum. The programme focuses mostly on Tourism and

coincides with ‘World Tourism Day’ which falls on 27 Sept, 2020.

The four-day programme will feature Audio Visual presentation of the tourist spots of the states and the region, messages from state icons and achievers, introduction to prominent local entrepreneurs and virtual exhibition of handicraft/ traditional fashion/ & local products. There will be special messages from the state Chief Ministers and Tourism Ministers as well as cultural items of individual states and medley performances combining cultures of all the eight states.

Earlier, this week unveiling the Logo and song for festival “Destination North East-2020”, Dr Jitendra Singh said that the Festival Destination North East has been travelling across the country since last couple of years, from Varanasi in 2019 to the Lawns of India Gate in New Delhi or in Chandigarh before that and now it will be virtually reaching to your homes this year. He said, the festival is

not just about Tourism, but it's an invitation to the organisations and especially to the young entrepreneurs who would like to avail the advantage of unexplored potentials of the region.

Dr Jitendra Singh said that North-Eastern Region will be one of the favourite tourist and business destinations of India post COVID-19 and will be an important engine for Prime Minister, Narendra Modi's clarion call of Atmanirbhar Bharat by focussing on “Vocal for Local”.

He said, the event “Destination North East 2020” is also an effort to make everyone explore the Local Destinations rather than going anywhere abroad. The Minister said that people should take a pledge to Visit Local, Travel Local and Explore Local thus giving a boost to the local Tourism and Hospitality industry. Moreover, he added that by remaining Corona free mostly, North East offers a very safe and attractive tourist destination in the entire World.

The Chief guest for

the closing ceremony on 30 Sept, 2020 will be Union Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, Kiren Rijiju while Union Minister of State for Food Processing Industries, Rameshwar Teli will join as Guest of Honour.

What NE region has to offer:

Eco-tourism - North Eastern Region is ideal for both passive and adventure forms of Eco-Tourism with wildlife sanctuary/parks, good scenic beauty, waterfalls, forests, etc. The region has much to offer for the active adventure segment including river rafting among others, trekking of various grades and levels, rock climbing, hang gliding, etc.

Culture - Culture is an important aspect and has the potential to attract selective culture tourists to North Eastern Region. The diverse and rich tribal heritage and culture is what differentiates North East with the rest of India. Another major differentiator is the rich and varying Arts and Crafts across the 8 North Eastern

States. Here unlike most places, handicrafts are part of everyday life.

One significant aspect is the local community's active participation towards increasing tourist-community cultural interfaces.

Heritage - Heritage tourism has picked up considerably in the Region with a participatory approach where tourists also get to actively participate than just seeing the monuments, old tea estates etc.

Religious pilgrimage - The region has many famous and old religious spots, which have been integrated with national tourism circuits for the benefit of the pilgrims.

Business - In view of attractive natural environment and growing trends of outbound business meets, the NER also offers ample opportunities for business tourism segment. Domestic and international connectivity, High-end hotels, Convention Centres, resort based convention facilities etc. have all contributed to the expansion of this Sector.

Webinar discusses role of agriculture and allied sectors to develop Atmanirbhar farming Community

GANGTOK, 26 SEPT (PIB):

The challenges and the opportunities for the farming community was the focus of the webinar held today by the Regional Outreach Bureau, Siliguri, Ministry

of Information & Broadcasting.

This was organized in close coordination with ICAR Mohitnagar, Jalpaiguri, KVK, WBIAFS, Ramshai, Jalpaiguri and NABARD Jalpaiguri, with various NGOs Like Krish

iAragoni, DISHA, from Ratherhat and with farmer Community of Jalpaiguri & Siliguri on the theme “Role of agriculture & allied sector to develop Atmanirbhar farming community”.

Singtam hospital launches Wear Your Mask Properly campaign



SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 26 SEPT:

EC Cell in collaboration with DASH and Nursing fraternity, District Hospital Singtam [DHS] launched a campaign “Wear Your Mask Properly” at DHS today, a press release informs.

The event took place in presence of DMS(E),

Manoj Mishra, DTO(E), DNO, Addiction Medicine Specialist, SrMSO, DHEO, DPHNO, Staff Nurses, HE, ANSS, Staff DHS and general public.

The campaign was launched by playing a video message on “Wear Your Mask Properly” by DTO (E), DrShanti Mishra followed by the

Message Dissemination Round on the importance of proper use and disposal of mask by all the Doctors, Nurses and Paramedics present in order to ensure every individual to protect themselves, their families and communities by wearing and disposing the mask properly.

Paris stabbing suspect wasn't on police radar, minister says

PARIS, SEP 26 (AP): A young man stabbed two people Friday outside the former Paris offices of satirical newspaper Charlie Hebdo, where 12 people were killed in 2015, and a terrorism investigation has been opened into the new attack, authorities said.

The suspected assailant had been arrested a month ago for carrying a screwdriver but was not on police radar for Islamic radicalization, France's interior minister said. He said the screwdriver was considered a weapon, but did not explain why.

Two people were wounded in Friday's attack, and two suspects were arrested, although the links between the two suspects weren't immediately clear.

The main suspect, a young man with speckles of blood on his forehead and wearing orange gym shoes, was arrested on the steps of the Bastille Opera in eastern Paris, authorities said.

The site is not far from where Friday's attack took place, outside

the building where the weekly Charlie Hebdo was located before the 2015 attack.

The interior minister said the assailant arrived in France three years ago as an unaccompanied minor, apparently from Pakistan, but his identity was still being verified.

Manifestly it's an act of Islamist terrorism, Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin said in an interview with public broadcaster France-2. Obviously, there is little doubt. It's a new bloody attack against our country, against journalists, against this society.

France's counterterrorism prosecutor said earlier that authorities suspect a terrorist motive because of the place and timing of the stabbings: in front of the building where Charlie Hebdo was based until the Islamic extremist attack on its cartoonists, and at a time when suspects in the 2015 attack are on trial across town.

Prosecutor Jean-Francois Ricard said

that the chief suspect in Friday's stabbings was arrested, along with another person.

Ricard said the assailant did not know the people stabbed, a woman and a man working at a documentary production company who had stepped outside for a smoke break.

An investigation was opened into attempted murder in relation with a terrorist enterprise, according to the terrorism prosecutor's office.

French Prime Minister Jean Castex said the lives of the two wounded workers lives were not in danger.

He offered the government's solidarity with their families and colleagues.

The prime minister noted the symbolic site of the attack, at the very moment where the trial into the atrocious acts against Charlie Hebdo is under way.

He promised the government's unfailing attachment to freedom of the press, and its determination to fight terrorism.

People in the

neighbourhood were stunned, saying on French TV that they were reliving the nightmare of the newsroom massacre.

In a tweet, Charlie Hebdo strongly condemned the stabbings.

“This tragic episode shows us once again that fanaticism, intolerance, the origins of which will be revealed by the investigation, are still present in French society.... There is no question of ceding anything, the newspaper said.

The two people confirmed injured worked for documentary film company Premieres Lignes, according to founder Paul Moreira. He told France's BFM television that the attacker fled into the subway, and the company's staff members were evacuated.

Moreira said a man in the street attacked two people who were in front of the building, didn't enter the building, and who attacked them with an axe and who left. He said the company had not received any threats.

His colleague, Luc

Hermann, describing witnesses' version of the attack, said the assailant first struck the woman in her face, then the man, before returning to attack the woman again.

The whole team ... took refuge on the roof of the building like our team did five years ago during the attack of Charlie Hebdo, he said on France-2.

He said it was incomprehensible that authorities had not taken special security precautions particularly at this time.

A wrenching, two-month trial in the Charlie Hebdo attacks is currently unfolding at the main Paris courthouse.

Murmurs broke at the terrorism trial of 14 people, including 3 fugitives, accused of helping the attackers in the January 2015 killings, as the news filtered through.

The widows of the two brothers who forced their way into the newspaper's offices and opened fire at a morning editorial meeting testified Friday.

Summit Times in Nepali



<https://www.facebook.com/SummitTimesSikkim/>

Watch our Nepali broadcast every evening on Facebook at Summit Times Daily Page, Please like, Share, Comment and let us know we can improve.

Thank You!



BUILDING FOR SALE

A two storey house building constructed on plot area 50×40 ft. Situated at Upper Phong near Phong SS , South Sikkim is on sale. Cost Rs 56 Lakhs (Negotiable). Interested may contact: 8145829309, 7864937800, 9749897695.

Succession in Sikkim: The Dilemma

PRAMIT CHHETRI

Succession assumes a great significance for all of us, for every property our ancestors owns it passes on throughout the generations through the Succession law and in India it varies from one faith to another, Hindus, Buddhist, Sikh & Jains are governed by the Hindu Succession laws whereas Christians and Muslims have their respective personal laws. In recent times the beneficial legislation like Hindu Succession Act has taken a dramatic turn by giving equal shares to the women in the ancestral property and further it was sharpened by the Supreme Court and brought much clarity with respect to the devolution of equal shares in the property of women.

It's a catch-22 situation so far the application of Succession law granting equal rights at par with male descendant to Sikkimese women are concerned because neither Hindu Succession laws are extended nor the Indian Succession Act, 1925 is formally enforced it is just that the principles of Indian Succession law are being followed by the various decision of the High Court.

Another irony within the Indian Succession Act, 1925 so far Succession is concerned is that the Part-V of the Act which deals with Intestate Succession excludes its application to the Hindus, so therefore even if a principle of the Act is followed then the Intestate Succession will not be applicable to Sikkimese Hindus.

In absence of any legislative pronouncement in the State in one hand and on the other hand when the central legislation is not extended, there is a widespread cause of concern and confusion so far partition of the family properties and its equal inheritance is concerned.

Pan India demand for equal succession rights to women started prior to the central amendment of 2005, in view of Marriages and divorces falling under the preview of the concurrent list in the Seventh Schedule of the Indian Constitution several States like Karnataka, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu started bringing an amendment in Hindu Succession Act mid since 1980's granting equal shares to women in Mitakshara Property of their ancestors.

SIKKIM'S SUCCESSION LAW IN DIRE STRAITS

In the year 1962, the then Chogyal had issued a proclamation under Married Women's Property Regulation in order to provide succession rights to Sikkimese women married to non-Sikkim subjects to acquire, hold and dispose of immovable property in Sikkim and to, provide for rules of succession to property. Though this Regulation was the first of its kind to provide Succession rights to hold property but sadly it didn't accord devolution of property rights to Sikkimese women married within the State subjects. Furthermore, the validity of this Regulation came under scrutiny in 1991 in the case of Padma Kumari Ganesan, when the district authorities refused to register a gift deed executed by her in favor of her two sons. The Sikkim High Court in this Judgment had directed the district authorities to reconsider the plea of registration of gift deed afresh without relying on the 1962 Regulation Promulgated by the Chogyal because it was found to be non-existent as it was not notified.

Further in the year 2008, the then social Justice Minister tabled the "Sikkim Succession Bill". This Bill which was introduced in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly had the provision for the devolution of property to the entire lineal descendant in case of intestate property and to the surviving member of the family including the unmarried women of Sikkim as per their entitlement. Over again the validity of this Act came under Judicial Scrutiny on the touchstone that this Act forbids the right of Sikkimese Women married to non-Sikkimese to get shares or to hold property, further this Act was challenged before the High Court on the ground that it violates the basic tenants of Equality clause enshrined in the Constitution. The perplexity was finally put to end to our further astonishment when we found through High Court Judgment in the year 2017 in Basanti Rai's case pursued by the Daughter of Sikkim group that such an important Succession law was never enforced and it was just a piece of paper so therefore the High Court never had the occasion to deal the matter/issue in merits or in detail.

Thereafter pursuant to Basanti Rai's case, the Land Revenue Department in

a willy-nilly way issued a notification in June 2018 thereby conferring an ownership right to Sikkimese women married to non-Sikkimese even after her marriage. But the land registered in her name shall not be further transferred to her offspring. Though the realm of this decision making power is vested with the concerned authority but such an important announcement that determines the rights of an individual could have been passed by a majority vote in the state legislature in a comprehensive way.

ViewPoint

Therefore I ask a question to myself on how our legislature can enact a Succession law that will be in the larger interest of the Sikkimese and keeping in mind the intent of our forefathers who believed that "Sikkim is for Sikkimese". And on the other hand, how do we also keep in mind the basic tenants of the Equality Clause enshrined in Article 14-18 by also safeguarding the interest of the Sikkimese women married to non-Sikkim, in which majority of us fear that Sikkimese women after being married to non-Sikkimese would drive away immovable properties in the hands of non-Sikkimese population and will be in contrary to the old laws of Sikkim that have especially being guaranteed by the Special enactment under Article 371 (F) of the Indian constitution.

EQUAL INHERITANCE RIGHTS OF WOMEN UNDER HINDU SUCCESSION ACT

The Hindu Succession Act which went into unprecedented changes has not been extended in the State of Sikkim, but has got much relevance after its amendment that granted equal property rights to women and placing them as coparceners and further treating them at par with the male counterpart is concerned. Since its major amendment in the year 2005 the Hindu Succession so far coparcenary rights are concerned took a fascinating twist and turn. Finally, the law is now well-settled in a recent judgment in Vineeta Sharma's case wherein the Supreme court has held that the daughter will have a share in their father property after the Hindu Succession (Amendment), Act irrespective of whether her father was alive or not at the time of

Hindu Succession (Amendment) in the year 2005.

Soon after the verdict was announced in Vineeta's case on 11th August, netizens in Sikkim took into various social media account and expressed immense happiness and on the other hand, few others were also anguished for the reason that the state is yet to put relevant law in practice.

The Hindu Succession law as it stands today is a long-fought battle with various conflicting judgment from the apex court itself. Section 6 of the Hindu Succession Act which granted inheritance right stood into a different footing prior to the 2005 amendment, as it granted inheritance right only to sons, grandsons and great-grandsons. Only males descendants upto 4th generation were regarded as coparceners and only the male descendants had the right to demand partition, but as mentioned 2005 amendment to the said section brought sweeping changes in which since then daughters were also regarded as coparceners which conferred the same right in the coparcenary property as she would have had, if she had been a son.

But soon thereafter bigger question of law emerged with regard to the interpretation of the amended provision of section 6 of the Hindu Succession Act. The Supreme Court in the year 2015 in the case of Prakash vs. Phulavati held that property right would be given only if both the daughter and father is alive at the time of amendment of the Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act, 2005 and held that the amended law is prospective in nature. Again another judgment though conflicting with Phulavati's case but in the right direction was passed in Danamma Vs. Amar wherein the Supreme court held that even if the father died in the year 2001 i.e. prior to the amendment then the daughters would be eligible for the partition and further daughter's right of shares will be crystallized even if they were born prior to the enactment of the Hindu Succession Act, 1956.

HINDU SUCCESSION ACT & THE PROTECTIVE OLD LAWS OF SIKKIM

Why is it that such an important beneficial legislation is not extended in the state of Sikkim is

an intriguing question that requires much deliberation. But on the other hand, it is also not surprising for us to see many legislation that Sikkimese are deprived of because of non-enforcement and due to various contradictions with the old laws of Sikkim. What happened in Sikkim during the pre-merger era was, due to the Indian Influence we borrowed many principles from various legislation to fill the lacunae created by the existing situation then. When the laws in Sikkim were almost scanty in the Independent kingdom of Sikkim, the administration freely borrowed various legislation that was not covered by the Sikkimese laws, but on the other hand, it is also a matter of fact if any Indian laws were found to be contrary with the old laws of Sikkim it was never considered for implementation.

Similarly, at this point of time when Sikkim does not have any Succession law of its own, it has now become incumbent upon the legislature to either legislate the new law that comprehensively deals with the law of Partition & Succession and shall equally consider that Sikkimese women married to non-Sikkimese get their due keeping in mind the principle of old laws that has been constitutionally guaranteed and also by borrowing the liberal principles from the central law or on the other hand the legislature can either extend the existing Hindu Succession law in letter and spirit.

Laws, particularly that deals with Partition, succession, marriages and divorce positively flow from the morality and culture of one's society, place and region and therefore it should always be based on the principle of natural justice and morality and further, it should always be accepted by the general consensus of the people living in a society at a particular point of time. Any law that acts as a fire will surely ignite destruction to the social fabric but a law that emerged within the realm of morality and existing practices that safeguards the general consensus formed in the pre-merger times should always be respected and any new law that is based within the framework of old laws should be upheld.

[The writer is an Advocate who hails from Malbassey, Budang, West Sikkim and is practicing in the Supreme Court of India]

Governor's greetings on World Tourism Day

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 26 SEPT:

Governor of Sikkim, Ganga Prasad has extended his warm greetings to the people of the state, particularly to those entrepreneurs who

are in tourism industry on the occasion of World Tourism Day, as per a Raj Bhavan press release.

In his message to the people today, the Governor said that tourism plays an

important role in the State economy and Indian economy at large. Tourism industry as it is one of the most influential sectors which generates employment opportunities, provides

employment and facilitates in cultural exchange. It also contributes immensely to the overall growth and sustainability of places and destinations and local communities.

"Sikkim is a haven for tourists with great locations, amazing flora & fauna and rich hospitality.

Himalayan state is blessed with rich cultural and geographical diversity making it one of the most popular tourist destinations among domestic and foreign visitors. Sikkim

offers diverse forms of tourism, including cultural, rural, religious, historical, nature, wildlife, water sports, mountaineering, hiking, adventure and eco-tourism. I am confident that Sikkim would be the most favoured tourist destination in the country in near future.

On this Tourism Day let's cultivate and create awareness among the society globally on the significance of tourism, and it's social, political, financial and also cultural worth and value", the Governor said.

Bengal reports 56 more COVID deaths, 3,181 fresh cases

KOLKATA, SEP 26 (PTI): The COVID-19 death toll in West Bengal on Saturday went up to 4,721 with 56 more people succumbing to the disease, the state health department said in a bulletin.

The tally increased to 2,44,240 after 3,181 people tested positive for the infection.

In the last 24 hours, 2,955 patients recovered from coronavirus taking the states discharge rate to 87.61 per cent, the bulletin said.

The number of active patients is now 25,544.

Altogether 43,285 samples were tested for COVID-19 in the state since Friday.

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Binu Singh Ghatani passes away



SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 26 SEPT:

Renowned singer from Mumbai, Binu Singh Ghatani, breathed his last breath on 23 Sept. As per the family, Binu Singh Ghatani suffered a heart attack. Born on 29 Mar, 1985, Binu has come out with more than six Nepali albums, with some of his songs also performed by Kumar Sanu.



What is Novel Coronavirus - nCoV?

The Novel Coronavirus (nCoV) is new strain of Coronavirus that originated in Wuhan, China. Notorious for mutating quickly and acquiring new qualities, it is a rising epidemic that was previously not identified in humans.

Symptoms of nCoV

- Fever
- Difficulty in breathing
- Dry Cough
- Severe acute respiratory syndrome
- Pneumonia - like symptoms

Precautions to Prevent nCoV

- Wash your hands often with soap.
- Use an alcohol based hand sanitizer
- Observe good personal hygiene.
- Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands.
- Avoid contact with people with possible symptoms.
- Avoid contact with animals and consumption of undercooked meats.
- Avoid travel to nCoV affected places.
- Wear a mask if you have respiratory syndrome. and cover your mouth while coughing or sneezing.

Treatment

- Treatment is symptomatic and supportive, based on the patient's clinical condition
- No vaccinations available as of now.
- Visit Doctor in case symptoms detected

If you seek help, you may call :

- Toll free no. 104

District surveillance Officer

EAST : 7029372100



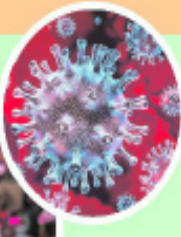
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It's Everyone's Responsibility

The minors need to kept safe and allowed their childhood

It is not easy to grow inured to issues that demand our involvement. We ease into such somnolence after years of consciously looking the other way until we reach a stage where most people prefer to remain silent spectators even when they are witness to obvious maltreatment. We deflect guilt by pretending sympathy at discussions around the dinner table and convincing ourselves that it is not 'proper' to get involved in what transpires beyond our private spaces. Soon, with this distancing sets in indifference, and with that everything that a society stands for starts falling apart. The collapse is already happening all around us and this is because the society is not striving to make things better for the underprivileged and the marginalised. It is in societal impassivity as this that the government has to step in and make specific laws protecting the ignored, marginalized, underprivileged and even children; sections for whom the society should be looking out, but does not. Had the society remained involved, these sections would not have suffered so much that legislations had to be brought in to ensure humanity.

And with that setting up, we segue again into a problem that refuses to get contained. And no, "catching" the culprit, although necessary, is not the same as keeping the children safe. One of the most difficult demands of putting together a newspaper is filing reports about abuse against minors. Apart from the disturbing chore of piecing together details to highlight the level of depravity that made a victim out of a child who has not even begun understanding the life around her/ him, there is the fear of over-sensationalizing the incident in a way that might force the incident and the reaction to it on a tangent that is not necessarily what the situation demands. There is also the worry of underplaying it so much that it trivializes the issue. But that is an uncertainty that challenges journalists; what is that befuddles the society at large so completely that it remains insensate to the trauma of the young victims? It is one of those moments in the process of putting out a newspaper when we regret being the bearers of news [since we have to confront all the gory details] and not receivers [readers do have the benefit of not reading beyond the headline and a sanitized retelling of the incident]. What is even more disturbing is to realize that we continue to fail in keeping our children safe. And make no mistake, this is a societal failing, not a failure of the law and order machinery.

Crimes against minors continue to occur [a few get reported, many get swept under the carpet and too many remain secrets with victims and traumatize them throughout their lives] because Sikkim, as a society, blindsides its children. Secure years while growing up are the least that can be guaranteed to the young, and despite its small size, the society here continues to come up wanting in this regard. The solution is not in lynch mobs to punish the accused, nor even in over-protective cushions created by paranoia. As a society we need to start realizing that children here are in harm's way, as parents and hopefully because we are also responsible citizens, we need to educate the young and ourselves on the ways and means that the young can be kept safe. Child abuse is no longer rare in Sikkim and minors suffer sexual abuse in numbers which are distressing. Still more are denied their basic rights and continue to work as domestic servants in homes across the state, invariably working in conditions which are deplorable.

As per the 2011 Census, there were 64,111 children aged 0-6 in Sikkim. This is also the most vulnerable age-group when it comes to abuse. Given that Sikkim has a population of 6.11 lakh, this means that there are more than 9 people above the age of six to look out for the minors. Pedophiles form a tiny, very tiny, sliver of this remaining population. And no, it is not being suggested that we form nine abreast wall of bodyguards around the children, but ensure that these nine are adequately informed about warning signs and wrong behavior and are effectively reassured that when they spy a predator, he will be taken one and taken away.

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Pregnancy during a pandemic: The stress of COVID-19 on pregnant women and new mothers is showing

JENNIFER C. ABLOW & ELINOR SULLIVAN

THECONVERSATION.COM

Pregnancy is stressful, to say the least, but COVID-19 brings new challenges to parents of newborns. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has identified pregnant women as a vulnerable population. If infected, they are more likely to be hospitalized and require ventilation and their risk of preterm birth goes up.

Economists predict that the U.S. may have at least 500,000 fewer births because of the pandemic. Deciding not to become pregnant during a pandemic is understandable, particularly in the U.S., as it is one of five countries worldwide and the only country classified as high-income by the World Bank, that does not mandate paid maternity leave for non-federally employed workers.

As scholars who study prenatal and postnatal stress, maternal nutrition and the brain development of children, we can tell you the pandemic has dramatically changed the pregnancy experience.

We are part of an international study to understand how women who are expecting to or have given birth are affected by stress related to the pandemic. We are finding that mothers are worried about catching the virus, transmitting it to their newborn and keeping their child safe during infancy. And this stress is on top of an already high stress load for pregnant women and new mothers.

THE RISKS

COVID-19-positive pregnancies have been linked to abnormalities in the placenta. Those abnormalities potentially impact oxygen and nutrient delivery to the fetus. The long-term influence of the virus on the developing child is not yet known.

It seems unlikely, however, that a developing fetus can get COVID-19 from its infected mother. COVID-19 needs a receptor molecule to cause infection. A recent study suggests the placenta contains very low levels of the molecules needed to create the receptor. This finding may explain why the virus is rarely found in newborns with COVID-19-positive mothers.



There are other concerns, however, including the effects of stress on the mother-to-be.

Humans are confronted with stress on a daily basis. The physiological response to stress is well known. It leads to the release of hormones into the bloodstream, most notably cortisol. Even in pregnancy, some stress is necessary. During a typical pregnancy, maternal cortisol increases by two to four times. This is normal and critical to the development of organ systems in the fetus, like the lungs, liver and central nervous system.

However, people respond differently to identical stressful situations for a host of reasons. Young age, racial and ethnic disparities, poor education, poor preparation for pregnancy and a history of trauma are a few factors that can exacerbate the effects of stress. To make stress tolerable, adequate social support, access to supportive resources and economic stability are necessary.

Otherwise, continuous exposure to significant stress leads to unrelenting activation of the stress response. Chronic stress, or toxic stress, in pregnant women has been linked to complications like gestational diabetes, impaired fetal development, low birth weight, neurodevelopmental problems and preclampsia (high blood pressure).

A lack of control and information makes stress worse. Things such as not knowing how long the stress will last and how intense the stress will be add to a pregnant woman's and new mother's stress levels.

THE BIRTH ITSELF

The hospital experience for pregnant couples is now very different. Water baths are out. So is walking around the hospital. Most facilities allow only one support person present at the birth. If either parent tests positive for COVID-19 during hospital admission, they fear separation from the baby. These things often add even more stress.

When the family comes home, there is still risk. Infants could catch the disease from an infected parent. While children with COVID-19 generally don't get as sick as adults, infants are an exception. Because of their immature respiratory and immune systems, they are at increased risk of severe illness compared to older children.

Faced with this possibility, parents of infants are advised to socially isolate. This may offer some advantages, but isolation also decreases access to childcare and other kinds of social support right at the time they need it the most.

THE COPE STUDY

As part of the COVID-19 and Perinatal Experience study, we are following women who are expecting to or have given birth during the pandemic to understand how they are affected by stress related to the pandemic. An initial review of data from over 500 Oregon women reveals they are significantly stressed; their levels of reported depression and anxiety are disturbing.

Approximately 75% say the pandemic is having an extreme impact on their daily life. The

stress, they tell us, is from social isolation, loneliness, changes in hospital procedures, concerns about postnatal care and a lack of social support because they need to quarantine.

The good news: prenatal stress during the pandemic can be reduced. A robust social support network is critical; friends and family are needed as new parents become exhausted and vulnerable to postpartum depression. Although COVID-19 makes in-person support difficult, if not impossible, technology – like Facetime and Zoom – can be a connector. Online group prenatal care is another possibility. So are relaxation and mindfulness techniques. A healthy diet, adequate sleep and exercise also help.

WHY THESE WOMEN NEED MORE HELP THAN EVER

Community health workers with pregnant clients can reduce stress by making sure basic needs are met. No longer is that only food, housing and insurance. Needs once considered extras, like internet service, are now essential.

Unfortunately – and leaving the internet aside – federal programs to help access food, housing, and insurance vary widely from one state to another. Without a unified federal mandate, social health disparities grow even more.

The Family and Medical Leave Act offers 12 weeks of job-protected leave. But it's unpaid and it applies only if you work at a company with more than 50 employees. Many families, and especially single mothers, decline this offer. They need the income. Parental leave is linked to healthier babies; they have better long-term outcomes as they develop. An investment in parental leave would, in the long run, save money.

Restructuring national policies to meet basic needs can help reduce the challenges faced by this underserved group. Without that support, the stress from COVID-19 could leave a long-lasting, multi-generational impact on pregnant couples and their children.

[Jennifer C. Ablow is Associate Professor of Psychology, University of Oregon; Elinor Sullivan is Associate Professor of Psychiatry, Oregon Health & Science University]

Playing football can improve mental health – new research

MARK LLEWELLYN, ALECIA COUSINS & PHILIP TYSON

THECONVERSATION.COM

Playing football is a good way to get physically fit. But our new study shows that a regular kick about can also lead to improved mental health, social confidence and a sense of purpose.

As we explored the impact of the beautiful game on people with mental health challenges, many of the players we spoke to said their weekly games improved stress and anxiety levels. One commented:

I think when you have the adrenalin pumping it kind of flushes out any kind of negative emotions and stuff you have, almost like you kind of sweat it out.

Another said they went home after a game feeling "much more relaxed", adding: "It would be great to do it every day."

Other benefits included social connections, which some of the players we spoke to had previously struggled with. It appeared that football was instrumental in providing a common interest for players and coaches, and a subsequent bond. One player said: "You talk about what has happened on the field. That is what the ice breaker is. I think that is where people gain their confidence then to talk to new people."

Another powerful element was the way in which becoming part of a team, sharing a pitch and a spirit helped to normalise their feelings and allowed them to build connections to each other as individuals and as members of a team.

The players we spoke to were mainly young men, for whom mental health problems are a particular issue. Suicide, for example, has been the leading cause of death for men aged under 34 in the UK since 2001.

For our study, participants attended weekly 90-120 minute football sessions, held by four professional and semi-professional clubs working with a mental health anti-stigma programme.

Key to its success was the enthusiasm and commitment of the coaches, who were able to



create a positive, inclusive environment for the players. For example, the programme was initially designed to be "non-competitive" but this changed after the coaches recognised it might not attract players, with one noting that "people with mental health issues are no different... I wouldn't get out of bed to play non-competitive football".

The participants recognised and appreciated the coaches' dedication, which acted as a motivating factor for many of them to commit to the programme, with one commenting that "they are here putting all their spare time for all us to enjoy. They do a massive job, and we have a lot of respect for them."

TREATMENT ON THE PITCH

The mental health benefits described by the players in our study support previous research in this area. One recent review demonstrated that physical activity improved depressive symptoms, with results comparable to the use of pharmaceuticals. It also showed improvements in cardio

fitness and quality of life for those with major depressive disorder and schizophrenia. Exercise-based interventions have widely been found to be as effective as psychotherapy for some people suffering from mental health difficulties.

Future initiatives should strive to develop a more structured communication between mental health service providers and potential participants. Crucially, they should also reach out to established clubs which have the facilities and personnel to help.

Our results add strength to arguments that sports-based programmes should be widely established as low cost, easily accessible and effective mechanisms for improving mental health in our communities.

After all, the prevalence of mental health difficulties has become a major concern for public health, with approximately one-quarter of the adult population currently experiencing mental health difficulties in some form. At the moment, such difficulties, which include anxiety and depression, are most commonly treated using pharmacological or psychological interventions. Yet serious consideration should be given by policy makers to exercise-based programmes, which continue to prove themselves as effective alternatives.

[Mark Llewellyn is Professor of Health and Care Policy, University of South Wales; Alecia Cousins is PhD Candidate in Psychology, Swansea University; Philip Tyson is Senior Lecturer in Psychology, University of South Wales]

ATK Mohun Bagan sign Indian defender Jhingan

KOLKATA, SEP 26 (PTI): Defending Indian Super League champions ATK Mohun Bagan on Saturday announced the signing of high-profile defender Sandesh Jhingan.

The 27-year-old Arjuna awardee is said to be the highest-valued footballer in India but the club did not reveal the signing amount.

“I am delighted to have joined ATKMB. I had a detailed chat with the coach and the owners and I admire their vision and I am very happy that they felt that I could be a part of the family,” Jhingan said in a press release, issued by the club.

The former Kerala Blasters defender was keen to ply his trade in Europe, preferably



Portugal but because of the pandemic he changed his plans and joined the club, will compete in the AFC Cup 2021.

Jhingan will form a troika with his India teammate Pritam Kotal and Spaniard recruit Tiri and he will have a chance to prove his mettle at International level.

There is also promising Indian youngster Sumith Rathi in chief coach Antonio Habas'arsenal.

“I have a lot of friends already there in the team and I am looking forward to join them and start working together,” Jhingan said.

Jhingan missed the

entire 2019-20 season due to an injury and it remains to be seen how he lives up to the expectations of the frantic Mariners fans, especially after their merger with ATK this season.

“And also, I want to say to all the loyal fans of ATKMB that

together we will become not the only the greatest team in India but in Asia as well. For Glory ‘Joy ATK Mohun Bagan,’” he added.

Jhingan will join the squad in Goa where they are currently quarantining after arriving this morning ahead of the ISL, slated to begin in November third week.

Head coach Habas was excited to get Jhingan in the side.

“Sandesh brings a new energy into the team. He is an adept player and adds immense value to our overall strategy,” Habas said.

The former Kerala Blasters player won the AIFF Emerging Player of the Year award in 2014 and debuted for the national team in 2015.

Bengal logs 59 more COVID deaths, 3,190 new cases

KOLKATA, SEP 25 (PTI):

The COVID-19 death toll in West Bengal rose to 4,665 on Friday after 59 more people succumbed to the disease, a bulletin issued by the state health department said.

The tally went up to 2,41,059 after 3,190 people tested positive for the contagion.

The bulletin also said that 2,978 patients recovered from coronavirus since Thursday, taking the discharge rate to 87.54 per cent.

Altogether 2,11,020 people have been cured of the disease in the state till date, it said.

The state now has 25,374 active cases. In the last 24 hours,

43,815 samples have been tested for COVID-19, taking the total number of such tests in the state to 30,11,754.

Of the 59 fresh fatalities, North 24 Parganas accounted for 19 deaths, followed by Kolkata (six), Hooghly (five) and South 24 Parganas and Howrah (four each), the bulletin said.

The remaining casualties were registered in several other districts.

Out of the 59 deaths, 46 were due to the comorbidities where COVID-19 was incidental.

The 3,190 new positive cases included 692 from Kolkata,

685 from North 24 Parganas and 257 from South 24 Parganas district.

Meanwhile, state Transport Minister Suwendu Adhikari tested positive for the infection and he has isolated himself at a guest house in Nandigram, his constituency in Purba Medinipur district, a health official said.

The minister's mother also contracted the disease and she was admitted to a Kolkata hospital, the official said.

Ministers Sujit Bose, Jyotipriyo Mullick and Swapan Debnath had earlier tested positive for the infection and have recovered.

49 new COVID-19 cases in Mizoram; tally rises to 1,835

AIZAWL, SEP 26 (PTI): At least 49 people, including 42 security personnel, have tested positive for coronavirus in Mizoram, taking the state's COVID-19 caseload to 1,835, an official said on Saturday.

Of the 42 security personnel, 27 are Assam Rifles personnel posted in Aizawl and 15 Border Security Force (BSF) jawans stationed in

Aizawl and Serchhip districts, the official said.

Five state residents and two outsiders - a worker of Border Road Organisation (BRO) and manual worker or master- craftsmen working under Assam Rifles in Aizawl, have also tested positive for the virus, he said.

Thirty-eight new cases were reported from Aizawl district,

eight from Serchhip district, two from Lawngtlai district and one case was reported from Lunglei district in the southern part of the state.

All the patients are asymptomatic, he said. Mizoram now has 546 active COVID-19 cases, while 1,289 people have recovered from the virus, according to the state

health department.

The COVID-19 recovery rate in the state on Friday was 70.27 per cent, it said.

Mizoram has not reported any COVID-19 fatality so far.

A total of 70,483 samples have been tested till Friday evening, of which 2.61 per cent tested positive for COVID-19, it added.

COVID-19: Ladakh records 56 new cases, two more deaths

LEH, SEP 26 (PTI): Ladakh has registered 56 new coronavirus cases and two more fatalities, taking the infection tally to 4,025 and death toll to 56 in the Union Territory, officials said on Saturday.

Seventy-eight more patients were

discharged after successful treatment, bringing down the number of active cases in the region to 998, the officials said, quoting a media bulletin released by the directorate of health services, Ladakh.

The two new COVID-related fatalities were

reported from Kargil, raising the death toll in the district to 33.

The rest of 23 patients died in Leh district since the outbreak of the disease in March.

Out of total active cases, 601 are in Leh district and 397 in

Kargil district, the officials said, adding that so far, 2971 patients have recovered from the infection in the Union Territory.

Fifty-six more people tested positive for coronavirus. These included 48 in Leh and eight in Kargil.

Tripura's COVID-19 tally rises to 24,408

AGARTALA, SEP 26 (PTI): At least 278 more people tested positive for COVID-19 in Tripura on Saturday, pushing the coronavirus tally in the state to 24,408, a health department official said.

The death toll rose to 265 with three more people succumbing to the infection, he said.

West Tripura district, of which state capital Agartala is a part, has accounted for 146 of the 265 COVID-19 deaths, the official said

Tripura currently has 6,151 active coronavirus cases, while 17,969 people have recovered from the disease.

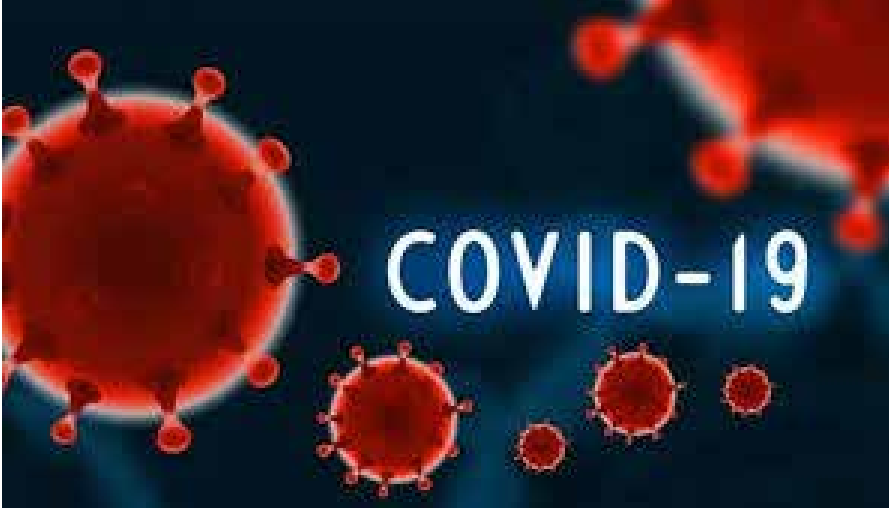
Australia win first cricket match Down Under in six months

SYDNEY, 26 SEPT (REUTERS): Cricket Australia's world champion women's team saw off New Zealand on Saturday in the first international cricket game to be played in either country since March.

Australia won their first Twenty20 international in almost seven months by 17 runs at Allan Border Field in Brisbane.

Ashleigh Gardner anchored Australia's innings of 138-6 with a superb 61 from 41 balls on the two-paced pitch that proved hard to score from before Megan Schutt took 4-23 to restrict New Zealand to 121-7.

The match represented a significant moment for cricket in Australasia in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Twenty-three patients have migrated to other states, the official said.

At least 502 patients were discharged from G B

Pant hospital, the main referral hospital for the COVID19 patients in the state on Friday as they have recovered

from the disease.

As many as 3,78,123 samples have been tested for COVID-19 in the state so far, he added.



Both teams have been in isolation for at least the last two weeks in biosecure hubs, with all other international teams likely to follow suit over the southern hemisphere summer.

New Zealand Cricket have said they spoke extensively with CA over their biosecurity measures, with their own plans for their international programme being approved by the New Zealand government

on Friday.

CA, however, have not confirmed the rest of their fixtures for their international programme, which includes a men's four-test series against India. They postponed a one-off test with Afghanistan and a men's one-day series with New Zealand on Friday.

The delay in finalising the schedule has provoked a bitter public dispute with Channel Seven.

The broadcaster has threatened to tear

up its 2018 contract, complaining that coronavirus restrictions on travel will dilute the competitiveness of games, especially in the Twenty20 Big Bash League.

Seven and pay television company Foxtel agreed a six-year broadcasting rights agreement worth A\$1.2 billion (\$880 million) with CA in 2018. Seven's share of the agreement was worth about A\$450m.



Imphal West district reported the highest number of fresh cases at 127, followed by 13 from Imphal East, 12

each from Thoubal and Kakching and 11 from Churachandpur, the official said.

Fifty-eight Central

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The Dele-José story is far from over but the fear is Alli may have peaked at 21

BARNEY RONAY

LONDON, 26 SEPT [THEGUARDIAN]: Last year Sport England announced it would be spending £85m on The Talent Plan For England. The idea behind the Talent Plan is to create “the world’s best talent plan” – a shoot-for-the-moon ambition that becomes more achievable if you accept the rather pedantic objection that a Talent Plan is something you’ve just made up, and thus, technically, nobody else in the world has one anyway.

What is certain is that the Talent Plan has a lot to say about talent, so much that its 35-page outline mentions it 258 times in total. This is the big takeaway from the Talent Plan: talent is definitely very important. To be clear, nobody here is suggesting we don’t care about talent. It is a doubly interesting read given one unarguable truth about talent is that nobody seems to know exactly how it works. It has even become fashionable in coaching circles to say talent is overrated, that it is a kind of chimera.

Talent deceives you. Talent introduces notions of aesthetics, grace, intangible possibilities. Mike Atherton has noted that he spent his England career hearing how baffling it was that “more talented players” had failed repeatedly while he, Atherton, somehow grubbed his way to more than 7,000 Test runs – none of which were evidence of talent, which generally looks a little more dreamy and free flowing old chap.

So you leaf on though the Talent Plan hoping for clues, through Talent Research and Talent Insight, through the role of the coach-developer within the context of the talent pathway, through



positive talent development experience for all stakeholders, until finally the Talent Plan asks the big one: “What is talent?” Breathlessly, you scan down looking for the payoff. “Athletes deemed as talented will be determined by an interaction between individual, environmental and task constraints,” the plan insists, choking a little, sweat breaking out on its brow. Finally it starts to shout, “TALENT CAN BE THOUGHT OF AS A MULTIDIMENSIONAL PACKAGE OF CHARACTERISTICS AND ABILITIES”.

At which point it becomes necessary to hurl your laptop across the room, adopt a José Mourinho scowl and think about Dele Alli for a bit, a footballer who really does have something to tell us about talent, expectation and the limits of both.

It has been another intriguing week in Dele’s career: On Thursday he started against Shkendija and did OK for an hour. The high point was a run from the centre

circle that had him gliding magisterially through his own jet stream before shooting against a defender. The worst moment came as Shkendija took a goal-kick and Mourinho could be heard shouting “Dele. Attention Dele. Fucking hell”, urging a player who has been capped 32 times by England to remember the basic details of a pressing drill.

How did we get here, to a place where Dele’s career to date looks like an investigation into the idea of what talent actually is and how you make it work? There are those who will tell us he has simply found his level, that the media built him up unduly in his first two seasons at Spurs.

In reality Dele built himself up, winning the PFA young player gong two years in a row, and reaching a kind of peak three years ago in the 3-1 defeat of Real Madrid at Wembley. He scored twice that night, strode through a series of great, yawning holes in the Real defence and looked the most thrillingly razor-edged presence on the pitch.

Eden Hazard just before the bad times (“Everyone knows he is a talented player”).

With Mourinho talent is a kind of codeword for inflated value and slack to be trimmed. It is also what makes Dele-José such a fascinating interaction and one that may not be done just yet.

At this point it is necessary to have some sympathy here for José the dream-stomper, who is, lest we forget, the manager of a team not a one-to-one coach.

For all his seductive moments, Alli is also a very needy talented player, for whom clear strengths are combined with clear weaknesses, and where the ability to score and assist effectively rests on being slotted into the most precisely accommodating team patterns.

He needs to be central. He needs to play as a No 10 but a running not a passing No 10. He needs a striker ahead of him. He needs players who can carry the ball to make space for his runs.

Some talent is more brittle and less adaptable than other talent. Perhaps it is simply a lesser talent as a result. Son Heung-min, incidentally, can also make those runs, and he’s pretty good at taking orders. It isn’t over for Alli by any means but time is passing and the list of those who have regained a stellar trajectory after years of drift is quite small.

For now he seems a hostage to the deceptive ease of his finest moments and to the overly linear notion that athletes always improve when in fact so many hit an early peak. And above all to the one thing we do know about this most thrillingly mysterious commodity, that nobody ever really has a plan.

Click. That’s one in the chamber. See also: Juan Mata at Chelsea (“everything is clear between us. He’s a talented player”); Anthony Martial (“He’s a talented player, everybody knows that”); and

Players must keep taking a knee to highlight BLM, says ex-QPR defender Onuoha

LONDON, 26 SEPT (REUTERS): Players kneeling before games in support of the Black Lives Matter movement will ensure that it remains a topic of conversation and help bring about change, said former Queens Park Rangers (QPR) defender Nedum Onuoha.

Former England striker Les Ferdinand said last week that taking a knee had become nothing short of a PR stunt and that the real message was being diluted.

Ferdinand, who is Black, is director of football at QPR. The club was criticised after neither they nor Coventry City knelt before their second-tier Championship match last week.

But Nigerian-born Onuoha told the BBC on Friday, “Les is perfectly entitled to his opinion, but even if 50% of people that kneel don’t believe in it, they’re still kneeling, and as a consequence it can still be a topic of

conversation.”

“Even if it’s diluted, it’s still a message in itself,” said Onuoha, who plays for Major League Soccer side Real Salt Lake.

The Black Lives Matter cause was taken up by clubs in England’s Premier League when the 2019-20 season resumed after the COVID-19 hiatus.

Clubs wore Black Lives Matter logos on their shirts, but that has now been replaced by “No Room for Racism”.

“This message of saying that Black Lives Matter and trying to fight against discrimination, it has to be in people’s faces for it to become a topic,” added Onuoha, who has previously said he never feels completely safe in the United States.

“In the United States, if it hadn’t been for people of all races protesting since March, the conversation would get pushed to the side. But because it continued, you can’t ignore it.”

Plan was to play shots along the ground: Shaw

DUBAI, SEPT 26 (PTI): Young opener Prithvi Shaw, who starred in Delhi Capitals’ victory over Chennai Super Kings, says his plan was to play along the ground and avoid “silly mistakes” after failing to make an impact in the first match. Shaw was dismissed for five in DC’s campaign opener against Kings XI Punjab but the 20-year-old made amends with a fluent 64 off 43 balls on Friday to lay the foundation of the team’s 44-run victory against CSK.

“My plan was to play my natural game but play the shots along the ground, last game we saw there were some silly mistakes and it was not working for me or the team,” Shaw told skipper Shreyas Iyer in a video posted on the IPL website.

Shaw shared a 94-run opening stand with Shikhar Dhawan to guide DC to 175 for three against CSK. The duo started slowly, scoring just 36 runs in the first six overs but soon gained momentum.

“CSK has some good pace bowlers, I was able to time the ball and get some gaps. As the spinners came on,

even if we are 40/0, it doesn’t matter, I knew me and Shikhar Dhawan could pace our innings after the powerplay,” he said.

His fifty and a disciplined bowling effort helped DC thrash CSK to register their second win of the tournament and go up the top of the points table.

Iyer was delighted by his side’s performance and said they need to capitalise on the winning momentum.

“As a captain, it’s a nice feeling, when you start by winning your first two matches, it helps in giving you confidence and now we need to capitalise on the momentum.

“As a team, we have been doing fantastic off late. The more matches we win, the easier it will be for us in this year’s IPL,” said Iyer.

Asked about the six-day quarantine before the tournament, Iyer said it was quite challenging.

“First six days were very challenging, I thought they would pass very quickly, but it felt like a month seriously. I had to entertain myself in the room as I was watching movies, chatting with my friends.

Manchester City’s injured Jesus ruled out of Brazil qualifiers

LONDON, 26 SEPT (REUTERS): Brazil forward Gabriel Jesus will be sidelined for next month’s World Cup qualifiers after being injured in Manchester City’s Premier League match at Wolverhampton Wanderers, the Brazilian football federation (CBF) said Friday.

The CBF said in a statement that Jesus would be replaced by Hertha Berlin’s Matheus Cunha for the matches against Bolivia and Peru.

Jesus will be out for at least three weeks, missing City’s matches at home to Leicester City in the Premier League on Sunday plus Wednesday’s League Cup fourth round tie at

Burnley and the league game at Leeds United on Oct. 3.

“The English club have contacted the Brazil team doctor Rodrigo Lasmas to inform us of the injury to Gabriel Jesus, which was detected after the match against Wolverhampton,” it said.

Brazil are due to host Bolivia in Sao Paulo on Oct. 9 and visit Peru in Lima four days later as the 2022 World Cup qualifiers get under way in South America.

However, the global players’ union FIFPRO has expressed concern that the matches are being played in one of the regions most badly affected by COVID-19.

New balls, please! Nadal unhappy with French Open choice

PARIS, 26 SEPT (REUTERS): French Open organisers have had enough problems dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, the dwindling number of fans on site and inclement weather but they faced another controversy on Friday -- criticism of the choice of ball for this year’s edition.

Roland Garros has switched to Wilson balls for the 2020 tournament after using Babolat for many years and 12-times champion Rafa Nadal was not impressed.

“You have to take care because with these conditions you can’t practise that much because the ball is super heavy,” the second-seeded Spaniard told reporters on Friday.

“Different brand than last year, a new ball. The

ball is much slower than the previous years. If we add these conditions of cold and humidity, then it is super heavy.”

Nadal, a 19-time Grand Slam champion, prefers warmer weather and faster claycourts at his favourite tournament but faces cooler and wetter conditions at this year’s event, which was pushed back to the fo end September from its May-June dates.

While the decision to change the ball was already known, Nadal felt the prevailing conditions had an even bigger impact.

“I practised with the balls in Mallorca,” said the Spaniard. “In Mallorca with warm conditions, the ball was very slow, I think (it’s) not a good ball to play on clay, honestly. That is my



personal opinion.

“Even with these conditions it makes things tougher. But I knew before arriving here. So no problem at all. Just accept the challenge.

“(But) I really believe that the organisation need to take a look at that

for the next couple of years, for the health of the players too, because the ball is super heavy. (It) becomes dangerous for the elbow and for the shoulders, I think.”

Austria’s newly-crowned U.S. Open champion Dominic Thiem, who lost to

Nadal in the final of the last two editions at Roland Garros, also prefers the ball used in previous editions.

“I practised two days at home with the ball. Now, of course, here. I’m a little bit sad because the Babolat at Roland Garros, it was

my favourite ball, it was perfect,” he said.

“Obviously it was the ball from my racket company. (It) was fast, was taking spin incredibly well. But the Wilson ball is good, as well. It’s just a little bit slower. It gets a little bit bigger after a while.”

However, Russian Daniil Medvedev, who prefers slower claycourt conditions and less spin, had no complaints.

“I like the balls because, yeah, tennis is a funny and interesting sport,” said the world number five, who lost to Nadal in last year’s U.S. Open final.

“It’s normal that when one player doesn’t like something, second one maybe is going to like it. So far I like it. I think it suits me not bad.”

Verdasco questions French Open COVID-19 testing protocols after withdrawal

PARIS, 26 SEPT (REUTERS): Spain’s Fernando Verdasco questioned the French Open’s COVID-19 testing protocols on Friday after having to withdraw from the tournament due to a positive result, which he deemed was false.

Verdasco, 36, pulled out of the final Grand Slam of the year in Paris on Thursday, alongside Canada’s Milos Raonic and Switzerland’s Belinda Bencic.

The Spaniard said he had returned a negative result on several occasions before he arrived in Paris, including at this month’s Italian

Open in Rome, where he lost in the qualifiers.

The world number 58 criticised the French Open’s testing procedures after he was denied a re-test.

“In August, I passed the COVID-19 asymptotically,” he said in a statement on Twitter here. “Since then I have done multiple PCR tests, with negative results... I tested negative again a few days ago in the test I took before going to Hamburg...”

“My team and family travelled to Paris on Tuesday... they all tested negative except me. I explained my history and

situation to try to request another test...”

“The Roland Garros organisation refused to do another test, even taking into account all these circumstances, and that there were enough days to repeat the tests before the competition and the draw ceremony. Still, I was disqualified.”

Verdasco said he had undergone two Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) tests and an antibody test since his withdrawal from the French Open and returned a negative result in all three tests.

“I want to communicate my total



frustration and outrage with the organisation of Roland Garros for taking away my right to participate even without giving me the opportunity to take another test with a new sample to confirm that

the result of the first could be an error,” he said.

On Wednesday, Bosnian Damir Dzumhur said he was taking legal action against the French Open organisers after he was barred from entering the qualification round

after his coach Petar Popovic tested positive for the virus.

The French Open, moved from its usual late May-June slot due to the novel coronavirus pandemic, begins on Sunday.

Yom Kippur synagogue attack leaves German Jews still uneasy

BERLIN (AP): As Jews around the world gather Sunday night to mark the beginning of Yom Kippur, many in Germany remain uneasy about going together to their houses of worship to pray, a year after a white-supremacist targeted a synagogue in the eastern city of Halle on the holiest day in Judaism.

If the assailant — armed with multiple firearms and explosives — had managed to break into the building, there's no telling how many of the 52 worshippers inside might have been killed. As it was, he turned his attentions on people outside, killing a passer-by and a man at a kebab stand before he was apprehended.

Since then, security has been increased at Jewish institutions across the country, but many wonder whether it is enough amid reports of increasing anti-Semitism and the Halle attack still fresh in their minds.

Naomi Henkel-Guembel was inside the building that day a year ago, and didn't immediately understand what was happening when she heard a loud bang outside.

Together with other young Jews from Berlin, the 29-year-old had traveled to the eastern German city to celebrate Yom Kippur, which fell on Oct. 9 in 2019, with the small, aging community there.

She still remembers the scene vividly as the 28-year-old German right-wing extremist tried to barge into the synagogue, shooting at the heavy door in an unsuccessful attempt

to force it open, then throwing explosives over a wall into a cemetery inside the compound while livestreaming the attack.

"When I heard the second explosion and saw a light flash outside the window, I knew that this was an anti-Semitic incident," said Henkel-Guembel.

"Still, I was not aware of the dimension of what was happening outside of the sanctuary — I would have never thought that somebody would throw explosive devices at the synagogue and the adjacent cemetery."

The attack suspect, Stephan Balliet, is currently on trial on charges of murder for the killings outside the synagogue. He explained his motivation to the court: "Jews are the main cause of white genocide and want to establish a new world order."

The attack, one of the most violent and overt anti-Semitic acts in postwar history, caused shockwaves across Germany, which considers protecting its Jewish minority of about 200,000 a special responsibility after the Nazi genocide of 6 million Jews.

While many Jewish institutions get some kind of protection — particularly on Jewish holidays — the Halle synagogue didn't have any. Now steps are being taken to ensure widespread security, said Josef Schuster, the president of the Central Council of Jews in Germany.

People "were clearly more worried to send their children to school or kindergarten or to



visit Jewish institutions," Schuster told The Associated Press in an interview this week.

"But after that day, security staff in front of synagogues and other Jewish places was increased and it has stayed that way."

Since then, Schuster said, state authorities have developed new security measures for Jewish houses of worship and all 16 German states have given varying amounts of financial support to spend on boosting security.

Bavaria, for example, provided 8 million euros (\$9.37 million) to its Jewish communities and Saxony-Anhalt, where Halle is located, committed some 2.4 million euros over 2020-2021 to help better secure Jewish sites.

Earlier this month, the federal government said it would also provide 22 million euros to improve security.

Still, the deputy head of Germany's Federal Criminal Police Office, Juergen Peter, acknowledged recently that "the protection of Jewish institutions is better than last year, but it is not good enough nationwide."

"Overall, we cannot be satisfied with the current status quo," Peter said,

adding that on average, there had been more than five anti-Semitic incidents registered per day in Germany in 2019. Those included physical attacks, property damage, threats, anti-Semitic propaganda and other acts of malicious behavior such as giving the stiff-armed Nazi salute.

Ronen Steinke, an investigative reporter with the Sueddeutsche Zeitung newspaper, studied the issue in depth after the Halle attack, and found that too often Jews are left to avert the danger of possible assaults themselves.

In his book "Terror Against Jews," published earlier this year after he visited more than 20 Jewish communities around the country, Steinke found that while authorities are helpful with making security assessments, the communities themselves are often left to implement the official suggestions.

Smaller communities, in particular, struggle and frequently end up not getting enough funds "because they have problems with the bureaucracy or because they can't agree with the state on a common line," Steinke said.

"Danger prevention is

the task of the state, not the job of those who are threatened by danger," said Steinke, who himself is a German Jew.

Even if security can be perfected, that does not mean there is no work left to be done by the German authorities, he said.

"It's a perverted state of siege, in which one can only go to school or religious service if people with pistols have to watch out for you," said Steinke.

For Naomi Henkel-Guembel it has been a year of soul searching after Halle.

"The event left deep marks, not just for those who were immediately affected, but for Jews in Germany in general," said Henkel-Guembel, who is currently studying in Berlin to become a rabbi.

The granddaughter of Holocaust survivors, Henkel-Guembel grew up in Munich, then moved to Israel after her high school graduation in search of a Jewish homeland. Today she shares her time between both countries.

Since Halle, she said, she and others who were at the Yom Kippur service have been questioning whether Germany is where they want to build their future lives as Jews.

For herself, Henkel-Guembel said she has decided to stay, and has even joined the trial of the Halle attacker as a co-plaintiff, as allowed under German law.

"The question is whether one leaves and surrenders the space to the attacker and his abettors — or whether one opposes them," she said.

S Korea calls for N Korea to further investigate shooting

SEOUL, SEP 26 (AP): South Korea said Saturday it will request North Korea to further investigate the killing of a South Korean government official who was shot by North Korean troops after being found adrift near the rivals' disputed sea boundary while apparently trying to defect.

Seoul could also possibly call for a joint investigation into Tuesday's shooting, which sparked outrage in the South and drew a rare apology from North Korean leader Kim Jong Un.

Kim was quoted as saying he was very sorry over what he described as an unexpected, unfortunate incident in a message sent by Pyongyang's United Front Department, a North Korean government agency in charge of inter-Korean relations.

However, the North Korean message, which was announced by the office of South Korean President Moon Jae-in on Friday, largely passed the blame for the shooting to the South Korean official, claiming that he refused to answer questions and attempted to flee before North Korean troops

fired at him.

South Korean officials during a presidential National Security Council meeting Friday evening concluded that further investigation was needed because the North's account of the incident was different from what was gathered by South Korean intelligence, Moon's office said.

We have decided to request the North to conduct an additional investigation and also request a joint investigation with the North if needed, the Blue House said in a statement.

It said the South will also swiftly take measures to further strengthen surveillance posture in waters off the country's western coast to prevent similar incidents.

South Korea's coast guard was deploying dozens of vessels and hundreds of officers to search waters near the western sea border Saturday for the official's remains.

The North's state media have yet to report on the incident or Kim's apology.

South Korea earlier accused the North of shooting the man, who was likely trying to

defect, and burning his body after finding him on a floating object in North Korean waters.

South Korean officials condemned what they called an atrocious act and pressed North Korea to punish those responsible.

But North Korea in its message said that troops first fired blanks after the man refused to answer questions other than saying he's from South Korea a couple of times.

Then, as he made moves to flee, the North Korean troops fired 10 rounds. When they came near the floating object, they only found lots of blood but no sign of him.

The troops determined he was dead and burned the floating object in line with anti-coronavirus rules, the message said.

North Korea has previously expressed regrets when it wanted to lower tensions triggered by incidents involving South Korean casualties, such as the 2015 front-line mine blasts that maimed two South Korean soldiers and the 2008 shooting death of a South Korean tourist in North Korea.

But it's rare for a North Korean leader to do so.

Ukraine plane crash death toll rises to 26, with 1 survivor

MOSCOW (AP): Searchers combing the area where a Ukrainian military aircraft crashed found two more bodies on Saturday, bringing the death toll to 26. One person survived.

The plane, a twin-turboprop Antonov-26 belonging to the Ukrainian air force, was carrying a crew of seven and 20 cadets of a military aviation school when it crashed and burst into flames Friday night while coming in for landing at the airport in Chuhuiv, about 400 kilometers (250 miles) east of the

capital Kyiv.

Two people initially survived the crash, but one later died in a hospital. No cause for the crash has been determined.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy declared Saturday to be a day of mourning for the crash victims and ordered that flights of An-26 planes be halted pending investigation of the crash cause.

Zelenskiy, who visited the crash area on Saturday, called for a full assessment of the condition of

the country's military equipment and said he wanted an official report on the crash by Oct. 25.

The An-26 is a transport plane used by both military and civilian operators. Nearly 1,400 of the planes were manufactured from 1969 to 1986, according to the company's website. The age of the plane that crashed Friday was not immediately reported.

An An-26 chartered by a contractor for the World Food Program crashed on Aug. 22 while taking off from Juba in South Sudan, killing seven people.

Progress against virus brings complacency in parts of Africa

HARARE, ZIMBABWE (AP): With Zimbabwe's coronavirus infections on the decline, schools are reopening, along with churches, bars, restaurants, airports and tourist attractions. Strict lockdowns designed to curb the disease are being replaced by a return to relatively normal life.

The threat has eased so much that many people see no need to be cautious. With his face mask stuffed into his pocket, Omega Chibanda said he's not worried about COVID-19.

"We used to fear coronavirus, not anymore," the 16-year-old said in the crowded Chitungwiza town on the outskirts of the capital, Harare. "That's why I'm not even wearing a mask."

As the global death toll from COVID-19 approaches 1 million, Zimbabwe and several other African countries have not experienced the widespread surges and many deaths that were predicted. That has invited complacency.

"It's all relaxed now," Chibanda said.

Earlier this month, Zimbabwe went a week without recording any deaths from coronavirus, and new infections and deaths have declined, as in South Africa and Kenya.

Africa's surge has been leveling off, with its 1.4 million confirmed cases increasing relatively slowly. Antibody testing is expected to show many more infections, but most cases are asymptomatic. Just over 35,000 deaths have been confirmed on the continent of 1.3 billion people.

But the improving figures and the start of the searing heat of the Southern Hemisphere's summer could undermine efforts to beat back the virus even further, said community health worker Rosemary Rambire.

She leaves home early in the morning and returns in the evening after going door to door calling "the gospel is here" and gathering families for quick awareness sessions.

"Our job is now harder to do because people are no longer afraid," Rambire said. "Some even tell us that it has not killed anyone they know. Most of them say the sun kills COVID-19 so they have no reason to worry."

Some think they are immune once they eat garlic, ginger and onions, she said.

In her 14 years on the job and through multiple disease outbreaks, COVID-19 has been the most difficult to get

people to take preventive measures, she said.

"It's different from before, when we did campaigns on cholera (and) HIV. We could tell that people were afraid. They tried to follow preventive measures," she said. "With COVID-19, they are not afraid."

Many people look at the infection and death figures in Zimbabwe, compare them with other countries "and conclude that it only affects other countries and not Zimbabwe," Rambire added.

In Chitungwiza, a sprawling working-class center on the southern edge of Harare, people no longer wear masks at markets, funerals or other public events. Masks are now the exception in many of Harare's poor residential areas.

"We have lost both the initial COVID-19 fear factor and the motivation to comply with national guidelines," said Aaron Sundsmo, of the charitable organization Mercy Corps. The group has now enlisted local soccer, music and film celebrities to renew awareness.

The government will "not hesitate to do something really strict" to curb any creeping complacency, said Dr. Agnes Mahomva, the chief COVID-19

response coordinator in Zimbabwe.

"The dire projections that 'Africa, you are going to be toast,' perhaps actually helped us. We tightened up," she said.

Continued vigilance should accompany Africa's apparent success story, said Mervyn Jollie, deputy regional director for Africa at Mercy Corps, which operates in 16 of Africa's 54 countries.

Limited testing in many African countries makes it difficult to assess "the reality of COVID-19 situation," Jollie said.

In West Africa's Sahel region, for example, positive cases of COVID-19 have declined over the past several weeks amid low testing capacity, which could suggest "a significant presence of undetected cases," Jollie said.

Health experts point to Africa's youthful population as a factor in why COVID-19 has not taken a larger toll, along with swift lockdowns and the later arrival of the virus.

Many African countries have eased the lockdowns and curfews in recent weeks to boost economies battered by the virus outbreak and, in some cases, ease local political pressure.

Balancing concerns

about unemployment, security and access to food, as well as the complacency and the need to keep infections low could be Africa's next big challenge, experts said.

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The Big Bang Theory star, Kaley Cuoco returns to the set of her new show The Flight Attendant in NYC.

Eva Longoria to helm action feature ‘Spa Day’

LOS ANGELES, SEP 26 (PTI): Hollywood star Eva Longoria will direct and play the lead in Sony Pictures’ upcoming action comedy “Spa Day”.

The 45-year-old actor will also produce the film, alongside Ben Spector through their UnbeliEVAble Entertainment banner, reported Variety.

Greg Silverman and Jon Berg are producing through Stampede Ventures.

“Telenova” creators Christine Pietrosch and Jessica Goldstein will be penning the screenplay, which is based on their original idea.

The plot details have been kept under wraps.

Longoria, known for starring in shows such as “The Young and the Restless” and



“Desperate Housewives”, has two other films lined up as director at Searchlight and Universal.

She will be helming “Flamin’ Hot”, an empowering biopic about the janitor who transformed the Cheetos brand by introducing a spicy version of the snack at its corporate owner.

At Universal, she will direct a reimagined version of 9 to 5 at Universal, titled “24/7”.

Surekha Sikri recovering well, says her agent

MUMBAI, SEP 26 (PTI): Veteran Bollywood and television star Surekha Sikri, who was hospitalised after she suffered a brain stroke earlier this month, is recovering well at her residence in suburban Mumbai, her agent Vivek Sidhwani said on Saturday.

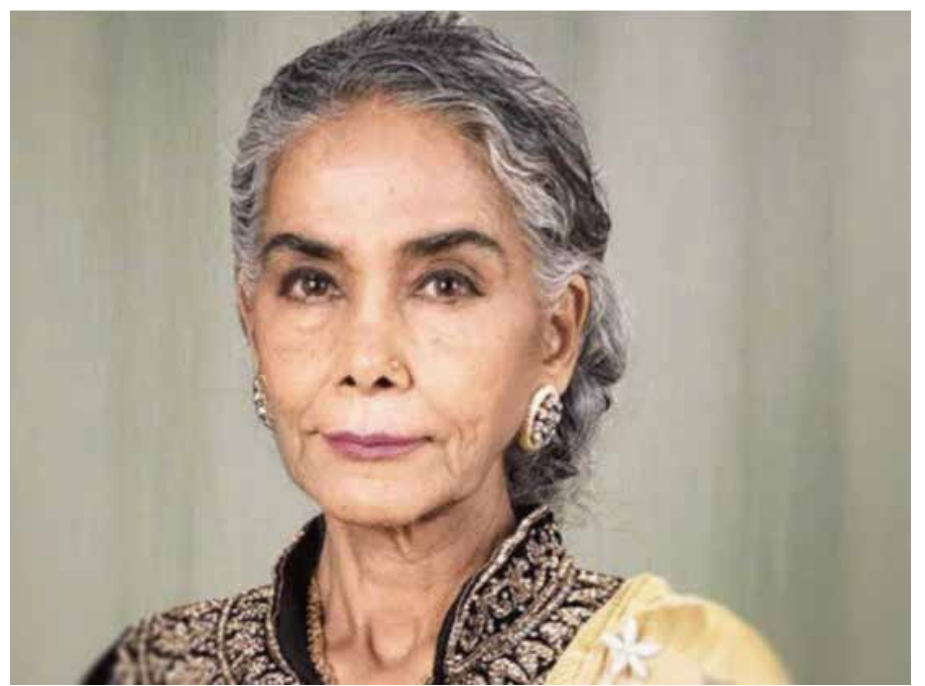
He said the 75-year-old actor got discharged from a city hospital earlier this week. She was taken to the hospital on September 8.

“She is recovering well. She has started physiotherapy along with her continuing medical treatment. The recovery is going to take sometime,” Sidhwani told PTI.

He further said Sikri is an optimistic person and she is looking forward to start working.

“She is keen to get back to work. But it will take a while for her to get back to work,” Sidhwani added.

A recipient of three national awards, Sikri is best known for her performance in “Tamas”, “Mammo”, “Salim Langde Pe Mat Ro”, “Zubeidaa” and daily soap “Balika Vadhu”, among others.



Sikri received wide spread acclaim for her role of a grandmother in Ayushmann Khurrana-starrer “Badhaai Ho” (2018). The actor won the 66th National Film award for the

best supporting actress for “Badhaai Ho” and she arrived in a wheelchair to pick up her award.

She was most recently seen in Netflix’s “Ghost Stories”.

Samuel L Jackson to once again play Nick Fury in Disney Plus’ new series

LOS ANGELES, SEP 26 (PTI): Hollywood veteran Samuel L Jackson will be reprising his fan-favourite MCU character Nick Fury in an upcoming series at Disney Plus.

According to Variety, the series is currently in development and will be produced by Marvel Studios.

Kyle Bradstreet, best known for his work on critically-acclaimed show “Mr Robot”, is attached to write and executive produce the series.

In Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU), Jackson first played the role of Fury, the head of clandestine government agency S.H.I.E.L.D, in the post-credits scene of “Iron Man” in 2008.

He has since featured in multiple MCU movies like “Iron Man 2”, “The Avengers”, “Avengers: Age of Ultron” and “Captain America: The



Winter Soldier”.

In 2019, the actor appeared as Fury

in two films -- “Avengers: Endgame” and “Spider-Man: Far from Home”.

Our film industry is beautiful, there is no toxic culture: Vishal Bhardwaj

MUMBAI, SEP 26 (PTI): Bollywood director Vishal Bhardwaj has rubbished claims that the Indian film industry has a toxic working culture or an insider-outsider divide, saying some people having “vested interest” are trying to malign its image.

Bhardwaj says he believes that people in the industry are always there to support each other and for somebody like him, who doesn’t belong to any film family, it has been a cherishable experience.

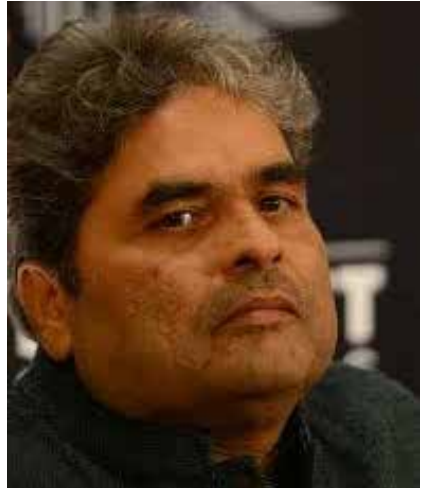
The death of actor Sushant Singh Rajput has triggered a lot of debates including one of “outsider v/s insider”, with many targeting the showbiz for ill-treatment of people who don’t have any links within the industry. There is also a talk about the alleged drug-nexus.

Rajput was found dead at his Bandra residence here on June 14.

During a virtual press conference of Screenwriters Association (SWA) Awards on Friday, Bhardwaj in response to a question posed by PTI said, “I don’t personally feel there is toxic work culture. I believe there is so much love in our work culture. The film unit becomes like a complete family. There is such a beautiful work culture (here).”

The “Haider” director said there are people who have “vested interest” and they are trying to project cinema as a “toxic” work place.

“I believe all this is rubbish about toxic working culture. Ours is a beautiful industry... jo barbad kiya jaa raha hai aajkal uske vested interest kis tarah ke hai sabko malum hai (Ours is a beautiful industry, which has been ruined due to vested interest and we all know about this).



“And we also know why it is happening. So please forgive us, leave us on our own. We are doing good,” he added.

“It has nothing to do with insider or outsider. All this is banai hui bakwas (All this nonsense has been made up). We are like a family. I never felt like an outsider in the industry. Whatever little I have felt, that might

happen in any other profession (as well).

“The emotional support that you get here, that you might not get in any other work culture. It is a beautiful industry, there is no toxic culture,” he said.

The director, however, is optimistic about the industry regaining its glory as soon as the cinema halls open.

“This is one side bowling happening. We are yet to get to ball because our theatres are closed. Those who are abusing are the ones who go and purchase tickets to watch films. Let our Friday come,” he said.

Theatres across the country have been closed since March due to the coronavirus pandemic.

ARIES:

When you mean business, you mean business, and you’re not going to compromise on your ideals for anything. It’s time to stand up for what you believe in, Aries. Trust that people will respect you a lot more once you take a stance. On the love and romance front, however, things are getting hot and heavy. If you’re already coupled, you may feel inspired to take things to the next level. If you’re single, you’re getting ready to attract somebody who’s just as passionate as you are.

TAURUS:

You’re at a point where you are reassessing everything you’ve done so far, picking and choosing the stories you want to take into the future with you. Remember, you are not defined by your past. You have the permission to start over whenever you want to. Speaking of change, a blessed shift is on the cards for you on the career and finance front. If there’s been disharmony in your team, trust that you will find a resolution soon. Freelancers will find that this is a wonderful time to attract a blessed collaboration into their lives.

GEMINI:

‘Be positive’ is a wonderful affirmation to tell yourself, but it may not help you in any way right now. It’s time to get real about how you are feeling. Sometimes, facing your inner demons head on is the only way to triumph over them. Geminis who are in the creative field could find themselves struggling with the ‘too much’ syndrome. What makes you different is what makes you, you. Find

the courage to take off the mask.

CANCER:

Cancerians in the family business will find that this is a time of growth and expansion. Surprise, surprise! Too many cooks do not spoil the broth. As such, domestic bliss will continue to be a big theme for you. You’ll find that spending time with your family is rewarding in so many ways. If you’ve recently been engaged, you may feel inspired to get to know your partner’s tribe better too.

LEO:

Not everything works out according to plan, and that can only be a good thing. Consider this rejection as a redirection, Leo. Look through the eyes of wisdom and you will understand what the Universe is revealing to you. Spirituality and soulfulness will also be big themes for you this week. Stay connected to your guides. Be receptive to the messages coming through. You are being realigned with the life you’re meant to live.

VIRGO:

Saturday finds you sipping and swirling on your wine and watching the world go by. It’s a ‘dolce far niente’ kind of weekend in the Virgo HQ—a much-needed break you’re indulging in without the guilt that used to weigh you down. All kinds of beauty rituals are also blessed as a result of the current cosmic collaboration. But you don’t have to go too far to bring on your inner Cleopatra. Nature’s apothecary will provide you with all the magical ingredients you are looking for.

LIBRA:

Creative projects of all kinds are blessed as a result of this cosmic collaboration. What you want to keep in mind: fitting in has never been your style. So, bring your inner rebel to the table and venture into territories you never have before. Blending seemingly contradictory ideas will bring forth magnificent results. But it’s not just ideas that you are channelling under the spell of the waxing moon.

SCORPIO:

That look of invincibility on your face reveals that you’ve just crossed an important landmark, Scorpio, and you’re in no mood to give up now. There is a fine line between working hard and overworking, and there’s a good chance that you are exhausting your reserves right now. So, pause. Breathe. Step back from your creations. Allow yourself to look at the fruits of your labour with pride. You deserve every bit of the success you have attracted right now.

SAGITTARIUS:

There are times when you have to hit the accelerator button, and then there are times you have to step back and allow things to unfold at their own pace. Sagittarius, you’ll find that the less you push, the easier it will be to get things done. So tap into your inner Buddha. Become an observer of your circumstances. Keep in mind that the only way out is in. Some of you could be dealing with mental and physical exhaustion as well. ‘Less is more’ is a philosophy that will serve you well this weekend.

CAPRICORN:

The cards are speaking of selfless service, Capricorn. The virtue of giving with all your heart without getting attached to the outcome or expecting anything in return. Think of it this way: the person or organisation in question is merely the medium. It is the Universe you are serving through this process. Remember, it’s not always about providing material support. Sometimes, lending a listening ear is all that it takes to remind your fellow warriors that they are cared for.

AQUARIUS:

Where is this sense of confusion stemming from? What’s keeping you from making a choice that’s in your favour, Aquarius? Could that guilt and shame narrative be preventing you from following the stirrings of your heart? It’s time to put self-inquiry on your priority list. Learning to trust your own judgements will prove to be the key to your transformation in the coming days. If you’re having a hard time convincing other people, familiarise yourself with the merits of non-violent communication.

PISCES:

You can be satisfied with where you are now, or you can push yourself to the next level, Pisces. The choice is yours. The cards are reiterating that you have built a solid foundation, and are now in the position to expand your work. Word for the wise: don’t be afraid of your own power. Your manifestation abilities are also on point, which means that the resources and guidance you require at each step will be provided to you. An open heart and mind will help you receive what is truly yours.