



**PRIYANKA CHOPRA JONAS CONFIRMED AS THE NEWEST CAST MEMBER IN MATRIX 4 OPPOSITE KEANU REEVES**  
pg 08

**RETRACTIONS AND CONTROVERSIES OVER CORONAVIRUS RESEARCH SHOW THAT THE PROCESS OF SCIENCE IS WORKING AS IT SHOULD**  
pg 04

**'BLACK WIDOW': FLORENCE PUGH WILL TAKE OVER AFTER SCARLETT JOHANSSON, SAYS DIRECTOR**  
pg 08



# SummitTIMES

Vol 05 | Issue 179 | Gangtok | Wednesday | 08 July 2020

ON TOP OF THE NEWS

RNI No. SIKENG/2016/69420

Pages 8 | ₹ 5

**CBSE rationalises syllabus by up to 30 pc for classes 9, 12 to make up for academic loss**

**NEW DELHI, JUL 7 (PTI):** The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has rationalised the syllabus for classes 9 to 12 for the academic year 2020-21 by up to 30 per cent to make up for academic loss caused due to COVID-19, Union HRD Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' announced on Tuesday.

"Looking at the extraordinary situation prevailing in the country and the world, CBSE was advised to revise the curriculum and reduce course load for the students of classes 9 to 12.

"To aid the decision, a few weeks back I also invited suggestions from all educationists on the reduction of syllabus for students and I am glad to share that we received more than 1.5K suggestions. Thank you, everyone, for the overwhelming response," Nishank tweeted.

"Considering the importance of learning achievement, it has been decided to rationalize syllabus up to 30 per cent by retaining the core concepts," he added.

Universities and schools across the country have been closed since March 16 when the central government announced a countrywide classroom shutdown as one of the measures to contain the COVID-19 outbreak.

A nationwide lockdown was announced on March 24, which came into effect the next day. While the government has eased several restrictions, schools and colleges continue to remain closed.

**36 new cases of COVID-19 in Ladakh; 24 patients cured**

**LEH, JUL 7 (PTI):** Thirty-six persons tested positive for coronavirus in Ladakh, taking the total number of cases in the Union territory to 1,041, officials said on Tuesday.

However, the number of active cases in the region dropped to 180 after 24 more patients - 17 in Kargil and seven in Leh - were cured of the disease, they said.

All the fresh COVID-19 positive cases were detected in Leh district, officials said. While one person had died of the infection in Ladakh, the total number of cured patients stands at 860, including 24 patients who were discharged on Tuesday.

Out of the total 1,041 cases so far, Kargil district has recorded the highest 714 cases and Leh 327 cases.

turn to pg 02

## Sikkim observes A Day for Mother Earth

**Open Air Biodiversity Theatre at Golitar inaugurated**

**GANGTOK, 07 JUL (IPR):** Chief Minister, Prem Singh Tamang (Golay) attended "A Day For Mother Earth" programme organised by Forest and Environment Department, Government of Sikkim at Fambonglho Wildlife Sanctuary in East Sikkim today.

It may be mentioned here that the State Government's ambitious project 'A Day for Mother Earth' was launched by the CM at Kitchu Dumra in South Sikkim last year with its unique feature of observing seven minutes (11:00-11:07am) no vehicular movement (except for emergency vehicles) in Sikkim as a step towards nature conservation.

The CM was accompanied by Deputy Speaker SLA, Sangay Lepcha, Minister for Forest, Karma Loday Bhut-



ia, and MP, Lok Sabha, Indra Hang Subba, along with Cabinet Ministers, MLAs, Political Secretary to CM, Confidential Secretary to CM, Advisors, Heads of Department, Panchayats, forest Officials and other dignitaries.

At the onset of the programme, the CM along with

other dignitaries visited Lake Side and Watch Tower at the Fambonglho premises which was followed by a photo session near the stone signage and a visit to the Nature Interpretation Centre and Orchidarium.

Moving on with the event of celebrating nature, the CM inaugurated the Open Air Bio-

diversity Theatre at Golitar premises whereby the ceremonial plantation session was also held.

Extending his warm greetings of 'One Day for Mother Nature' to the gathering, the Chief Minister lauded the efforts of the State Forest Department for successfully

holding the event this year as well and extended gratitude to the public at large for diligently observing seven minutes of no-vehicular-movement this morning.

Defining conservation of forest and environment as a responsibility of every citizen of Sikkim, the HCM ap-

pealed to the public at large to take care of Mother Nature throughout 365 days every year. He also pointed out the important lessons learnt during these trying times of the Covid-19 pandemic in terms of health, hygiene, and environment and cautioned all to maintain the safety protocol at all times.

He further urged people to avoid the usage of plastics or any other amenities that could harm the environment and added that plantation and cleanliness drives should be initiated by every individual in their respective areas throughout the year as a contribution towards conserving the environment.

Forest Minister, Karma Loday Bhutia, in his brief speech, talked about how each one of us can contribute for the conservation of our forest and environment.

Touching upon the subject of man-animal conflict, he appealed to all foresters to raise wild

turn to pg 02

### COVID-positive driver's wife, daughter and primary contacts test negative

**SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 07 JUL:**

All the 15 primary contacts of the taxi driver who recently tested positive in Rangpo and his wife and three-year-old daughter have all tested negative for COVID-19.

The primary contacts were lodged in the same transit camp as the driver in question and two of them had also ferried passengers to same quarantine centre as the one from which the taxi driver is believed to have contracted the virus.

This news comes as yet another reiteration of the mischief of fake news. Soon after word had arrived that the driver had tested positive, WhatsApp

forwards were insistent that even his wife and daughter had tested positive and raised fears that they must have in turn transmitted the virus as well.

The authorities had been insistent that the driver was living in a transit camp and not with his family, but some sections had continued to insist otherwise. With the wife and daughter testing negative, those rumours have been dispelled. But that will hold only until another conspiracy catches the fancy of those who circulate hearsay and fan fears. With the fact-checking committee proving to be an expectedly token effort, Sikkim is destined to remain a state where fake news circulates unchecked.

### India's COVID-19 tally crosses 7-lakh mark

**NEW DELHI, JULY 7 (PTI):** India's COVID-19 tally raced past the seven-lakh mark on Tuesday

after a single-day spike of 22,252 infections, five days after crossing the six-lakh post, while the death toll breached the 20,000 mark, according to the Union Health Ministry data.

It took 110 days for coronavirus infections in the country to reach the one-lakh, while just 49 days more to go past the seven-lakh mark.

This is the fifth consecutive day that COVID-19 cases have increased by more than 20,000.

The country's coronavirus infection caseload increased to 7,19,665 on Tuesday, while the death toll climbed to 20,160 with 467 persons succumbing to the disease in the last 24 hours, the data updated at 8 am showed.

The number of recoveries stands at 4,39,947, while there are 2,59,557 active cases of coronavirus infection presently in the country.

"Thus, around 61.13

per cent of patients have recovered so far," an official said.

The total number of confirmed cases included foreigners. According to the ICMR, a cumulative total of 1,02,11,092 samples have been tested up to July 6 with 2,41,430 samples being tested on Monday.

Of the 467 deaths reported in the last 24 hours, 204 are from Maharashtra, 61 from Tamil Nadu, 48 from Delhi, 29 from Karnataka, 24 from Uttar Pradesh, 22 from West Bengal, 17 from Gujarat, 11 each from Telangana and Haryana, nine from Madhya Pradesh, seven from Andhra Pradesh, six from Jammu and Kashmir, five each from Rajasthan and Punjab, two each from Bihar, Kerala and Odisha and one each from Arunachal Pradesh and Jharkhand.

Of the total 20,160 deaths reported so far, Maharashtra accounted for the highest 9,026 fatalities followed by Delhi with 3,115 deaths, Gujarat with 1,960, Tamil Nadu with 1,571, Uttar Pradesh with 809, West

Bengal with 779, Madhya Pradesh with 617, Rajasthan with 461 and Karnataka with 401.

The COVID-19 death toll reached 306 in Telangana, 276 in Haryana, 239 in Andhra Pradesh, 169 in Punjab, 138 in Jammu and Kashmir, 97 in Bihar, 42 in Uttarakhand, 38 in Odisha and 27 in Kerala.

Jharkhand has registered 20 deaths, Chhattisgarh and Assam 14 each, Puducherry 12, Himachal Pradesh 11, Goa seven, Chandigarh six, Arunachal Pradesh two and Meghalaya, Tripura and Ladakh have reported one fatality each, according to the Health Ministry.

More than 70 per cent deaths took place due to comorbidities, it said.

Maharashtra has reported the highest number of cases at 2,11,987 followed by Tamil Nadu at 1,14,978, Delhi at 1,00,823, Gujarat at 36,772, Uttar Pradesh at 28,636, Telangana at 25,733 and Karnataka at 25,317, according to the ministry data.

turn to pg 02

### COVID-19 IN SIKKIM

#### 2 more test positive, 5 overcome virus

**SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 07 JUL:**

Two new cases of COVID-19 were reported on Tuesday taking Sikkim's tally of COVID-19 cases to 127.

In what must bring some relief to the people, five more patients made full recoveries and were discharged from hospital after testing negative twice in 24 hours. Out of 127 cases reported so far in Sikkim, there are now only 44 active patients, 70 people have recovered and 13 patients [army personnel] have migrated out to Army Hospital, Bagdogra.

In his daily health bulletin on Tuesday, Health Department

Dr Pempa T Bhutia informed that a total of 130 samples were tested by RT-PCR at VRDL, STNM Hospital this morning and it is here that the two new cases were detected.

He informed that while one is 27-year-old female currently lodged at the quarantine centre established at Manjushree Public School in South Sikkim, the other is a 37-year-old man from the quarantine facility at Sikkim Retreat in East Sikkim.

The Health Secretary informs that contact tracing of both patients has already begun and that both have been shifted to the isolation ward at STNM Hospital.

### Road-rolled into destitution



**WANGCHUK BHUTIA MANGAN, 07 JUL:**

Buddha Raj Limboo and his family have been living in a decrepit makeshift house at Gairi Gaon in Tinzey, Upper Mangshila, North Sikkim for the last two years as they had to abandon their previous house due to new road construction work. The family is yet to receive any compensation.

Aruna Limbo, the wife of Buddha Raj Lim-

boo, informs that they are going through very hard times. The irony was that this family had been included in a house allotment scheme but unfortunately that has been left pending for the last one and a half year.

The family has appealed to the concerned authorities to recognise their plight and release their due compensation so that they can build a house for themselves.

## Class X student creates foot sanitizer machine

**Taxi drivers association installs it at Rangpo bazaar**

**SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 07 JUL:**

Class X student, Ikshahang Limboo, has made a foot sanitizer machine in the interest of public health and safety. Ikshahang is a student of Government Secondary School Duga, East Sikkim under West Pendum constituency, a press release informs.

According to Ikshahang, he used thick plastic pipes with solar panels, switches and other accessories to make this machine which cost around Rs. 1500 in total.

The product would have been



better if there was a sensor installed in it for dispensing but the lockdown made it impossible to acquire one, says the Class X students. He adds that the product

can be made in any size.

In January 2020, Ikshahang participated in the science exhibition held in Kolkata, representing the state of Sikkim.

Rangpo Local Taxi Owners cum Drivers Welfare Association has shown interest in the machine and installed it in Rangpo bazaar. Association president, Gangaram Bhattarai informs that after a taxi driver tested positive for COVID-19 in Sikkim, all the drivers and passengers are feeling unsafe and this initiative is a must for the state to take up especially at Rangpo.

"The machine has been installed in the market area and I urge the entire drivers of the state to be fully sanitized and take care of one another," said Mr Bhattarai.



## Singtam school distributes rice to students



**YOGEN THATAL SINGTAM, 07 JUL:**

Government Senior Secondary School, Singtam distributed rice to the students under the Mid-Day Meal Scheme today.

Earlier, students of classes 1, 2 and 3 were provided with the mid-day meal rice, whereas today students of classes 4, 5 and 6 were provided with rice. The remaining classes will be provided with rice on Wednesday.

Under the scheme, each student is provided with 10kgs of rice.

## Diesel price scales new high after 25 paise increase

**NEW DELHI, JUL 7 (PTI):** Diesel price in the national capital on Tuesday touched an all-time high following a rate hike after a week-long hiatus.

Diesel price on Tuesday was increased by 25 paise per litre, according to a price notification of state-owned oil marketing companies.

This took the retail selling price of diesel to Rs 80.78 per litre in the national capital - the highest ever.

There was no change in petrol price for the 8th straight day, and it continues to be priced at Rs 80.43 per litre.

Rates vary from state to state depending on the incidence of local sales tax or VAT.

Petrol and diesel price were last revised on June 29.

In the last one month, diesel price has been increased on 23 occasions while petrol rates have risen 21 times.

The cumulative increase since the oil companies started the cycle on June 7, totals to Rs 9.17 for petrol and Rs 11.39 in diesel.

In Mumbai, petrol is priced at Rs 87.19 - unchanged since June 29, while diesel was hiked to Rs 79.05 a litre from Rs 78.83.

### CONTACT

**SUMMIT TIMES REPORTERS**

**SINGTAM 8170070813**

**MANGAN/ DIKCHU 9832612485/ 9434011213**

**GANGTOK 8116388176**

**9832424750**

**8016270440**

# Green Sikkim program held at Bermiok

**GYALSHING, 07 JUL (IPR):** A plantation and public awareness program on Green Sikkim organized by Department of Forest & Wildlife was successfully observed at Bermiok, West Sikkim.

The program was chaired by Minister of Power & Labour Department, M.N Sherpa as the Chief Guest in the special presence of L. N. Sharma, Minister of Agriculture and IPR. The program also had the presence of D. B. Gurung, Chairman SBS; Karma R. Bonpo, Tashi Wangyal, Superintendent of Police (West), Tshering N. Bhutia DFO (T); Nisha Subba, DFO (Wildlife); Nakul Pradhan, Additional Superintendent of Police (West); N. K. Karki, Sub-Divisional magistrate (Dentam); Prativa Tamang Block Development Officer (Bermiok-Martam); Officers, dignitaries & public



of west sikkim.

Minister Sherpa while addressing public at administrative hall at 13th Mile explained how important plantation is in today's world. He expressed his gratitude towards Department of Forest for organising such program which has a great value in society. He also mentioned how people should take

care of their surroundings. He urged the public of who took part in the day long program to have a sense of responsibility for every plant that has been planted.

Minister Sherpa also mentioned on the issues and inconveniences faced by the public due to the power failures that the scenario will change since the Power

Department is undergoing major changes. He also informed that power consuming items need to be used wisely by the public also.

Minister of Agriculture L.N Sharma in his address extended his gratitude to Chief Minister of Sikkim PS Tamang (Golay) for his direction to organize such function. Minister Sharma

also highlighted various benefits of a greener environment, for all on earth. Mr Sharma along with Mr Sherpa also handed over a photocopier machine and other items various to the Environmental Development Committee (EDC) West District, sponsored by Department of Forest & Wildlife (West).

## A Day for Mother Earth in Mangan



**MANGAN, 07 JUL [IPR]:** A Day for Mother Earth was celebrated at Forest Annexe Building, Upper Zimchung, Mangan, North Sikkim organized by North Territorial Division, Forests and Environment Department with great zest and fervour taking up environ-

ment friendly activities in the North District with the active participation of DC North, SP North, DFO (T) North, ACF (T) North, other division's forest officials, field staff and JFMC members by planting saplings of flowering species like azalea at the premises

of the building.

One of the unique features of this programme of dedicating seven minutes of no vehicular emission in Sikkim commencing from 11.00 am to 11.07 am was also observed in the district with remarkable success.

## South holds meeting on monsoon preparedness



**MANGAN, 07 JUL (IPR):** The district level meeting on monsoon preparedness-cum-coordination was held here at conference hall of Election Office, DAC, Mangan, North Sikkim under the Chairmanship of the District Collector, North Tenzing T Kaleon today.

The objective of the meeting was to get prepared for the natural calamities that may happen because of the Monsoon and take preventive measures in the event of any eventuality thereby averting the loss of lives and properties from the fury of natural calamities.

The meeting attended amongst other by the SP/North, Ongmu Bhutia, ADCs, SDMs, BDOs, All Heads of Line department and representatives from Teesta urja-V, Teesta Urja, GREF and ITBP.

In the meeting, DC/

North gave a briefing on Monsoon Preparedness with reference to previous experiences and how other line departments responded to the situations. He said, with the onset of Monsoon, roads connecting inter-districts, towns and villages in all the four blocks of the district have been getting affected by flash flood, landslides, mudslides, subsidence, etc. However, he directed all concerned department to stay high alert to combat any unforeseen natural calamities.

Further, he also advised the line Department for advance placement of machineries and equipments so as to take preventive measures quickly without wasting time. He also asserted that coordination between District Administration, PWD, GREF, Private companies and

DDMA is important in order to address the issues occurring due to natural calamities.

During the meeting SP/North talking on role and responsibilities of all concerned department to join hands to face off any untoward incident that may occur during monsoon. She also directed to the construction agencies of the district to instruct their labourers to wear mask those who are engaged in road construction activities during such a COVID-19 pandemic.

Furthermore, the meeting also deliberated on preparedness for provision of relief supplies, emergency medical services, communication, clearance of water channels, clearing of blockages from drainage system at length so that appropriate preventive action could be taken.

## A Day for Mother Earth at Salghari



**SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 07 JUL:**

A Day for Mother Earth was observed with a plantation drive by Panchayats along with the public of Sal-

ghari, South Sikkim under Poklok-Kamrang constituency today. There was no vehicle movement from 11.00 to 11.07 am for seven minutes on the occasion.

### Believers Eastern Church Diocese observes A Day for Mother Earth



**SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 07 JUL:**

Believers Eastern Church Diocese of Sikkim also observed "A Day for Mother Earth" with plantation drives in different places of the State on Tuesday. During the drive, saplings of different

species were planted by members.

It is informed that 870 saplings of fruits and flowering trees were planted at Aho-Andheri and Kadamtam in East Sikkim and at Dong, Yangsum, Bhanjyang, Jorethang-Majhi-tar and Khaniserbong in South Sikkim.

**To book ad-space, contact SummitTIMES at**

**GANGTOK:**

For circulation details Contact: (Sandeep) 9734152451 & for Advertisement booking at 9933427505 or at office no 03592 208698. Mail us at advertise@summittimes.com

**SILIGURI:**

Mr. Mani Rai, M/s. Space Ads, B.R. Ambedkar Building, Room No.7, 1st floor. Opp. Ganga Hotel, Hill Cart Road, Siliguri - 03. Ph. 9832318644/ 9800682989/ 9153035100 or mail at mani\_siliguri@yahoo.co.in.

**KOLKATA OFFICE:**

Irshad Ali/ Imteeyaz. Synapse, 6, Madan Street, Mezzine - 2, 2nd floor, Kolkata - 700072. Ph. 033-22124348/ fax 033-22124337/ mob. 9830547774/ 983108397. E-mail: contact.synapse@gmail.com/ irshad\_ali123@rediffmail.com

### India's COVID-19...

The number of COVID-19 cases has gone up to 22,987 in West Bengal, 20,688 in Rajasthan, 20,019 in Andhra Pradesh, 17,504 in Haryana and 15,284 in Madhya Pradesh.

It has risen to 12,160 in Assam, 12,125 in Bihar, 9,526 in Odisha and 8,675 in Jammu and Kashmir. Punjab has reported 6,491 novel coronavirus infections so far, while Kerala has 5,622 cases.

A total of 3,305 people have been infected by the virus in Chhattisgarh, 3,161 in Uttarakhand, 2,847 in Jharkhand, 1,813 in Goa, 1,680 in Tripura, 1,390 in Manipur, 1,077 in Himachal Pradesh and 1,005 in Ladakh.

Puducherry has recorded 802 COVID-19 cases, Nagaland 625, Chandigarh 489 and Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu together have reported 297 cases.

Arunachal Pradesh reported 270 cases, Mizoram has 197 cases, Andaman and Nicobar Islands has 141, Sikkim has registered 125 infections so far, while Meghalaya has recorded 80 cases.

"Our figures are being reconciled with the ICMR," the ministry said, adding that 5,034 cases are being reassigned to states.

State-wise distribution is subject to further verification and reconciliation, it added.

### 36 new cases...

While 649 patients were cured in Kargil, the number of such people stands at 115 in Leh, they said.

According to officials, there are 115 active cases in Leh and 65 cases in Kargil district, and the condition of all the 180 active patients is stated to be stable.

Ladakh has recorded no COVID-19 case over the past couple of days.

to book advertisements in  
SummitTimes  
call 03592-208698 9734152541  
9647102692  
advertise@summittimes.com

### Sikkim observes...

edible fruit trees such as Phunchey, Bhadrashay, Amphi, Kattus, Okhar, etc., at the nurseries with full dedication so that the department has the sufficient number of such trees for wide distribution to the public by next year in order to mitigate man-animal conflict in the State. He reiterated the efforts of the State government in the field of eco-tourism and shared plans of creating a source of employment generation for people of rural areas.

During the programme, the Rajya Van Samrakshan Evam Paryavaran Puraskar initiated by the Forest Department was presented to Primary Teacher of Katuk Vidyasagar Primary School, Ratan Raj Pradhan, Ranka, East Sikkim, for his exemplary contributions in the field of environment protection.

The programme also saw the presentation of a citation to former ACF, East, Samdup Tshering Bhutia, for his immense contributions in constructing eco-tourism facilities at Golitar, Fambonglho Wildlife Sanctuary.

The program also featured the launch of Eco-Tourism Merchandise for Protected Areas in the East District and release of the Story on Fambonglho under the NMHS Nature Learning Centre and release of a book on Conventional Nature Techniques for major trees of Sikkim.

Prizes and certificates for online painting competition organized by the Forest Department earlier last month were also distributed to the winners.

Likewise, fuel/wood saving devices including induction cookstoves and improved biomass cookstoves were handed over to Lingdok JFMC and Lingdok Namphok EDC.

The Wildlife-East Division under Forest and Environment Department handed over a cheque of Rs. 81,213 as a contribution towards Chief Minister's Relief Fund to support the State government during the Covid-19 pandemic.

### AFFIDAVIT

I Dipa Lepcha spouse of Norden Lepcha resident of Lower Bega, Dentam GPU West Sikkim have changed my name from Dipa Lepcha to Dipa Rai (Lepcha) vide affidavit dated 25/06/2020 before the Notary at Sikkim.

## ~ SummitTIMES ~ CLASSIFIEDS

### LAND FOR SALE

Two plots available - 30X40 sq ft and 50X30 sq ft  
Junkerri Dara, Samlik Marchak  
Price negotiable  
Contact : 6296366498,  
9641878315, 9593262407

### GENERAL LAND FOR SALE

General land 30X40 (3 Plots) available for sale at Tadong 6th Mile next to Harka Maya College.  
Flat Land no cutting required. Price 27 Lakhs (negotiable).  
**Contact: 9800201335**

### LAND FOR SALE

A land measuring an area for 50x32 1/2 at Roadside just below housing colony is for sale. It is just a one minute walking distance from Namchi bazaar taxi stand. Interested party may contact 9593373387 and 9434406761

### LAND FOR SALE

An area measuring 1 acre at Sadam South Sikkim near Loretto Convent School at Gupti road. Price negotiable any one interested can contact:  
78640-04501, 62970-03235, 98320-48410

### FOR RENT

Two and half storeyed (1st to 3rd floor) complex is available for rent in the heart of Ranipool Bazaar (Opposite UCO Bank). The building area is 35'x60' appx. in each floor and is fit for offices, shopping complexes, guest houses, banks etc. Contact: 8509755220, 8348007688.

### GENERAL LAND FOR SALE

General roadside land for sale measuring 30 by 45 square feet near smile land below apica garden. Contact no.7797885351/9733538899.



## Zimbabwe nurses protest; South Africa reopens some classes

**HARARE, JUL 7 (AP):** At least 12 nurses were arrested in Zimbabwe on Monday when they were demonstrating against their working conditions, complaining that they do not have adequate protective gear to safely treat COVID-19 patients.

Thousands of nurses working in public hospitals stopped reporting for work in mid-June, part of frequent work stoppages by health workers who earn less than \$50 a month and allege they are forced to work without adequate protective equipment such as gloves and masks. Police have been deployed to stop protests by nurses and doctors in recent months.

On Monday, dozens of nurses wearing masks and their white and blue uniforms gathered for protests at some of the country's biggest hospitals in the capital, Harare, and the second-largest city of Bulawayo.

Zimbabwe's coronavirus cases have been climbing in recent weeks, mostly recorded at centers where people returning to the country mainly from neighboring South Africa are kept in mandatory isolation.

The country had recorded about 700 cases of coronavirus infection and 8 deaths by Monday.

Nurses sang and chanted slogans at hospital premises, carrying placards that read 'Nurses' lives matter, We have been reduced to nothing and we want our salaries in US dollars.'

After some running skirmishes, police arrested some of the nurses and shoved them into a truck at Harare Central Hospital.

Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights, an organization representing the nurses, said at least 12 nurses were arrested and have been taken to a police station in the poor suburb of Mbare. They have been charged with contravening lockdown rules, the organization said.

The Zimbabwe Nurses' Association described the arrests as the clearest evidence of the government's unwillingness to improve their conditions.

The attempts to strangle our genuine voices through force is nothing new ... however we have lost our earnings through slave wages and so we have nothing more to lose, said the nurses' association in a statement.

Zimbabwe's health workers, like most government employees, argue that their salaries are being eroded by inflation, now at more than 750%, as the once-prosperous southern African country battles its worst economic crisis in a decade.

The frequent strikes by health workers are a further strain on a weak public health system that was already in the intensive care well before the outbreak of coronavirus.

Families of patients are expected to provide drugs, food and, in some cases, buckets of water as Zimbabwe's once-envied health care system reflects the southern African nation's general collapse.



## Gangtok branch of Jain Swetamber Terapanth Sabha calls on Governor

**GANGTOK, 07 JUL:** The newly-formed Gangtok committee of Jain Swetamber Terapanth Sabha, the apex body of Jain

Minority Committee, called on Governor Ganga Prasad at Raj Bhavan today. During the courtesy visit, they wished the Gov-

ernor on his 84th birthday and wished for his good health and long life, an official press release informs.

## Plantation drive at Lower Rakdong



**SUMMIT REPORT**

**DIKCHU, 07 JUL:**

A Day for Mother Earth was observed today at Lower Rakdong, East Sikkim with a plantation drive along the Dikchu-Sokpay road during which flowering and fruit-bearing plants were planted.

The function was held under the guidance of SKM's Tumin-Lingee constituency in-charge, Samdup Bhutia, in the presence of ward-level

committee coordinator, Neshlal Gurung, president Rajendra Gurung, SKPPL coordinator Lalman Limboo and member of different Self Help Groups such as Ritu, Lotus, Nava Pragathi, Suryadhy, PWD workers and the general public.

The organisers expressed gratitude towards DFO (T), Social Forestry North, Zigdel Lachungpa and officials for providing saplings for the plantation drive.

## SKM's retired employees affairs cell meets SGREWA members in Namchi

**SUMMIT REPORT**

**NAMCHI, 07 JUL:**

The recently-formed frontal organisation of Sikkim Krantikari Morcha, the Retired Employees Affairs Cell, conducted its first meeting in Namchi today.

Members of Sikkim Government Retired Employees Welfare Association were invited to the meeting briefed about the new Cell. Grievances enumerated by SGREWA and already submitted to the State Government were also discussed at the meeting.

The meet which was conducted under the chairmanship of Ganesh Rai, the SKM in-charge

of South District, was also attended by the vice president in-charge South District, Satish Chandra Rai, and other party functionaries of the district.

The meeting was conducted on the directions of the party president, Chief Minister PS Tamang [Golay], who had also initiated the formation of the Cell to address the grievances of all the retired government employees of the state.

The retired employees of the district were informed about the Cell and of how it aims to highlight and solve problems faced by retired employees.

## Namchi observes 'A Day for Mother Earth'

**NAMCHI, 07 JUL (IPR):** As a part of observing 'A day for Mother Earth', Namchi, South District headquarters saw halt on various vehicular movement for seven minutes which commenced from 11.00 to 11:07am.

This stoppage initiative

was supported by South Traffic and Police Departments along with drivers and public at large.

The aim for this endeavour is to reduce the air pollution caused by vehicular movements especially in the state of Sikkim.

## South Zilla Panchayat inspects delayed construction site



**SUMMIT REPORT**

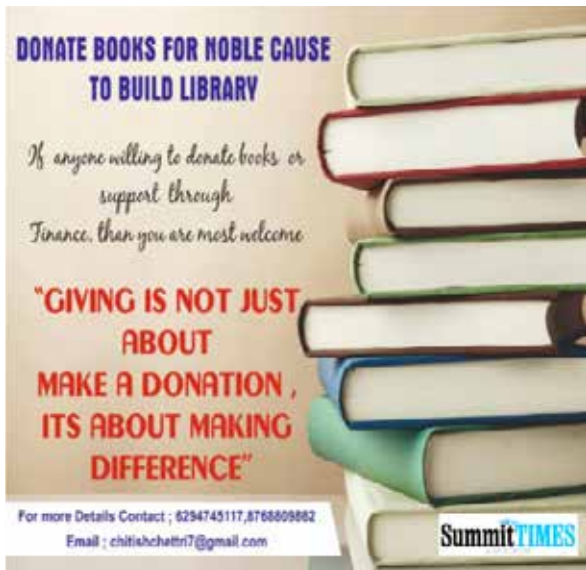
**GANGTOK, 07 JUL:**

South District's Zilla Panchayat conducted site inspection of the under-construction community recreation centre at Salghari block under Zoom Constituency today, a press release informs. The project has been running behind schedule for a while now.

The inspection team consisted of Zilla Ad-

hakshya, Tshering Dem Bhutia, South; District Planning Officer, Saran D Kalikotey, SDZP; DE, IC Subedhi, AE, AO, JEs and concerned Panchayat member of Salghari GPU. The said inspection was also attended by District Youth Coordinator, Nagen Tamang, SKM.

The Adhakshya and officers instructed the contractor to complete the work within one month.



## NSP not to celebrate Bhanu Jayanti this year

**SUMMIT REPORT**

**GANGTOK, 07 JUL:**

Nepali Sahitya Parishad [NSP], Sikkim has decided not to celebrate Bhanu Jayanti this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. NSP Sikkim has been celebrating the state-level Bhanu Jayanti in Gangtok on 13 July every year.

Addressing a press conference here today, NSP Sikkim president, Rudra Poudyal mentioned that the parishad has decided not to celebrate the 106th Bhanu



Jayanti this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, he mentioned that NSP Sikkim has decided to telecast few events through Samvaad Television and other social media pages on 13

July this year on the occasion of Bhanu Jayanti.

He informed that the event includes message of the Chief Minister, message of NSP Sikkim president, Ramayan recitation and poem recitation.

## Rotary Club distributes Giloy saplings

**SUMMIT REPORT**

**GANGTOK, 07 JUL:**

While the state observed 'A Day of Mother Earth' by switching off electric appliances in houses, offices as an initiative, the Rotary Club of Gangtok distributed Giloy saplings to the community and the people of the State which was collected from Forest Department, Government of Sikkim to mark the day, a press release informs. The Club is thankful to the Forest Department for supplying the saplings, it adds.

Giloy plant also known as heart-leaved



moonseed is found in the tropical region of the Indian sub-continent. It is a large deciduous, extensively spreading, climbing shrub with several elongated twining branches.

According to Ayurveda, the Giloy plant helps in boosting immunity, treats chronic fever, improves digestion, reduces stress and anxiety and fights with respiratory problems.



## Doctor Safe team sanitizes Rangpo

Doctor Safe team of Mount Distilleries Limited, Majhitar, sanitized Rangpo today, a press release informs.

**CONTACT SUMMIT TIMES REPORTERS SINGTAM 8170070813**

**MANGAN/ DIKCHU 9832612485/ 9434011213**

**GANGTOK 8116388176 9832424750 8016270440**

**विज्ञान एवं इंजीनियरी अनुसंधान बोर्ड**  
(विज्ञान और प्रौद्योगिकी विभाग, भारत सरकार का एक स्वायत्तिकाय)  
**SCIENCE & ENGINEERING RESEARCH BOARD**  
(A Statutory body of Department of Science and Technology, Govt. of India)  
(No.SERB/Recruitment/01/2020)

**ADVERTISEMENT NOTICE NO.01/2020**

The Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB) proposes to fill up the following administrative posts on Deputation/Absorption basis, filling which by Direct Recruitment basis as per details given below:

Name of the Post	Pay Scale	No. of Posts	Mode of Recruitment	Reservation
Section Officer	Level-6 in the Pay Matrix (Rs.35400-112400)	02	By deputation/ absorption failing which by direct recruitment.	As per the Central Government Norms/ Guidelines

Last date of submission of application would be within 75 days for candidates from remote areas/60 (sixty) days for candidates from rest of India from the date of publication of Advertisement in the "Employment News" (English Edition), as given in the detailed advertisement.

The other details like Eligibility criteria, Age, Educational Qualifications, Experience, Selection process, Terms & Conditions of the recruitment and Application Format etc. are available on our Websites: [www.serb.gov.in](http://www.serb.gov.in) / [www.dst.gov.in](http://www.dst.gov.in)

**davp 36207/11/0001/2021** (SATISH MARAR) Under Secretary

**Sikkim University**

SU/REG/Acad/F-1/13/2019/Vol-III/290 Date: 08/07/2020

**ADMISSION NOTICE**

Sikkim University announces admission for the Academic Year 2020-21 for Post-Graduate programmes in the following departments:

1. Anthropology (MA/M.Sc.)	18. Lepcha (MA)
2. Bhutia (MA)	19. Limbu (MA)
3. Botany (M.Sc.)	20. Management (MBA)
4. Chemistry (M.Sc.)	21. Mass Communication (MA)
5. Chinese (MA)	22. Mathematics (M.Sc.)
6. Commerce (M.Com.)	23. Microbiology (M.Sc.)
7. Computer Applications (MCA)	24. Music (MFA)
8. Economics (MA)	25. Nepali (MA)
9. Education (MA, M.Ed)	26. Peace and Conflict Studies and Management (MA)
10. English (MA)	27. Physics (M.Sc.)
11. Geography (MA/M.Sc.)	28. Political Science (MA)
12. Geology (M.Sc. and M.Sc. in Environmental Science)	29. Psychology (MA/M.Sc.)
13. Hindi (MA)	30. Sociology (MA)
14. History (MA)	31. Tourism (MTTM)
15. Horticulture (M.Sc.)	32. Zoology (M.Sc.)
16. International Relations (MA)	
17. Law (LLM)	

The advertisement notice for Under-Graduate, M.Phil. and Ph.D programmes will be notified separately.

The details of courses and other admission procedure to be followed are available on University website at [www.cus.ac.in](http://www.cus.ac.in). Last date for submission of online application form is 31.07.2020 (up to midnight).

**davp 21318/11/0001/2021** Sd/- Registrar

**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

**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.

**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.

If you seek help, you may call :  
- Toll free no. 104  
District surveillance Officer  
EAST : 7029372100  
WEST : 9593297809  
NORTH : 9841957468  
SOUTH : 7407691463  
New STNM  
AMS : 9434711402

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM**



## Language Barrier

*Language needs contemporary and relevant literature to flourish*

Speaking to a young Nepali-speaker a few days ago was eye-opening. The youngster could rattle off a Nepali proverb to suit just about any situation or irony that abounds around us nowadays. When asked what she would recommend to someone beginning an exploration into Nepali literature, she listed out titles which almost all exclusively vintage classics. When it comes to the region, she says that while there are some interesting contemporary works in Nepali, there were not enough invested with the endurance or even lasting relevance that the past greats have nuanced their works with. Make no mistake, she was not being dismissive about the language itself, in fact, she, like perhaps her entire generation, is rather passionate about language and what it means for a people. Their conviction on the importance of language is encouraging even as it is uncomfortable to stare into the mirror they hold up to reflect the legacy that the present generation passes down to them by way of language.

Speak to students of Nepali language at the school level and they will complain that the Nepali taught in schools is too outdated and out of step with their realities. The stories in the textbooks speak of issues which none of the students can identify with and in a language that is almost alien to them. Of course there are still gems hidden in the syllabus, but the overall content is less than inspiring, they insist. They have a point there. Nepali writing is moving in two extremes at present. They are either too archaic, or too esoteric. There is not much that is contemporary and this is also reflected in the less than handsome circulation figures of Nepali publications which have not even touched a small fraction of what is possible. Nepali writers, the young speakers contend, are not only out of sync with the times, but also distant from their readers. As a result, few students end up developing any serious interest in the language which is already compromised by the fact that it is of little use beyond the region. Take vibrant literature out of the mix, and the language stares at a very real danger of becoming a dialect.

Not everything the young say can be dismissed as an emotional outburst of rebellious and easily bored minds. They will after all be carrying the language further and going by what they have to say, they are not confident about delivering on this responsibility. Why?

Because the present generation has not equipped them well enough. Students who speak Nepali at home have to take tuitions to pass in the subject. They could not possibly be weak in the language, it is obviously because the material does not excite enough interest in most of them; an interest which those responsible for developing and promoting the language have failed to kindle in them. The students want a more contemporary syllabus which they can identify with; they want greater respect shown to the language by their elders; and they want a genuine interest in the promotion of Nepali as a language to be learnt by those who control the language cartels. Tokenism will just not do, they stress. Justified points, but are we equipped to deliver on them? And this is not just about Nepali or even language for that matter.



## Retractions and controversies over coronavirus research show that the process of science is working as it should

MARK R. O'BRIAN  
*theconversation.com*

Several high-profile papers on COVID-19 research have come under fire from people in the scientific community in recent weeks. Two articles addressing the safety of certain drugs when taken by COVID-19 patients were retracted, and researchers are calling for the retraction of a third paper that evaluated behaviors that mitigate coronavirus transmission.

Some people are viewing the retractions as an indictment of the scientific process. Certainly, the overturning of these papers is bad news, and there is plenty of blame to go around.

But despite these short-term setbacks, the scrutiny and subsequent correction of the papers actually show that science is working. Reporting of the pandemic is allowing people to see, many for the first time, the messy business of scientific progress.

SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY QUICKLY RESPONDS TO FLAWED RESEARCH

In May, two papers were published on the safety of certain drugs for COVID-19 patients. The first, published in the New England Journal of Medicine, claimed that a particular heart medication was in fact safe for COVID-19 patients, despite previous concerns. The second, published in The Lancet, claimed that the antimalarial drug hydroxychloroquine increased the risk of death when used to treat COVID-19.

The Lancet paper caused the World Health Organization to briefly halt studies investigating hydroxychloroquine for COVID-19 treatment.

Within days, over 200 scientists signed an open letter highly critical of the paper, noting that some of the findings were simply implausible. The database provided by the tiny company Surgisphere – whose website is no longer accessible – was unavailable during peer review of the paper or to scientists and the public afterwards, preventing anyone from evaluating the data. Finally, the letter suggested that it was unlikely this company was able to obtain the hospital records alleged to be in the database when no one else had access to this information.

By early June, both the Lancet and New England Journal of Medicine articles were retracted, citing concerns about the integrity of the database the researchers used in the studies. A retraction is the withdrawal of a published paper because the data underlying the major conclusions of the work are found to be seriously flawed. These flaws are some-

times, but not always, due to intentional scientific misconduct.

The urgency to find solutions to the COVID-19 pandemic certainly contributed to the publication of sloppy and possibly fraudulent science. The quality control measures that minimize the publication of bad science failed miserably in these cases.

IMPERFECT AND ITERATIVE

The retraction of the hydroxychloroquine paper in particular drew immediate attention not only because it placed science in a bad light, but also because President Trump had touted the drug as an effective treatment for COVID-19 despite the lack of strong evidence.

Responses in the media were harsh. The New York Times declared that “The pandemic claims new victims: prestigious medical journals.” The Wall Street Journal accused the Lancet of “politicized science,” and the Los Angeles Times claimed that the retracted papers “contaminated global coronavirus research.”

These headlines may have merit, but perspective is also needed. Retractions are rare – only about 0.04% of published papers are withdrawn – but scrutiny, update and correction are common. It is how science is supposed to work, and it is happening in all areas of research relating to SARS-CoV-2.

Doctors have learned that the disease targets numerous organs, not just the lungs as was initially thought. Scientists are still working on understanding whether COVID-19 patients develop immunity to the disease. And to close the case on hydroxychloroquine, three new large studies published after the Lancet retraction indicate that the malaria drug is indeed ineffective in preventing or treating COVID-19.

SCIENCE IS SELF-CORRECTING

Before a paper is published, it undergoes peer review by experts in the field who recommend to the journal editor whether it should be accepted for publication, rejected or reconsidered after modification. The reputation of the journal is dependent on high-quality peer review, and once a paper is published, it is in the public domain, where it can then be evaluated and judged by other scientists.

The publication of the Lancet and the New England Journal of Medicine papers failed at the level of peer review. But scrutiny by the scientific community – likely spurred on by the public spotlight on coronavirus research – caught the mistakes in record time.

The hydroxychloroquine article published in The Lancet was retracted only 13 days after it was

published. By contrast, it took 12 years for the Lancet to retract the fraudulent article that incorrectly claimed vaccinations cause autism.

It is not yet known whether these papers involved deliberate scientific misconduct, but mistakes and corrections are common, even for top scientists. For example, Linus Pauling, who won the Nobel Prize for discovering the structure of proteins, later published an incorrect structure of DNA. It was subsequently corrected by Watson and Crick. Mistakes and corrections are a hallmark of progress, not foul play.

Importantly, these errors were exposed by other scientists. They were not uncovered by some policing body or watchdog group. This back-and-forth between academics is foundational to science. There is no reason to believe that scientists are more virtuous than anyone else. Rather, the mundane human traits of curiosity, competitiveness, self-interest and reputation come into play before and after publication are what allow science to regulate itself. A model based on robust evidence emerges while the weaker one is abandoned.

LIVING WITH UNCERTAINTY

From high school classes and textbooks, science seems like a body of well-known facts and principles that are straightforward and incontrovertible. These sources view science in hindsight and often make discoveries seem inevitable, even dull.

In reality, scientists learn as they go. Uncertainty is inherent to the path of discovery, and success is not guaranteed. Only 14% of drugs and therapies that go through human clinical trials ultimately win FDA approval, with less than a 4% success rate for cancer drugs.

The process of science generally takes place below the radar of public awareness, and so this uncertainty is not generally in view. However, Americans are paying close attention to the COVID-19 pandemic, and many are, for the first time, seeing the sausage as it is being made.

Although the recent retractions may be unappealing, medical science has been very successful over the long run. Smallpox has been eradicated, infections are treated with antibiotics rather than amputation and pain management during surgery has advanced well beyond biting on a stick.

The system is by no means perfect, but it is pretty darned good.

*[the writer is Professor and Chair of Biochemistry, Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, University at Buffalo, The State University of New York]*

## Why realism is the key to wellbeing – new research

CHRIS DAWSON & DAVID DE MEZA  
*theconversation.com*

Life coaches and motivational speakers often treat positive thinking as the key to happiness. Self-help books tend to promote a similar message, with Norman Vincent Peale’s bestseller The Power of Positive Thinking claiming: “When you expect the best, you release a magnetic force in your mind which by a law of attraction tends to bring the best to you.”

The idea is not merely that optimistic thinking dispels present gloom, but that it also launches a self-fulfilling prophecy whereby simply believing in success delivers it. In happiness terms, optimistic thinking seems to be a win-win strategy.

Perhaps this is why unrealistic optimism – the tendency to overestimate the likelihood that good things will happen and underestimate the likelihood that bad things will happen – is one of the most pervasive human traits. Studies consistently show that a large majority of the population (about 80% according to most estimates) display an overly optimistic outlook.

But pessimism does have its advocates. Despite the fact that expecting the worst can be extremely psychological painful, pessimists are, by their nature, fairly immune to disappointment.

As the English writer Thomas Hardy noted: “Pessimism is, in brief, playing the sure game. You cannot lose at it; you may gain. It is the only view of life in which you can never be disappointed. Having

reckoned what to do in the worst possible circumstances, when better arise, as they may, life becomes child’s play.”

This view receives implicit support from Nobel Prize winner Daniel Kahneman and his late colleague,



Amos Tversky. According to their concept of loss aversion, we feel twice as much pain from losses than we experience joy from equal gains.

For example, the pain of an unexpected loss of £5 is twice as strong as the joy of an unexpected gain of £5. In most cases, whether a gain or a loss is perceived, depends on what was expected. Getting a pay raise of £5,000 may seem like a loss if you were expecting £10,000. Unrealistic optimists, by expecting a lot, are setting themselves up for large doses of destructive disappointment.

These behavioural views of the merits of an optimistic or pessimistic mindset contrast with the perspective of mainstream economics according to which it is best to have realistic beliefs. The point is that to

make good decisions, accurate, unbiased information is required. Optimism and pessimism are therefore judgemental biases that make for poor decisions, leading to worse outcomes and lower wellbeing. Particularly prone to harmful error of this sort are career choices, saving decisions and any choice involving risk and uncertainty.

In our research, we investigated whether it is optimists, pessimists or realists that have the highest long term wellbeing. To do this, we tracked 1,601 people over 18 years.

Wellbeing was measured by self-reported life satisfaction and psychological distress. Alongside this, we measured participants’ finances and their tendency to have over or under

estimated them. Better finances are associated with higher wellbeing, so no surprise there.

KEEPING IT REAL

Our main finding is that it is not just outcomes that matter but also expectations. Other things being equal, overestimating outcomes and underestimating them are both associated with lower wellbeing than getting expectations about right. Realists do best.

The research may well come as a relief to many people, as it shows you don’t have to spend your days striving to think positively. Instead, we see that being realistic about your future and making sound decisions based on evidence can bring a sense of wellbeing, without having to immerse yourself in relentless positivity. As to why these results arise, two mutually

inclusive possibilities come to mind. Firstly, our results could be the result of counteracting emotions. For optimists, disappointment may eventually dominate the anticipatory feelings of expecting the best, so happiness starts to fall. For pessimists, the depressing effect of expecting doom (dread) may eventually dominate the elation when the worst is avoided.

An alternative to counteracting emotions is that plans based on inaccurate beliefs are bound to deliver worse outcomes than would rational, realistic beliefs. In all events, our finding is that a misperception of either sign involves lower wellbeing.

A majority of the population tend towards optimism, so should they curb their enthusiasm? Our study does suggest realists are the happiest, but this does not necessarily mean that becoming a realist (if such a change was possible) would necessarily boost wellbeing. All we can say is, it might.

This may be especially so in the context of coronavirus. Both optimists and pessimists make decisions based on biased expectations. Not only does this lead to bad decision making, but also a failure to take suitable precautions to potential threats.

Optimists see themselves as less susceptible to the risk of COVID-19 than others and are therefore less likely to take appropriate precautionary measures. Pessimists, on the other hand, may never leave their houses or send their children to school again. Neither strategy seems like a suitable recipe for wellbeing. Realists meanwhile, take measured risks knowing susceptibility depends to a major extent on age.

*[Chris Dawson is Senior Lecturer (Associate Professor) in Business Economics, University of Bath; David de Meza is Professor of Management, London School of Economics and Political Science]*



# Bengal's serial 'chain' killer sentenced to death

**BARDHAMAN (WB), JUL 7 (PTI):** A man, accused in a series of murders and sexual assaults on women, was sentenced to death by a court here for the rape and killing of a schoolgirl in West Bengal's Purba Bardhaman district.

Kamaruzzaman Sarkar, who gained notoriety as a serial 'chain' killer for strangling his victims with bicycle chains, was sentenced to be hanged to death by the additional district and sessions judge Tapan Kumar Mondal of Kalna court after being found guilty of the rape and murder of the girl.

Sarkar, a small-time trader of discarded materials, is being tried in other courts for alleged sexual assault and murder of at least five other women and murderous attacks on at least three other women in Purba Bardhaman and neighbouring Hooghly districts.

Following the order on Monday, Sarkar's lawyer said that an appeal will be filed before the Calcutta High Court, challenging the conviction



and sentence. The alleged serial killer who targeted women when they were alone at home, was arrested in the town of Kalna in Purba Bardhaman district in June last year.

The 42-year-old, attired in trendy clothes, would allegedly enter homes during afternoon hours on the pretext of taking electricity meter readings and then pounce upon the women with a cycle chain and an iron rod, according to the prosecution. Some wom-

en had managed to escape attacks by the diminutive man, whose modus operandi was to strangle them with a chain and then hit them on the head to ensure death.

Though he would escape with some valuables from the houses of his victims, theft does not seem to be the motive.

Murdering the women seemed to be his main target, according to district police sources.

Police said that Sarkar, married with three

children, had even allegedly inserted sharp materials into the genitals of some of his victims following their deaths.

Following the murder of a middle-aged woman, the district police had circulated CCTV footage of a suspect wearing a red helmet and riding a red motorbike to all police stations, following which he was apprehended at a check-point.

Sarkar is suspected to have killed a woman of Anukhal area on January 27 last year, police said.

On April 4, 2019, two women were killed within a few hours of each other in the Memari police station area of Purba Bardhaman. Another woman of Memari was also killed in the same manner, the police said.

Swarupa Bibi of Rongpara here was one of the lucky few to have escaped a similar attack. She was allegedly attacked from behind with a cycle chain, but she managed to shrug off the attacker and raise an alarm.

## 19 new COVID-19 cases in Nagaland, 60 patients recover

**KOHIMA, JUL 7 (PTI):** Nagaland on Tuesday reported 19 new COVID-19 cases, taking the north-eastern state's tally to 644, Health Minister S Pangnyu Phom said.

Of the 321 samples tested during the last 24 hours through BSL laboratories and also TrueNat RDRP Gene, 19 fresh cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed, he said.

Of the total 644 COVID-19 cases, 341 are active and 303 people have recovered from the disease.

The minister also

said that the state reported the highest single-day recovery of 60 patients on Tuesday.

Of them, 59 are from Peren district and one from the state capital. The recovered patients will be kept under strict surveillance, he said.

Dimapur district has 213 COVID-19 cases followed by Peren (184), Kohima (125), Mon (72), Tuensang (35), Phek (9), Zunheboto (4) and Mokochung (2) while other three districts Kiphire, Longleng and Wokha have not reported any coronavirus case so far.

## Tougher lockdown to be imposed in Bengal from July 9

**KOLKATA, JUL 7 (PTI):** The West Bengal government on Tuesday decided to expand the areas under lockdown and impose tougher restrictions from July 9 to stem the relentless spike in COVID-19 cases, a senior official said.

The containment zones and buffer zones around them will be clubbed together and constitute a "broad-based" containment zone where total lockdown will be imposed from 5 pm on Thursday.

Local authorities will try and arrange home delivery of essential commodities for the residents of

these areas, he said.

"These broader containment zones may be subjected to strict lockdown and all offices, government and private, all non-essential activities, congregations, transportations and all marketing, industrial and trading activities be closed," an order issued by Additional Chief Secretary, Home, Alapan Bandyopadhyay said.

It, however, did not mention how long the fresh spell of the shutdown will last.

The current phase of lockdown, in force till July 31, was largely limited to containment zones alone.

## TMC launches protests against railway privatisation



**SUMMIT REPORT SILIGURI, 07 JUL:**

All India Trinamool Congress has launched protests in various states across the country, including Darjeeling, Kurseong, Kalimpong and Siliguri, NJP railway station, against the central government's move to privatise railways.

Tourism Minister, Gautam Dev addressing the press said, "The price of LPG, petrol and diesel is increasing day by day and public is facing lots

of problems because of this. The BJP government is busy in selling our country (India), we can see many government properties being sold to private companies. Why is this?"

Before BJP government this kind of behavior was never done and because of that as per our CM, Mamta Banerjee instructions we are organising protest rallies and will continue till 13 July".

Hill Trinamool leader, NB Khawas said, "At

present, the public of our country is distracted by the China issue and the BJP government is focusing on privatizing railways. We have heard that many private companies are being roped in for Indian Railways, so it is clear that the Indian Railways is heading towards privatization. We are against that so we are protesting here today."

He added that very soon Indian Railways will become Ambani Railways and the public will suffer.

## Arunachal Pradesh reports second COVID-19 death

**ITANAGAR, JUL 7 (PTI):** Arunachal Pradesh reported its second COVID-19 fatality as a 40-year-old man died at the Tomo Riba Institute of Health and Medical Sciences at Naharlagun, a senior health official said on Tuesday.

The man from Dirang in West Kameng district died in the states lone medical college and hospital on Monday, he said.

The man, suffering from Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD), was under week-long dialysis at TRIHMS, State Surveillance Officer L Jampa said.

The body of the deceased was handed over to the relatives after full sanitisation, he added. This is the second Covid-19 death in the Northeastern state. A 43-year-old woman, also a resident from Dirang, died on June 25 due to the infection.

Both the casualties have uncanny similarities -- they are from the same district, suffering from kidney ailments and recently returned from Delhi, Jampa said.

A fresh case of COVID-19 was reported from the Capital Complex, comprising of Itanagar, Naharlagun, Nirjuli and Banderdewa, taking the states total infection count to 270, he

said. The patient recently returned to the state from Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh and was asymptomatic. He has been shifted to a Covid Care Centre, the official said.

On Monday, 14 persons from Changlang district were discharged after recovery, Jampa said, adding that they have been advised two weeks home quarantine and self-monitoring.

Arunachal Pradesh at present has 176 active cases, while 92 persons have been discharged.

Total 27,645 samples have been tested for COVID-19 so far.

Capital Complex has registered the maximum number of cases at 84, followed by Changlang district at 40, West Kameng at 20 and Namsai at 12.

The state government imposed a week-long total lockdown in the Capital Complex that began on Monday evening, amid the spurt in cases.

The shutdown which came into force from 5 pm on Monday would continue till 5 am on July 13.

The state, which remained coronavirus-free until May 23, witnessed a sudden rise in cases after people started returning from other parts of the country.

## We've to get on to Ben early, hope Jason can get on top of him in first Test: Simmons

**SOUTHAMPTON, JUL 7 (PTI):** West Indies coach Phil Simmons believes the opening Test will be a battle between two all-rounder captains in which he expects his skipper Jason Holder to "get on top" of his England counterpart Ben Stokes.

Holder and Stokes, both top all-rounders, will lead their respective sides with the latter standing in for regular captain Joe Root who will miss the opening 'bio-secure' Test for the birth of his second child.

The three-Test series begins with the opening match at Ageas Bowl here on Wednesday.

"I think that it's going to be a toss-up between these two all-rounders and hopefully Jason can do what's necessary to get on top of Ben in this first Test," Simmons told reporters on the eve of the opening Test.

"Ben is one of them who leads from the front. That's been shown by all his exploits before in cricket, (so) we will have to make sure that we get on to him very

early, because he likes to do what is necessary for his team."

The 57-year-old also doesn't necessarily see Root's absence as an advantage.

"You have to be careful how you use an advantage because, with Root not being there, you have some youngster who wants to make a name for himself.

"And sometimes that's even harder than the players you know, so you have to be very careful about saying that it's an advantage," he said.

Simmons said Stokes lack of experience as a captain wont be an issue as veterans like Jimmy (Anderson) and (Stuart) Broad to turn to for suggestions. "Ben has not had that time (as captain) but they've had a successful team for a while, and that helps," he added.

"With the experience that he has behind him - Jimmy (Anderson) and Broad and people like that, there's a lot of experience to help him on the field if he comes a cropper. But it's hard to really say if that's a big advantage."

tage." Simmons also said he is not worried about his batting unit as they will have to produce the goods in all three facets of the game to outwit England at home.

Batting is often considered to be the weakling of the West Indies team, which had lost the opening Test against England in Birmingham by an innings and 209 runs during their last tour in 2017 due to the failure of the batsmen.

Simmons said the batters have prepared well and it is all about mindset now.

"I'm not concerned about the batting. The batsmen have worked very hard on getting to where they are now, and all that it takes now is for their mindset to be right for the Test match," Simmons said.

"We keep talking about the batting, and the bowling has been strong, but we must field well and catch well also to give ourselves that chance. Our frame of mind is that we have to play well in all three facets of the game in order to beat England."

## Appeals court deals 2nd blow to Trump asylum policy

**SAN FRANCISCO, JUL 7 (AP):** A federal appeals court on Monday blocked a key US policy to deny asylum to anyone who passes through another country without first seeking protection there, dealing it a second blow in less than a week.

The 9th US Circuit Court of Appeals ruling has no immediate impact because a judge appointed by President Donald Trump in Washington last week knocked down the policy on procedural grounds.

The three-judge appeals

panel in San Francisco found procedural errors as well as substantive reasons to block the policy while litigation continues.

The panel said it does virtually nothing to prevent asylum-seekers from being sent to unsafe countries, a violation of international treaty obligations.

The impact is also lessened by a pandemic-related measure imposed in March to quickly expel asylum-seekers. In May, the administration extended it indefinitely, relying on a little-known public health law to prevent the

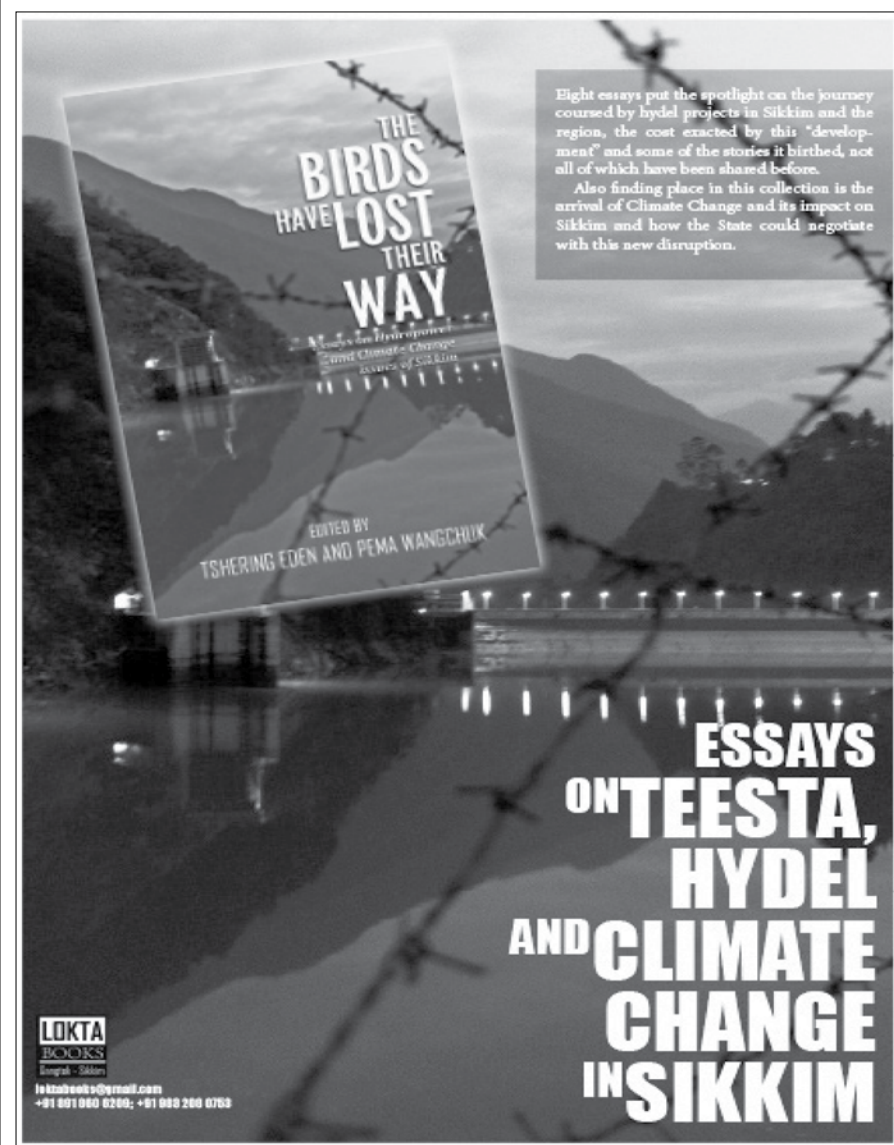
spread of disease. The Justice and Homeland Security departments didn't immediately respond to requests for comment late Monday. In response to last week's decision, Homeland Security said it strongly disagreed and was considering options.

The Supreme Court is unlikely to hear arguments before January if it takes the case.

The lawsuit was filed by the American Civil Liberties Union, Center for Constitutional Rights and Southern Poverty Law Center on behalf of immigrant ad-

vocacy and service groups. The court recognised the grave danger facing asylum seekers and blocked the Trump administration's attempt to make an end-run around asylum protections enacted by Congress, said ACLU attorney Lee Gelernt.

Judge William Fletcher, an appointee of President Bill Clinton, wrote the opinion. He was joined by Judge Richard Clifton, an appointee of George W. Bush, and Eric Miller, a Trump appointee who said the ruling should be much narrower in scope.





## Rani's struggle gives me hope to bring family out of poverty: Young striker Rajwinder

**NEW DELHI, JUL 7 (PTI):**

Waiting to earn her place in the senior Indian women's hockey team, young striker Rajwinder Kaur says she takes inspiration from skipper Rani's struggles and is determined to bring her family out of poverty with her sporting achievements.

Born in a small village in Punjab, life for Kaur, whose father is an autorickshaw driver and mother a housewife, was not particularly easy. But it changed when a few seniors in her school -- Sri Guru Arjun Dev Public School -- insisted on her taking up hockey.

"I wanted to be an athlete. I had the speed but when I was in standard IX, my seniors asked me to pursue hockey, I took the chance," the 21-year-old, who is part of the senior women's core probables group, was quoted as saying by Hockey India in a press release.

Her speed, abilities as a striker and natural flair caught the attention of national selectors during domestic tournaments in 2015.

Soon, she was picked for the junior national camp and was given an opportunity to play for India at the U-18 Asia Cup in 2016 in Malaysia.

"In 2017, I received a call up for the senior national camp where I got to closely interact with several top players," said Kaur, who comes from a village named Mugal Chak near Tarn Taran in Punjab.

"Everyone comes from very difficult backgrounds and each one's personal story is motivating but Rani's struggle in her younger days and her subsequent rise in the sport gives me hope because I too come from similar background and I hope I can also pull my family out of poverty by doing well in hockey."

Rani's father was a cart-puller but she fought her circumstances to become the youngest player in the national team at 15, drafted in to play in the 2010 World Cup. She eventually became the captain of the side.

Kaur, the eldest of three sisters and a brother, is a striker who also doubles up as an attacking midfielder.

Having been a regular in the senior national core probable group since 2017, Kaur patiently awaits her turn to earn her maiden International Cap. "I do feel disappointed when I don't see my name in the 18-member squad but I know I still have a lot of time and Chief Coach Sjoerd points out my shortcomings in a positive way and encourages me to improve on those areas.

"I know I have the skills and speed, I need to work on my fitness which is a weak point and since I mostly played as a striker in Junior days, I need to adapt to playing in the midfield."

Back home for a break, Kaur recalls her time during the nation-wide lockdown when the team was in SAI, Bengaluru.

# Always wanted Dhoni to bat up the order: Ganguly

**KOLKATA, JUL 7 (PTI):** Mahendra Singh Dhoni went on to become one of the best finishers in the game but on his 39th birthday, former India captain Sourav Ganguly said the World Cup winning skipper would have been even more lethal if he batted higher in the order.

Ganguly, the current BCCI president, led a barrage of birthday wishes for 'captain cool'.

"He's one of the great players of the world cricket, not just a finisher. Everyone talks about the way he finishes lower down the order. I always believed that he should bat up the order because he was so destructive," Ganguly said in a chat show hosted by young India opener Mayank Agarwal on BCCI's Twitter handle.

Most of Dhoni's India and IPL teammates, including Virat Kohli, too paid glowing tributes to him on his birthday.

A BCCI source confirmed that Pandya brothers, Hardik and Krunal, are on a charter flight from Baroda to Ranchi to wish Dhoni in person.

"Hardik has always looked up to Dhoni and they share a special bond. Flight connectivity is limited due to the



COVID-19 situation, so they have taken a charter flight and should be landing in Ranchi soon," the source told PTI.

Ganguly, who had handed Dhoni his international debut against Bangladesh on December 23, 2004, recalled how he rose to fame with his 148 against Pakistan batting at Number three.

"It was fantastic. If you look over a period of time in

the history of one-day cricket, the best players can find the fence under pressure consistently. MS Dhoni was one of them and that's why he was special," said Ganguly in his chat with Agarwal.

Asked whether it was him who picked Dhoni in the team, Ganguly said: "Ya that's true, but that's my job isn't it? That's every captain's job to pick the best and make the

best team possible. "You go by your instincts, you go by the faith on that player that he'll deliver for you. And, you know, I'm happy that Indian cricket got a Mahendra Singh Dhoni, because he's unbelievable," Ganguly said.

Dhoni was last seen in action about a year ago when he was run-out for 50 by a brilliant Martin Guptill throw that eventually ended India's

campaign at the 2019 World Cup. He was set to make a much awaited comeback with the 2020 IPL in March but the event has been postponed indefinitely due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The International Cricket Council posted a video of the 2019 World Cup where Kohli, among others, said he immensely benefited from the "special partnership" with Dhoni.

"He just enjoys every minute of being on field and our understandings been brilliant over the years because when I walked into the team the reason why he gave me chances because he believed that I played the right intention and I'll do anything for the team together," Kohli said.

"That's why the partnership is so special and even off the field he understands me fully I understand him completely. And I'm always up for listening to his advice on the field and it helps immensely to have someone of experience around. He is always going to be my captain in my head," said the India skipper.

Former India opener Virender Sehwag wrote: "Once in a generation, a player comes and a nation connects with him, think of him

as a member of their family, kuch bahut apna sa lagta hai. Happy Birthday to a man who is the world ( Dhoni-ya ) for his many admirers."

Kedar Jadhav, on the other hand, penned an emotional letter to Dhoni and described him as his "best friend, teammate and captain".

Dhoni's Chennai Super Kings and India teammate Suresh Raina was one of the first to wish him.

"Here's wishing a very Happy Birthday @msdhoni! to one of my favourite human, brother & a leader I could ever ask for! The man who has always played with his mind and heart. Thank you for all the inspiration Dhoni Bhai."

Former India batsman VVS Laxman hailed Dhoni's "composure and patience".

Another CSK teammate, Dwayne Bravo, came up with a "Helicopter Song" that chronicles the former India skipper's achievements in the game.

The charismatic Dhoni's presence was not limited to cricket only as several sportspersons including two-time Olympic medalist wrestler Sushil Kumar led the birthday greetings for the most successful Indian skipper.

## FC Dallas withdraws from the MLS is Back tournament

**FLORIDA, JUL 7 (AP):** FC Dallas has withdrawn from the MLS is Back tournament in Florida after 10 players tested positive for coronavirus.

The league said Monday that of the 557 players sequestered at a pair of Walt Disney World hotels, 13 have tested positive: 10 from Dallas, two from Nashville and one from Columbus. Additionally, a Dallas coach also tested positive.

"The decision to have them not participate in the tournament is in the best interests of everyone, of the Dallas players and the other 25 teams, and allows us to continue to manage the health and safety of our players while continuing to go forward with our plan," MLS Commissioner Don Garber told The Associated Press in a telephone interview on Monday.

Apart from the health and safety aspect, the number of positive cases also meant that Dallas could not play competitive games.

"As we continue to focus on the well-being of our players, coaches and staff who are in isolation in Orlando, we understand it is not in their best interests to compete at this time," coach Lucho Gonzalez said in a statement.

"While we're disappointed, the health and safety of our trav-

eling delegation as well as our league partners is our highest priority." FC Dallas announced last week that six players had tested positive upon arrival in Florida for the tournament, and the entire team was quarantined. As a result, the team's opening match on Thursday against the Vancouver Whitecaps was postponed.

With Dallas' withdrawal, Major League Soccer was devising a new schedule for the monthlong tournament, to be played without fans at ESPN's Wide World of Sports Complex at Disney World.

The tournament is still set to open Wednesday with a nationally televised match between Orlando City and expansion Inter Miami.

Also on Monday, LAFC forward Carlos Vela opted out of the tournament out of concerns for his wife, who is expecting their second child.

"I always want to give everything I have to my club, our fans and supporters and the city of L.A.," Vela said in a statement.

"However, it is in the best interest of the health of my family to stay home and be with my wife during what is a risky pregnancy." MLS shut down because of the coronavirus pandemic on March 12 after teams had each played two games. Garber vowed to stop the tournament if warranted. "If

there is a situation at any time that I believe that the protocols aren't working, and the health and safety of our players is at risk, then I will make the decision to shut down the tournament," Garber said.

"That is something I committed to the players and to our entire league early on. But this is proving that our protocols worked and our plan so far has been sound."

FC Dallas previously revealed that all players and staff tested negative for the coronavirus before leaving for the tournament on June 27. Upon arrival, two players tested positive. Subsequent tests found four more players infected with the virus that causes COVID-19.

"We absolutely agree with the league's decision to withdraw FC Dallas from the MLS is Back Tournament out of safety concerns for our players and staff," FC Dallas President Dan Hunt said.

"We're looking forward to resuming the 2020 season once the entire club is healthy and in position to play competitive matches at the highest level."

The league said no other team was in contact with the FC Dallas delegation. League protocol requires players and staff to be tested every two days upon arrival in Florida.

## Mourinho delighted by Lloris-Son clash during Tottenham win

**LONDON, JUL 7 (AP):** When Tottenham captain Hugo Lloris confronted Son Heung-min on the field at halftime, Jose Mourinho was far from annoyed.

The manager renowned for his own flashpoints and volatility was delighted to see tensions between teammates erupting in public view.

"It was beautiful," he said. "Probably it's a consequence of our meetings."

Angered by the timidity of a 3-1 loss at Sheffield United in the previous English Premier League round, Mourinho saw the passion he wanted as Tottenham this time secured a 1-0 victory over Everton on Monday.

Just before the break, with Tottenham leading,

Son lost the ball which led to Richardson having a chance to equalize but striking wide of Lloris' post. "I think to concede a chance a few seconds before halftime because we don't make the pressing properly," Lloris said, "that annoys me but it's part of football. Move on."

Only, Lloris didn't when the whistle blew for halftime, shouting as he raced over to Son. Giovanni Lo Celso and Harry Winks intervened to split the clashing teammates before they headed into the dressing room.

Son had created the goal in the 24th minute. The South Korea forward knocked the ball forward to Harry Kane who squared for Lo Celso to strike on the turn and Everton defender

Michael Keane deflected the ball into his own net.

"An amazing kid that everyone loves like Sonny, a team boy," Mourinho said. "But in that situation the captain thought the last minute of the first half you have to do more for the team. You have to give a different effort than you give. A couple of bad words but I think it's something very important for the team to grow up."

In the dressing room, Mourinho told them: "I have no doubt you will stick together until the end." That they did. Tottenham moved up to eighth place with its second victory from the four games since the league resumed after a three-month suspension.

But it's not only the hopes of returning to the Champions League that

are in the balance for Spurs. Even qualifying for the Europa League is uncertain with five games remaining.

"If you want to blame someone for that it is me," Mourinho said.

"I was critical of my boys because they are not enough critical of themselves (in Sheffield) ... I ask them to demand more from each other. That pressure to give for everyone." Mourinho was hired in November to rescue the season after Mauricio Pochettino was fired with a team that reached the 2019 Champions League final in 14th place. "When you play a season like this one it is very easy to fall apart as a team," Mourinho said. "Today we showed we are still together and ready to compete and ready to fight until the end."



# France: Macron ousts security chief after police protests



**PARIS, JUL 7 (AP):** French President Emmanuel Macron ousted his top security official Monday following protests over police brutality, as part of a government shake-up aimed at focusing on France's post-pandemic economic recovery for the remaining two years of Macron's term.

The man named as France's new interior minister, Gerald Darmanin, is facing a preliminary investigation into a rape accusation that he firmly denies.

Macron's office said the probe was not an obstacle to Darmanin's appointment but wouldn't further comment on the ongoing investigation.

In a surprise move, Macron also named a provocative lawyer who has defended WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange and suspected terrorists as head of the Justice

Ministry. And a former Green Party lawmaker was appointed to lead the powerful Ministry for Ecological Transition after Macron came under criticism for lagging on promises to cut emissions.

The 42-year-old centrist leader, whose presidency has been buffeted by protests and now the virus crisis, promised that the new government would be one of purpose and unity.

Macron tweeted that his 2017 campaign promises to modernize France and free up its businesses remain central to his agenda, but he must adapt to the international upheavals and crises we are experiencing. A new path must be forged.

First among the priorities that Macron listed is helping the world's sixth-largest economy

recover from the battering delivered by the coronavirus pandemic.

His new lineup includes some new faces but also leans heavily on loyalists as Macron seeks to steady the country. One key change is at the Interior Ministry, which is in charge of police.

Former budget minister Gerald Darmanin was named to replace Interior Minister Christophe Castaner, who had come under fire amid widespread French protests against racial injustice and police violence spurred by the death of George Floyd in the United States.

In response, Castaner initially announced a ban on the use of chokeholds in policing, but he then backed down in the face of counter-demonstrations and pressure by police unions. He also launched an experiment

with expanded Taser use.

Darmanin, 37, a member of Macron's young guard, is a former conservative who joined Macron's centrist party in 2017 and is seen as outspoken but effective.

The rape investigation casts as a shadow over his appointment. An preliminary probe was opened in 2017 after a woman said he raped her when she sought legal help in 2009.

Prosecutors ordered it dropped the following year for lack of evidence, but last month the Paris appeals court ordered it reopened. Darmanin, the highest-ranking French official accused of sexual misconduct in the #MeToo era, says the encounter was consensual, and sued the woman for slander.

The new government reflects a balance of figures from the left and right and from outside

politics altogether -- like Eric Dupond-Moretti, arguably France's most famous lawyer.

Among his clients have been Assange; accomplices to Mohamed Merah, who killed Jewish children, a rabbi and paratroopers in a 2012 rampage around Toulouse; and former French government ministers accused of tax fraud or sexual harassment.

Two other important changes are at the Labor Ministry, whose new chief, Elisabeth Borne, will have to deal with a pending surge in unemployment, and the Ministry for Ecological Transition, to be led by former Green Party legislator Barbara Pompili. Macron didn't change the finance or health ministers, posts central to helping France through the virus crisis and recession, or the foreign and defense ministers.

The new government will be led by Prime Minister Jean Castex, who was appointed Friday. Macron last week ditched Edouard Philippe, who as prime minister steered France through its coronavirus lockdown and the first three years of Macron's presidency.

Castex is a career civil servant, and his low profile suggests that Macron doesn't want to be overshadowed should he choose to seek reelection in 2022. Macron has not yet said if he'll run for a second term.

## Hospitals approaching capacity as Miami closes restaurants



**MIAMI, JUL 7 (AP):** Hospitals rapidly approached capacity in Florida and Texas, and the Miami area closed restaurants again Monday because of the surging coronavirus, as the US emerged from a Fourth of July weekend of picnics, pool parties and beach outings that health officials fear could fuel the rapidly worsening outbreak.

The see-saw effect restrictions lifted, then reimposed after a resurgence of cases has been seen around the US in recent weeks and is expected again after a long holiday that saw party-goers and sunbathers gathering, many without masks, on one of the biggest weekends of the summer.

Confirmed cases are on the rise in 41 out of 50 states plus the District of Columbia, and the percentage of tests coming back positive for the virus is increasing in 39 states.

Florida, which recorded an all-time high of 11,400 cases Saturday and has seen its positive test rate over the past two weeks reach more than 18%, has been hit especially hard, along with other Sunbelt states such as Arizona, California and Texas.

In Florida's Miami-Dade County, population 2.7 million, Mayor Carlos Gimenez issued an emergency order closing restaurants and certain other indoor places, including gyms and vacation rentals, seven weeks after they were allowed to reopen. We want to ensure that our hospitals continue to have the staffing necessary to save lives, Gimenez said in a statement.

Hair salons and stores will remain open along with hotel pools and summer camps. Beaches will reopen on Tuesday after they being closed over the weekend.

But if we see crowding and people not following the public health rules, I will be forced to close the beaches again, the mayor warned. Hospitalizations across the state have been ticking

upward, with nearly 1,700 patients admitted in the past seven days compared with 1,200 the previous week.

Five hospitals in the St. Petersburg area were out of intensive care unit beds, officials said.

Miami-Dade said it has more than 1,600 coronavirus patients now in the hospital, more than double from two weeks ago. Miami's Baptist Hospital had only four of its 88 ICU beds available.

If we continue to increase at the pace we have been, we won't have enough ventilators, enough rooms, said Dr. David De La Zerda, a respiratory specialist at

Miami's Jackson Memorial Hospital.

Officials in Texas likewise said hospitals are in danger of being overwhelmed.

Hospitalizations statewide surged past 8,000 for the first time over the July Fourth weekend, a more than fourfold increase in the past month. Houston officials said intensive care units there have exceeded capacity.

Along the border with Mexico, two severely ill patients were flown hundreds of miles north to Dallas and San Antonio because hospitals in the Rio Grande Valley were full.

In Arizona, the number of people hospitalized with COVID-19 topped 3,200, a new high, and hospitals statewide were at 89% capacity. Confirmed cases surpassed 100,000, and more than half of those infected, or over 62,000, are under 44 years old, state health officials said.

Around the country, health officials have warned that the surge is being driven in large part by younger people who are disregarding the social distancing rules and that they could easily spread the virus to older, more vulnerable people, such as their parents and grandparents.

The coronavirus is blamed for over a half-million deaths

worldwide, including more than 130,000 in the U.S., according to the tally kept by Johns Hopkins University.

The number of confirmed infections nationwide stood at 2.9 million, though the real number is believed to be 10 times higher.

New cases per day nationwide have hit record levels well over 50,000. The daily count has surged more than 80% over the past two weeks, according to an Associated Press analysis.

Average deaths per day have fallen over the same period from around 600 to about 510, in what experts say reflects advances in treatment and prevention as well as the large share of cases among young adults, who are more likely than older ones to survive COVID-19.

But deaths are considered a lagging indicator that is, it takes time for people to get sick and die. And experts are worried the downward trend in deaths could reverse itself. The trajectory of the virus following the July Fourth celebrations is being closely watched as states weigh whether to reopen schools in the coming months.

If we don't control things now, we're going to see things happening into mid-August to late August, said Dr. Cyrus Shahpar of Resolve to Save Lives, a nonprofit organization that works to prevent epidemics.

Meanwhile, three of the top U.S. medical organizations issued an open letter urging Americans to wear masks, social distance and wash hands often to help stop the worst public health crisis in generations.

The American Medical Association, American Nurses Association and American Hospital Association issued the plea in the absence of a mask-wearing order from Washington and said steps taken early on that helped slow the spread of COVID-19 were too quickly abandoned.

## US thanks India for hosting Dalai Lama since 1959

**WASHINGTON, JUL 7 (PTI):** The US has thanked India for hosting the Dalai Lama since 1959 as the world commemorated the 85th birthday of the Tibetan spiritual leader. The Dalai Lama has been living in India ever since he fled Tibet in 1959 following a Chinese crackdown on an uprising by the local population. The Tibetan government-in-exile operates from Dharamsala in Himachal Pradesh. Over 1,60,000 Tibetans live in India.

"Happy 85th birthday to His Holiness @DalaiLama, who has inspired the world through his peace & kindness, and as a symbol of the struggle for Tibetans and their heritage. We thank India for hosting His Holiness and Tibetans in freedom since 1959 & wish His Holiness happiness," the US state department's South and Central Asian Affairs (SCA) bureau tweeted on Monday.

Speaker of the US House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi also conveyed her greetings to the Tibetan spiritual leader on his birthday.

The Dalai Lama is a messenger of hope, whose spiritual guidance has been a vital force to advance warm-heartedness and compassion, promote religious harmony, secure human rights and preserve the language and culture of the Tibetan people, she said.

Sadly, the aspirations of His Holiness and the Tibetan people remain unfulfilled as the oppressive Chinese regime continues its disgraceful campaign of persecution, Pelosi said. She noted that the US Congress on a bipartisan basis has long spoken with one voice in defence of those persecuted by Beijing and will continue to do so.

In January, House Democrats defended the rights of Tibetans to practice their faith, speak their language and celebrate their culture free from Beijing's repressive grip by passing the Tibet Policy and Support Act, which makes clear the US position that interference by Beijing in the process of recognising a successor or reincarnation of the 14th Dalai Lama would represent a clear violation of the religious freedoms of the Tibetan people.

"The Senate must pass this bipartisan legislation and support the bond of friendship that has existed between the United States, the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan people for decades," Pelosi said.

In honour of this special day and of the dreams of the Tibetan people, America remains committed to opposing the acceleration of Beijing's aggression toward the people of Tibet, as well as its brutal campaign against the Uyghur people, its suppression of free speech and assault on the one country, two systems' doctrine in Hong Kong, and its violent efforts to undermine religious freedom and human rights throughout China, she said.

## TikTok to leave Hong Kong as security law raises worries

**HONG KONG, JUL 7 (AP):** TikTok said Tuesday it will stop operations in Hong Kong, joining other social media companies in warily eyeing ramifications of a sweeping national security law that took effect last week.

The short-form video app's planned departure from Hong Kong comes as various social media platforms and messaging apps including Facebook, WhatsApp, Telegram, Google and Twitter balk at the possibility of providing user data to Hong Kong authorities. The social media companies say they are assessing implications of the security law, which prohibits what Beijing views as secessionist, subversive or terrorist activities or as foreign intervention in the city's internal affairs.

In the communist-ruled mainland, the foreign social media platforms are blocked by China's Great Firewall. Critics see the law as Beijing's boldest step yet to erase the legal divide between the former British colony and the mainland's authoritarian Communist Party system.

TikTok said in a statement that it had decided to halt operations in light of recent events.

Facebook and its messaging app WhatsApp said in separate statements Monday that they would freeze the review of government requests for user data in Hong Kong, pending further assessment of the National Security Law, including formal human rights due diligence and consulta-

tions with international human rights experts. Hong Kong was convulsed with massive, sometimes violent anti-government protests for much of last year as the former British colony's residents reacted to proposed extradition legislation, since withdrawn, that might have led to some suspects facing trial in mainland Chinese courts. The new law criminalizes some pro-democracy slogans like the widely used Liberate Hong Kong, revolution of our time, which the Hong Kong government says has separatist connotations.

The fear is that it erodes the special freedoms of the semi-autonomous city, which has operated under a one country, two systems framework since China took control in 1997. That arrangement has allowed Hong Kong's people freedoms not permitted in mainland China, such as unrestricted internet access and public dissent. Telegram, whose platform has been used widely to spread pro-democracy messages and information about the protests, understands the importance of protecting the right to privacy of our Hong Kong users, said Mike Ravdonikas, a spokesperson for the company.

Telegram has never shared any data with the Hong Kong authorities in the past and does not intend to process any data requests related to its Hong Kong users until an international consensus is reached in relation to the ongoing

political changes in the city, he said. Twitter also paused all data and information requests from Hong Kong authorities after the law went into effect last week, the company said, emphasizing that it was committed to protecting the people using our service and their freedom of expression.

Like many public interest organisations, civil society leaders and entities, and industry peers, we have grave concerns regarding both the developing process and the full intention of this law, the company said in a statement. Google likewise said it had paused production on any new data requests from Hong Kong authorities.

Though social platforms have yet to be blocked in Hong Kong, users have begun scrubbing their accounts and deleting pro-democracy posts out of fear of retribution. That retreat has extended to the streets: Many shops and stores that publicly stood in solidarity with protesters have removed the pro-democracy sticky notes and artwork that had adorned their walls.

Under implementation rules of Article 43 of the national security law, which give the city's police force sweeping powers in enforcing the legislation, platforms, publishers and internet service providers may be ordered to take down any electronic message published that is likely to constitute an offence endangering national security or is likely to cause the occurrence of an offence endangering national security.

Sikkim SCAN | CapitalTIMES | Neighbourhood WATCH | Sports & Specials | ElseWhere | EICETERA

*It's easy to relax... When you can trust the News.*

**To book ad-space, contact SummitTIMES at**

**GANGTOK:**  
For circulation details Contact: +91-9489976195, +91-9447824892 & for Advertisement booking at +91-9933427505 or at office no 03592 208498. Mail us at advertise@summittimes.com

**SILIGURI:**  
Mr. Mani Rai, M/s. Space Ads, B.R. Ambedkar Building, Room No.7, Ist. 98308397. E-mail: contact.synapse@gmail.com/irahad\_sil22@rediffmail.com

floor: Opp. Ganga Hotel, Hill Cart Road, Siliguri - 03. Ph. +91-9832318644/ 9806462889/9130325100 or mail at mani\_silguri@yahoo.co.in.

**KOLKATA OFFICE:**  
Irrahad Ali/ Intezayaz. Synapse, 6, Madan Street, Mazine - 2, 2nd floor: Kolkata - 700072. Ph. 033-22124348/ fax 033-22124337/ mob. +91-9830547714/ +91-98308397. E-mail: contact.synapse@gmail.com/irahad\_sil22@rediffmail.com

**Phone**  
03592-208498  
+91-9832554698  
+91-9832080753

**www.summittimes.com**  
news@summittimes.com  
summittimes6@gmail.com  
advertise@summittimes.com

**Address:**  
Santa Bhawan Complex, Church Road  
Near Diesel Power House (DPH)  
Gangtok, East Sikkim, 737101

**VIDEO NEWS SECTION**

facebook.com/SummitTimesIndia

**SUMMITTIMES**





**SHOPPING BAGS IN HAND!** The actress, Olivia Wilde steps out to run a few errands.

## 'Black Widow': Florence Pugh Will Take Over After Scarlett Johansson, Says Director

Marvel's Black Widow led by Scarlett Johansson is the origin story of the beloved Avenger and the actress' final act as the superhero. Apart from being a chance for fans to give Black Widow a tear-filled goodbye, the movie also introduces some new characters. New information surfacing about the film's plot reveals that some characters might be more important than we were led to believe. The Phase 4 film has a side mission - introducing Florence Pugh's character Yelena Belova as a part of the Marvel Cinematic Universe.

Black Widow director Cate Shortland revealed that although fans are approaching the film as an origin story, so they "went in the opposite direction", as per reports in IndieWire. Talking about Florence Pugh's performance in the film, she said, "We knew she would be great, but we didn't know how great. Scarlett is so gracious, like, 'Oh, I'm handing her the baton'. so it's going to propel another female storyline."

Say what you will, we're still watching Black Widow as the much-anticipated farewell to Natasha Romanoff. The fandom isn't

over her loss in Avengers: Endgame. The new details, however, confirm a fan theory that suggests the Little Women actress will be a part of the next generation of Marvel's superheroes. Florence Pugh's possibly larger role in the Marvel Cinematic Universe is quite a big deal considering her impressive career right from playing Lady Macbeth back in 2016, to portraying WWE star Paige in Fighting With My Family and more recently, getting an Oscar nomination for her role in Little Women. This could mark a whole new chapter in her filmography. And something tells us, it's going to be an absolute treat to watch her take over.

Yelena Belova was first introduced in the Black Widow teaser trailer alongside Rachel Weisz and David Harbour. That casting had use floored!

Since then we've had some hypable special looks and a final trailer before the film drops. However, Black Widow was pushed to November 6 from May this year due to the pandemic.



## Priyanka Chopra Jonas **CONFIRMED** as the newest cast member in Matrix 4 opposite Keanu Reeves

Priyanka Chopra Jonas is joining stars Keanu Reeves and Neil Patrick Harris as she lands a role in the popular sci-fi film Matrix 4. PeeCee has started shooting for the fourth instalment of this hit franchise in Berlin after COVID-19 decreased in Germany.

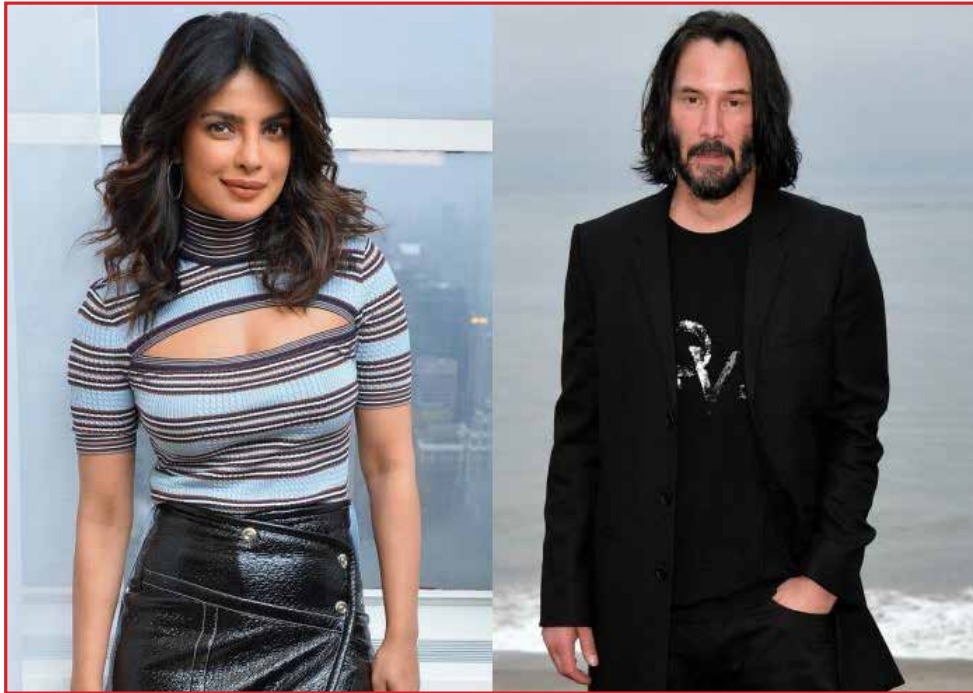
The Matrix series is one of the most followed sci-fi films of all times and global icon Priyanka Chopra Jonas has reportedly joined the cast of the fourth instalment of the Keanu Reeves starrer. According to Variety, Chopra Jonas has started shooting the popular sci-fi in Berlin as COVID-19 numbers are decreasing over there. The film's shooting schedule was put on halt in March after the Coronavirus pandemic blew up. With only a minor chunk of the film being shot, it is not too late for PeeCee to join the hit fiction film.

Previously, the team had finished its shooting schedule in San Francisco before moving to Germany post the break. There have also been reports about the cast of the film training for certain action sequences that are a major part of the film. In addition to Keanu and PeeCee, the star cast includes names like Jada Pinkett Smith, Carrie-Anne Moss, Yahya Abdul-Mateen II and Neil Patrick Harris

in pivotal roles. According to reports via Republic World, Priyanka Chopra Jonas will also be seen in a key role.

Keanu Reeves will play the lead role of Neo in the much-loved action drama

since its inception in 1999. The plot of this film revolves around a hacker and how he learns about the reality of technology. This film is followed by the sequels The Matrix Reloaded and The



film. He had previously revealed in an interaction that he was impressed with the storyline of the film and hence decided to take up Matrix 4. Keanu Reeves has been a part of The Matrix series ever

Matrix Revolutions. The film Matrix 4 is expected to hit the theatres on April 1, 2022, and the makers are all set to be back with a bang via the fourth instalment of the film.

## Halle Berry pulls out of transgender role in a movie after backlash

**LOS ANGELES, JUL 7 (PTI):** Hollywood star Halle Berry has apologised and pulled out from playing a transgender character in a movie following criticism on social media.

The 53-year-old actor had spoken about the role during an Instagram Live interview.

"(The film is about) a character where the woman is a trans character, so she's a woman that transitioned into a man," Berry said in the interview with hairstylist Christin Brown.

"She's a character in a project I love that I might be doing."

The announcement was followed by severe social media backlash with many people highlighting the issue of cisgender actors playing transgender roles in Hollywood.

Berry apologised on Monday night and tweeted that she was no longer considering the role.

Over the weekend, I had the opportunity to discuss my consideration of an upcoming role as a transgender man, and I'd like to apologize for those remarks. As a cisgender woman, I now

understand that I should not have considered this role, and that the transgender community should undeniably have the opportunity to tell their own stories, she wrote on Twitter.

I am grateful for the guidance and



critical conversation over the past few days and will continue to listen, educate and learn from this mistake. I vow to be an ally in using my voice to promote better representation on-screen, both in front of and behind the camera, the actor said.

Hollywood is waking up to criticism when it comes to trans representation. In the past, cisgender actors have played trans characters be it Jared Leto in Dallas Buyers Club or Eddie Murphy in The Danish Girl.

## 'Stargirl' gets season two order

**LOS ANGELES, JUL 7 (PTI):** Superhero series "Stargirl" has secured a second season at The CW.

The renewal, which comes midway through the show's first season, will see the network and its digital platforms become the exclusive home of the series starting with its second chapter.

According to Variety, the second installment of the live-action series, fronted by Brec Bassinger, will debut exclusively on The CW and stream the next day on the network's streaming platform DC Universe.

"Stargirl" follows Courtney Whitmore (Bassinger), a struggling high-schooler who relocates to Blue Valley, Nebraska when her mother Barbara (Amy Whitmore) gets married.

After finding out that her stepfather Pat Dugan (Luke Wilson) was Starman's sidekick Stripesy, Courtney uses his old Cosmic Staff to become Stargirl and inspire an unlikely group of young heroes to fight villains of the past.

The series also stars Trae Romano, Cameron Gellman, Yvette Monreal, Anjelika Washington, among others.

## TikTok to pull out of Hong Kong

Hong Kong's new security law is said to make it compulsory for companies doing business in the city to Oshare user data with the Chinese government.

Bytedance-owned short-video sharing platform TikTok is pulling out of Hong Kong amid a new security law that took effect last week.

Hong Kong's new security law is said to make it compulsory for companies doing business in the city to share user data with the Chinese government.

The legal change has made large technology companies to re-evaluate their plans on data sharing in Hong Kong.

Google and Twitter have suspended their reviews of user data requests from Hong Kong's government just after the security law was enacted.

Facebook, too, has said it is pausing data requests from government authorities until it assesses the impact of the new law.

In this line of tech companies, TikTok happens to be the first company that has decided to leave Hong Kong. The video-sharing platform has over 150,000 users in the semi-autonomous city.

In light of recent events, we've decided to stop operations of the TikTok app in Hong Kong," a spokesperson for TikTok told new agency Axios.

The short-video sharing platform said it has not shared any user information with the Chinese government.

**DEAR READERS,**  
IF YOU ARE HAVING TROUBLE GETTING YOUR COPY OF THE SUMMIT TIMES IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD, PLEASE MESSAGE OR WHATSAPP US YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS AT 9832556698 AND WE WILL ENSURE THAT THE NEWSPAPER REACHES YOU.

**ARIES:** Partnerships of all kinds are blessed under the influence of this cosmic camaraderie. So, if you and your beau have been having trouble agreeing upon something, you could just find a common ground—by which we mean get your way by making them feel like they're getting theirs. Sounds like a win-win for everybody involved! Those who are in a business partnership will find that it's a wonderful day to brainstorm and exchange ideas. Practicality is your keyword for now.

Tip: It's all about finding a middle ground.

**TAURUS:** The word karma gets a bad rap because of what we associate with it. But, if you look at it from a higher perspective, you will realise that it's neither good nor bad. It is a necessary step in our evolution, one that helps us move closer to moksha. Taurus, you are learning to honour the challenges as learning lessons.

Tip: Honour the karmic lessons on your path.

**GEMINI:** What is your relationship with joy, Gemini? Does the idea of claiming your happiness induce panic or awaken a sense of calm within? We often think of sorrow as a constant and happiness as the guest who is inevitably in a hurry to leave. Just for today, ask them to switch roles. Think of anything that's weighing you down or lowering your vibration as temporary, as you gently walk it to the exit door.

Tip: Reclaim joy.

**CANCER:** There are so many fish in the sea, but that doesn't mean you have to engage with each one of them. Bask in the

attention (there's a lot more where that came from), but know who is worth your time and who isn't. Compromising for the sake of 'settling down' would be an act of disservice to yourself, Cancer. Some of you could be dealing with a stalker ex.

Tip: Your time and energy are precious.

**LEO:** Understanding the higher reason behind why you are experiencing a certain challenge will help you acknowledge the soul lesson you are meant to learn. So, summon your higher self and break the cycle. Given that things are not going as planned, there will be times when you're tempted to take the easy way out or say something hurtful that you will come to regret later. Remembering that every action we take has repercussions will help you keep yourself in check.

Tip: Acknowledge the soul lessons.

**VIRGO:** It's time to revisit the goals you set for yourself earlier this year. Who says you have to give up on your dream, Virgo? Don't let the chaos convince you that the game is over. You have six months to achieve all the things you have set out to. Make them count! Some of you are at a point where you no longer resonate with your day job and are yearning to live a life of passion. Quit waiting for somebody to give you the go-ahead and take the first step.

Tip: You don't need anybody's permission to live a life of passion.

**LIBRA:** It's funny how they say 'look beyond the veil' when the veil in itself is an illusion. The guidance you need at any point in time is always available to you. All you have to do

is tune in and listen. The path of meditation and contemplation will help you strengthen your connection with your spirit team. What you want to be mindful of, however, is taking anything you see or hear at face value. Given that your intuition is heightened at this point, there is no reason for you to doubt that niggling feeling you have been having about a certain person or situation.

Tip: Strengthen your connection with your spirit guides.

**SCORPIO:** There is an inner revolution within you, one that is making you aware of your own power. It's true that destiny plays an integral role in determining the course of our lives. But, the courage and conviction we display in the given circumstances make the soul lesson easier, clearing the path for us to move forward. Expansion is a major theme in the Scorpio HQ. Your mantra: go forth and conquer! Your interpersonal relationships, however, could pose as a challenge right now.

Tip: Expansion is a big theme right now.

**SAGITTARIUS:** There are always two sides to every story. Remembering this will ensure that peace and harmony are constant in the Sagittarius HQ. But that doesn't mean you should be agreeing for the sake of agreeing with somebody. The key is to put your point across in a manner that fosters connection rather than disrupting it. Given that chaos has been a constant for some time now, you could also find yourself playing mediator today. Staying centred is the best to make an unbiased decision.

Tip: When in doubt, choose peace.

**CAPRICORN:**

At any point in time, you have two options: to live a life of passion or let mediocrity salt your game. What will you choose, Capricorn? The cosmic climate is awakening the fire that has been dormant within you, motivating you to pursue your dreams. Remember, the greater the risks, the more magnificent the rewards. So, don't be afraid to do something you have never done before. Oh, and one more thing: the day you plant the seed is not the day you eat the fruit. Let patience become your power word.

Tip: Go forth and conquer!

**AQUARIUS:** It's funny how they say 'look beyond the veil'. As somebody who is connected to their intuition, you understand that the veil in itself is an illusion. Trust the visions you're having at this moment, Aquarius. They're helping you move closer to your true north. Love and romance could also be a big theme right now, especially for coupled war bearers. What you're experiencing right now is a rare and precious connection that transcends the boundaries of space and time. Bask in this connection, but don't forget about your friends who are vying for your attention.

Tip: Here's to love and other intoxicants!

**PISCES:** Romance is a big mood in the Pisces HQ. So what if you're under house arrest? You have the power to create a slice of paradise exactly where you are. Let your imaginative side take the reins. Quarantined away from your crab? Don't let the blues get to you. Set up a virtual date, complete with champagne and mood light. Following a dress code might also be a good idea.

Tip: It's time for love!