



IMPOSSIBLE TO BE COCKY ABOUT AN ENIGMA LIKE ACTING: VINAY PATHAK
pg 08

WHAT SETS GOOD AND BAD LEADERS APART IN THE CORONAVIRUS ERA

04

MICHAEL B JORDAN CALLS ON HOLLYWOOD TO COMMIT TO BLACK HIRING'

pg 08



SummitTIMES

Vol 05 | Issue 148 | Gangtok | Monday | 08 June 2020

ON TOP OF THE NEWS

RNI No. SIKENG/2016/69420

Pages 8 | 5

LTVC meets Minister Upreti with request to allow Sushmita back into Sikkim

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 07 JUNE:**

Following up on their appeal to the State government to allow Sushmita Subba and her family permission to enter the State, a team of representatives from Limboo Tamang Voluntary Committee called on Minister Arun Upreti with the same request on Sunday.

Ms Subba and her family, it may be recalled, are stranded in Rangpo, West Bengal, not allowed to enter the State since they do not have Certificates of Identification or Voter cards. They do however have Aadhar Cards and their area Panchayat has also vouched for them as Sikkim residents. The present rules however allow only COI-holders and/or Sikkim voters to return.

The LTVC team discussed the case with the Minister and requested him to follow up the matter, informs an LTVC press release.

The release adds that the Minister heard them out patiently and has assured cooperation in this regard.

"We extend our heartfelt gratitude to minister sir for giving us his precious time and also wish that he would continue to support LTVC's cause and be there to hear us whenever we need his assistance," LTVC has conveyed.

Eastern Ladakh standoff: Indian, Chinese armies agree to resolve issue through talks

NEW DELHI, JUNE 7 (PTI):

Indian and Chinese military commanders agreed to peacefully resolve the current border issue in eastern Ladakh in accordance with bilateral pacts as well as the agreement reached between leadership of the two countries, the External Affairs Ministry said on Sunday.

The two sides held high-level military talks on Saturday in an attempt to resolve the month-long bitter standoff in mountainous eastern Ladakh.

"Both sides agreed to peacefully resolve the situation in the border areas in accordance with various bilateral agreements and keeping in view the agreement between the leaders that peace and tranquillity in the India-China border regions is essential for the overall development of bilateral relations, the MEA said in a brief statement

turn to pg 02

**ARPAN PRADHAN
GANGTOK, 07 JUNE:**

Four people having tested positive for COVID-19 in one day and taking Sikkim's tally up to seven over the weekend appears to have forced the State Government to take a rethink on the reopening of schools and colleges earlier scheduled for 01 July. There are strong indications that the date of reopening educational institutions in the state will be deferred.

As per the earlier notification, educational institutions were scheduled for reopening on 01 July and the students from outside directed to do register to enter Sikkim from 15 June onwards giving them time to complete the mandatory 14-day quarantine in time for resumption of classes.

With 15 June approaching closer, the State has asked them to hold on a bit longer as-



sured that they will be given a fortnight's advance notice on reopening of schools. With only a week left for the 15 June deadline, it is unlikely that they will be

allowed to register to return just yet,

Director, Higher Education, Education Department, Kapil Meena, has advised students from outside studying in

colleges and universities here not to worry about their return just yet.

He has informed that the registration and return will take some more time and that the same

will be notified by the state Government in the coming days.

A clear advance time of 15 days will be given to them and the students will be allowed back in a

phases manner, he said.

Speaking to SummitTimes, Mr Meena said that in the first phase, only final semester students may be allowed to return so that they can complete their final examination formalities.

"The Department has a proper plan on how to permit students from outside into the State and join their colleges and universities. We will be permitting the final year students first as the number of such students will be low and manageable. The rest will be permitted back in a phased manner," he detailed.

He urged students not to worry and said that they should focus on staying safe wherever they are.

As per sources, there are more than 2,000 students from outside the state studying in Sikkim. Most of these students are enrolled with the private colleges and uni-

versities. Students from outside who are studying in various Government College and Universities in the state are lower in number, sources inform.

It is also learnt that a high-level meeting to be chaired by the Chief Minister on Monday is expected to make a final decision on the reopening of educational institutions in the State.

At present, students from outside cannot even register on the State Government portal.

Meanwhile, Mr Meena adds that following the earlier notification and directives of the Government, the Department has directed all educational institution to begin preparing for reopening.

It may also be recalled that the State Government has shouldered the responsibility of arranging quarantine facilities for returning non-local students on their respective institutions.

CS convenes State Task Force on COVID-19 meeting



GANGTOK, 07 JUN [IPR]: Chief Secretary, SC Gupta convened the State Task Force Meeting to review and assess the present scenario of COVID-19 and the future course of action at Tashiling Secretariat today.

The meeting was also joined by the District Collectors, Superintendent of Police, Chief Medical Officers of four districts through video conferencing.

During the meeting, a detailed discussion on the status of evacuation of the returnees, compulsory testing of people under quarantine, protocols to be strictly maintained during home quarantine and other areas requiring urgent at-

tention and intervention were discussed.

The meeting also took stock of the present situation and the strategy for testing of the primary contacts of the positive patients and other returnees.

At the outset, the Chief Secretary gauged on the preparedness with regard to the conduct of Class X and XII board examinations to be held from the 1st of July and online entrance examination for All India Institute of Medical Sciences to be held shortly. In view of the board examination, he directed the District Administration to hand over the Senior Secondary Schools which have

been converted into quarantine centres to the Education Department latest by 25 June.

The Chief Secretary sought feedback from the members of State Task Force and District Collectors and added that the road ahead should be focused on reducing the spread of corona virus and ensuring that all adequate safety norms are adhered to.

He also enquired about the status of quarantine centres, both free and paid in the State. The Chief Secretary also made assessment to formulate plans on perception management, strategies on standard procedure, and future course of action.

NO NEW COVID CASES ON SUNDAY

Health Secy appeals for strict compliance of quarantine protocols

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 07 JUNE:

Health Director General and Secretary, Dr PT Bhutia, has appealed on returnees to strictly follow all guidelines prescribed for the 28-day quarantine. Returnees are expected complete a 28-day regime, the initial days in a facility quarantine centre and the rest under home quarantine.

He mentioned that the State has been following Central guidelines for facility and home quarantine which is 14 days of facility quarantine followed by 14 days of home quarantine.

He asserted that if any person is sent for home quarantine after having tested negative without having completed 14 days of facility quarantine, they are required to still complete 28 days of quarantine.

In his daily health bulletin on Sunday, Dr Bhutia mentioned that proper counselling is given to returnees and their family members before they are sent for home quarantine.

"We even can take legal action

in case of any violations during home quarantine but in the present situation it is more important for the person in home quarantine to themselves seriously follow all guidelines as a small mistake can affect the whole society," he said.

His comments are clearly in response to the detection of two COVID-19 cases in which the ladies after they had completed facility quarantine and were under home quarantine. Shortly after this was confirmed, rumors were rife that the home quarantine had been slack and that they could have transmitted the virus to others.

These have been dismissed as rumours by official sources, but no chances are being taken.

Dr Bhutia informs that contact tracing of both patients has been done and samples have been taken for testing. Samples of 25 direct contacts of these two patients, including their roommates and staff at their facility quarantine facility, have been taken and sent for testing.

He added that RNA extraction of direct contacts has been going on and reports were likely to come

out by Monday.

Meanwhile, samples of 80 more contacts of South Sikkim patients were taken today.

Dr Bhutia mentioned that the State's seven positive patients are currently undergoing treatment at the isolation ward at STNM Hospital.

Likewise, he added that 19 patients were admitted in the triage facility at STNM Hospital with flu symptoms and some were waiting their test reports.

While updating on the testing reports, he informed that a total of 1,711 samples were sent to North Bengal Medical College & Hospital, Siliguri for RT-PCR testing and reports of 1,424 samples have been received so far. Result for 287 samples are still awaited. These samples were sent before 29 May after which Sikkim began conducting tests at its own Viral Laboratory at STNM Hospital.

Of the samples awaiting results from Siliguri - 139 are from South Sikkim, 120 from East Sikkim and 27 from West Sikkim.

turn to pg 02

60,000 people affected by flood in six Assam districts

GUWAHATI, JUN 7 (PTI):

The flood situation in Assam remained serious on Sunday with nearly 60,000 people still affected by the deluge in six districts, officials said.

The flood waters receded from Lakhimpur district but entered two new districts Dhemaji and West Karbi Anglong, they said.

According to the daily flood report of the Assam State Disaster

Management Authority (ASDMA), 59,840 people have been affected due to floods in Dhemaji, Goalpara, Nagaon, Hojai, West Karbi Anglong and Cachar districts.

Goalpara is the worst hit with over 42,000 people affected followed by Hojai with more than 13,000 people and West Karbi Anglong with around 3,000 persons, it said.

Till Saturday, more than 59,000 people were

affected in five districts.

So far, the total number of persons losing their lives in the first wave of flood stands at 10 across the state.

The SDRF has rescued five persons in the last 24 hours in Goalpara, ASDMA said.

At present, 103 villages are under water and 6,439 hectares of crop areas have been damaged, it said. It said authorities are running

11 relief camps and distribution centres in two districts, where 1,727 people are taking shelter currently.

Embankments, roads and many other infrastructures have been damaged at various places in Biswanath and Barpeta districts.

Massive erosions have been witnessed at different places of Dibrugarh and Lakhimpur, ASDMA said.

**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.**

Shopping malls ready for re-opening on Monday; focus on contactless shopping, physical distancing

GAURAV SAINI

NEW DELHI, JUN 7 (PTI):

As malls and shopping centres in the national capital re-open on Monday after more than two months, they will be focussing on hourly disinfection of the common areas, contact-less shopping and physical distancing to prevent the spread of the deadly coronavirus.

There are around 100 big and small shopping malls in the national capital, the source of around Rs 500 crore in revenue for the Delhi government, according to Brijesh Goyal, the convener of the ruling Aam Aadmi Party's (AAP) trader's wing. "Business activity in malls is carried out in a much more organised way as compared to the shops in markets," he said, adding that the shopping malls in Delhi employ about 10,000 people.

The managements of the malls and shopping complexes have issued detailed guidelines to shop, office and restaurant owners to keep the infection at bay.

Several malls have set up UV sterilisation chambers for people to disinfect their belongings.

"We have asked our staff to report an hour before the malls are opened for the public. After the mandatory screening, the employees will be given face-shields, gloves and sanitiser," Harsh Vardhan Bansal, the director of Vegas Mall in Dwarka, said.

Shops, restaurants and offices have been asked to keep their doors open as common surfaces like doorknobs or handles can spread the infection, he added. The carrying capacity of elevators has been reduced by 25 per cent. Visitors will have to maintain a gap on escalators too, Bansal, who is also the director of Unity 1 malls, said.

Those visiting the mall should wear masks and have the Aarogya Setu application installed on their mobile phones. Pregnant women, children aged below 10 years and persons aged above 65 years will not be allowed entry, he said.

"Contact-less sanitiser dispensers have been placed in every corner of the mall. The entire complex will be sanitised twice a day. The common areas will be disinfected on an hourly basis," Bansal said. In clothing stores, dummy shirts will be made available for a trial and sanitised after every use, he added.

Manmohan Garg, the director of D Mall in Pitampura, said the metal surfaces and common areas of the complex will be disinfected regularly. Thermal scanners and sanitiser dispensers have been placed at the entry gates and the visitors with COVID-19 symptoms will be asked to return, he said.

All government guidelines will be strictly followed. Pregnant women and those aged below 10 years and above 65 years will not be allowed entry, Garg added.

WHAT IS micdaysikkim? The Organisers Explain

Micdaysikkim is something which has stood out to be a "one of a time" event ever held in Sikkim. Everyone would have heard a little about online events, ranging among diverse fields and prominent among the Sikkimese people. Here Micdaysikkim stands out to be different from others. Its an online rap event, which originally started as Micday2020 in Nepal.

Bebek Chettri aka B-hottie 88 then acquired the rights to hold the event in Sikkim, and thus the tag Micdaysikkim. Sameer Guragain aka the CEO of SGvlogsSikkim is the co-founder of the event. They are further assisted by their editor Puskar Adhikari and the co-ordinator Dinesh Dhungel aka The Rap Show.

Many confuse Micdaysikkim as a competi-



tion, but the founder has a completely different take to it. Micdaysikkim

is a way to showcase the inborn and/or acquired talent you have as a rap-

per and a storyteller. It will serve as a stage to all the rappers who fear to

step out of their comfort zone, to come out and showcase the talent that they have.

Simply by downloading the beat provided, and rapping a free verse over it, will make everyone a winner, because its their inner fear that they defeated to show Sikkim their talent. Uploading their video with tags #micdaysikkim #hottie88 #sgvlogssikkim #therapshow in any one of their social handles (Facebook, Instagram or youtube) will seal their participation.

Further decision will be taken by the judge's panel and the organizing committee. All the details of the event will be officially posted on SGvlogsSikkim facebook page. So anyone interested to be a part of the event, feel free to download the beat provided, and rap a verse over it.

Health Minister lead plantation drive in Singtam



SUMMIT REPORT

RANGPO, 07 JUN:

Health Minister, Dr MK Sharma, who also happens to be the area MLA, made a short visit to Shantinagar, Singtam, to attend a Plantation cum Environment Awareness programme organised by Shantinagar Gaon Sudhar Samiti. Also present on the

occasion were Tekendra Sharma, BDO, Khamdong BAC, M Narayan Sharma, RO, Singtam Forest Office and members of Shantinagar Gaon Sudhar Samiti. More than 70 saplings of different species were planted along the Shantinagar Walkway.

President, Krishna Chettri, SGSS thanked Dr Sharma and other

distinguished guests for his auspicious presence. He further appreciated the presence of the members of Shantinagar Gaon Sudhar Samiti early in the morning for today's event. He spooked about Deo Kumari Pradhan, the senior-most member in her 80s who never fails to attend any event.

Plantation drive at Green Vale Academy



SUMMIT REPORT

RANGPO, 07 JUN:

Green Vale Academy, Khamdong, organised a plantation and cleanness

drive at the school campus today. Apart from the school students, the school head, teachers and staff attended the programme.

Book offers steps on harnessing a perfect home

NEW DELHI, JUN 7 (PTI): At a time when staying indoors has become the new normal, a book offers step-by-step tips to improve our homes and the quality of life within it.

Author Michelle Ogundehin says a home that actively supports our well-being can be a game-changer and a secret super power in today's profoundly unpredictable world.

In "Happy Inside: How to Harness the Power of Home for Health and Happiness", she lists "nine steps to a home to help you become your best self, regardless of how much money you have, the size of your home, or whether you own or rent".

The purpose of life and home, she says, is to be happy inside.

Ogundehin, internationally renowned as an authority on interiors, trends, colour and style, writes about everything from how to create more light and space to how to get a good night's sleep; the path to a perfect sofa and why a dining table is your most vital piece of furniture in the book published by Penguin Random House.

She also tells how

to decorate to promote joy; the importance of play (and circular side tables); definitive capsule kitchen kit; and why the hallway is where it all starts.


She combines these with his knowledge of Buddhist philosophy, mindfulness, colour psychology and good design.

According to Ogundehin, for all "our advanced technology and supposed sophistication, we are at heart primal, emotional beings, which means that to feel centred, healthy and happy, we also need to feel safe, secure and protected". It is therefore "increasingly essential that our homes support us, as nurturing, sensory, tactile retreats, not so much as insulation from contemporary life, but strengthening us, body and soul, to deal with it", she says.

Ogundehin says her intention is to "give you some ideas and recommendations, alongside the benefit of my hard-earned experience and a few tricks of the trade".

This, she says, will "help you to set up your home, and a way of living within it, to get you where you want to be at your own pace".

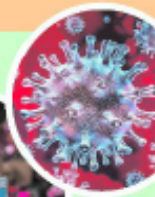
to book
advertisements in SummitTimes, call
03592-208698
9734152541



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 | Precautions to Prevent nCoV |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fever ● Difficulty in breathing ● Dry Cough ● Severe acute respiratory syndrome ● Pneumonia - like symptoms | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Wash your hands often with soap. ● Use an alcohol based hand sanitizer ● Observe good personal hygiene. ● Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands. ● Avoid contact with people with possible symptoms. ● Avoid contact with animals and consumption of undercooked meats. ● Avoid travel to nCoV affected places. ● Wear a mask if you have respiratory syndrome. and cover your mouth while coughing or sneezing. |
| Treatment | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Treatment is symptomatic and supportive, based on the patient's clinical condition. ● No vaccinations available as of now. ● Visit Doctor in case symptoms detected | |



If you seek help, you may call :
-Toll free no. 104
District surveillance Officer
EAST : 7028372100
WEST : 9593297809
NORTH : 9641957468
SOUTH : 7407691463
New STNM
AMS : 9434711402

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

India takes another biggest single day jump to surpass Spain; Maharashtra crosses China tally

New Delhi, 07 June: India has 2,46,628 coronavirus cases, data from the Union Health Ministry showed this morning, crossing the COVID-19 tally of Spain. India now is ranked fifth in the world in terms of coronavirus cases, after the US, Brazil, Russia and the UK. The total cases in the country include 6,929 people who have died of the highly contagious infection.

Coronavirus cases in India crossed 2.5 lakh on Sunday as a surge in infections continued amid increasing relaxations allowed by the government following an over two-month nationwide lockdown.

Maharashtra registered 3,007 new cases in the last 24 hours, the government said, and remains the worst state in the country with 85,975 cases. More than 3,000 people have died in the state home to India's financial and entertainment capital Mumbai.

The state has now surpassed China's COVID-19 tally of 83,036

confirmed cases, a health official said.

Tamil Nadu reported 1,515 more COVID-19 cases and 18 deaths. The total number of cases in the state is now 31,667, including 269 deaths, according to the Health Department.

Delhi, which is also witnessing a spike as people resumed regular activities and shed caution, has reported 27,654 cases of COVID-19 so far, including 761 deaths.

In Gujarat, the numbers of cases so far stand at 19,592 with 1,219 deaths.

Uttar Pradesh recorded the second-biggest spike in cases with 433 new patients that took the total to 10,536. On Friday, the state had reported 502 new cases.

With coronavirus cases on the rise, All India Institutes of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) director Dr Randeep Guleria, in said coronavirus cases in India could peak in two to three months but he maintained that there is no community transmission at the national level.

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

Health Secy....

Dr Bhutia informed that if results of these pending 287 samples get delayed even further, then the department will collect swab samples again and test them at STNM Hospital itself.

Likewise, he added that a total of 2,189 samples have been sent to Viral Research and Diagnostic Laboratory at STNM Hospital for testing and reports of 1,671 samples have been received so far.

Of the remaining samples, reports of 125 samples returned negative this morning and 270 samples were being processed for RT-PCR at the time of recording his health bulletin.

Eastern Ladakh....

The military talks took place at the Border Personnel Meeting Point in Maldo on the Chinese side of the Line of Actual Control in Chushul sector

"Both sides also noted that this year marked the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries and agreed that an early resolution would contribute to the further development of the relationship," the MEA said

"Accordingly, the two sides will continue the military and diplomatic engagements to resolve the situation and to ensure peace and tranquillity in the border areas," it said.

~ SummitTIMES ~
CLASSIFIEDS

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 Road-side 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

Prospects of post Corona Economic Recovery In India

VIEWPOINT
Dr AALOK & JAYSHREE SHRIVASTAVA

Any disease, such as, Corona is a Natural Calamity & should be treated like one.I have & I will again subscribe to the Malthusian thesis (1798) that-
“When man fails,nature takes over”.
Its highly unfortunate that an animal virus(cousin of SARS,2003,)has troubled 213 countries & that confirmed cases stand at 66.1 lakh & number of deaths have crossed 4 lakh all over the world. USA is topping with 18.90 lakh cases with 1.26 lakh deaths.

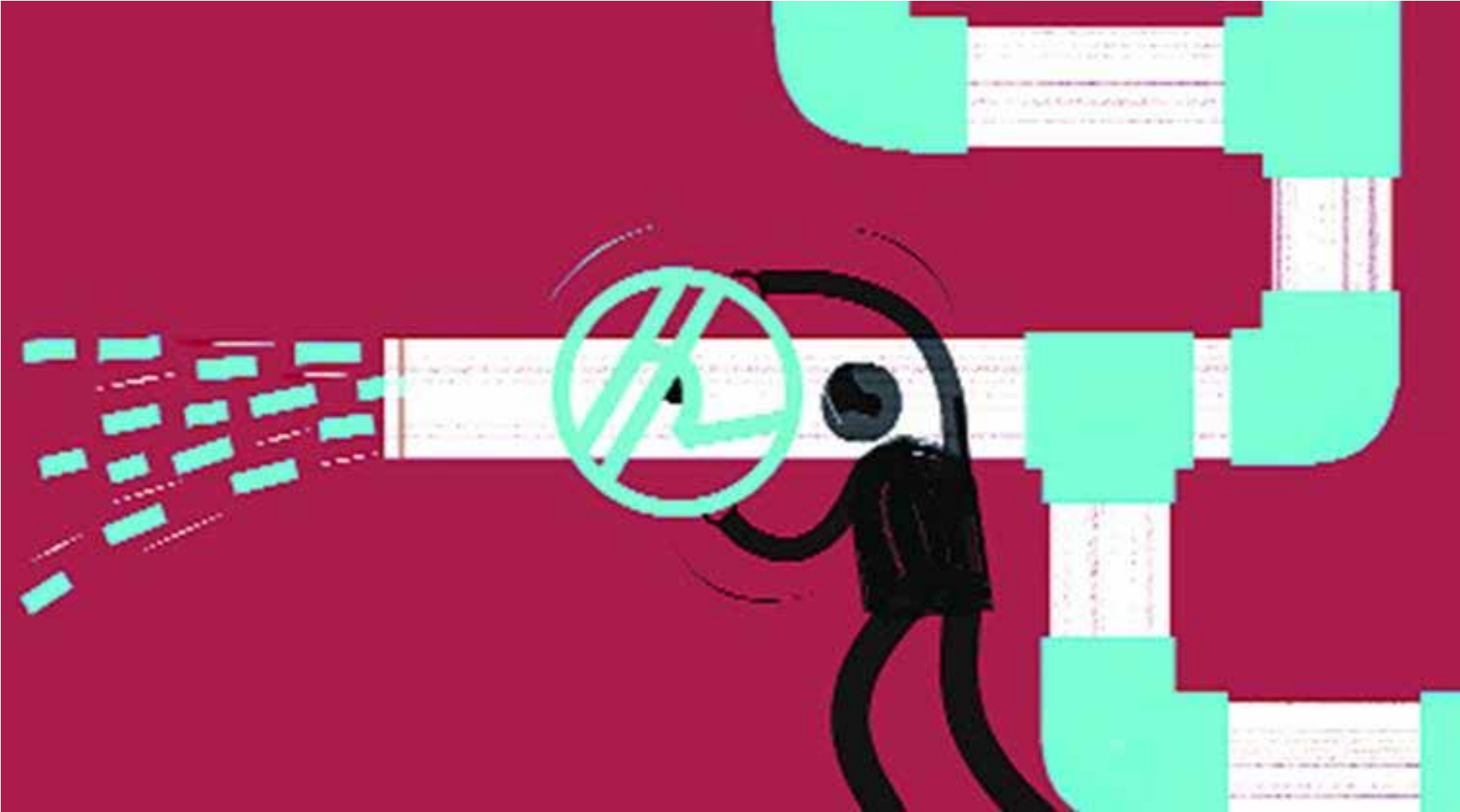
2) Distinction should be made between the TEXT and CONTEXT.
Aim of Greening of Economy is perfectly o.k. but now focus should be on suggesting workable & feasible ways & means for an early Recovery of Corona afflicted economy of India.

3) Reactions on 5 PILLARS of Economic Recovery Plan [ERP]-
(a) Inclusion of Armchair confined English speaking Metro-based intellectuals may not serve the desired purpose. One can have substance only when he or she is tied to the GROUND ZERO having ‘Pockets’ of Poverty (PoP) as opposed to ‘Islands’ of Prosperity (IoP) in their apparent urban conglomerates, still uninfluenced by the Smart City phenomenon.
b) Infrastructure sector of the Indian economy is most crucial but same is unfortunately SHAKEN , if not broken. Requisite corrections & steps are needed on priority,foremost being ,winning the confidence of the Migrant Labourers & Daily Wagers and bringing them back to work at the earliest,
c) The expression ‘system’ is not understood by an ‘average’ public servant like me. It needs elaboration,
d)There is nothing like ‘vibrant demography’(to elaborate later)and
e) By mentioning Demand side without referring to Supply side, one may only take pride in creating ambiguity of the highest order,

4)In all humility, I may be permitted to say that the circumstances are completely different Now.
The contemporary scenario is not only challenging but also terrifying.So the instant attention should be on satisfactory rescue & relief, both to recovered patients as also aimlessly wandering, confused and poverty stricken labour class.
5) Our OBJECTIVE should be focussed,therefore, on how to leverage requisite help in getting rid of Coronavirus(not expected before November’20 as per expert medical opinion, including that of Director,AIIMS).
MERELY FLATTENING of CURVE won’t do.
The figure of Confirmed Cases (2,40,000) & Deaths (6,575) will have to change/ reduce gradually to stabilise at an ‘Opportune time’. The RR of 36.19% can be considered much better than most of the so-called developed countries.

Comment on Pillars regarding Economy, Infrastructure and demography would follow.
6) RESTORATION of ECONOMY-
a) Of all the four factors of production-Land,Labour,Capital & organisation,LABOUR has been And continues to be MOST CRUCIAL.
If this class is free from the Corona virus,he/she has to be AVAILABLE also at required place.
Exodus between 25th & 28th March from 3 ‘Rich Kulak dominated Northern states’ saw unfortunately lakhs of them walking on the highways between Chandigarh & Delhi in scorching heat with their frugal leftovers ,wailing spouses & helpless & hungry off-springs. Among the walkers were also most anguished advance stage pregnant women & senior citizens of the age group 65 to 70 years.
They knew their destinations in Bihar, UP, MP & Odisha,yet for want of requisite official Co-operation & care when they were physically tired,they thronged the Anand Vihar Railway,Station and Kaushambi Inter-state Bus Terminus in Delhi.
Due to apparent ego clashes between the GoI and Govt.of NCT Delhi, they were left in lurch for 36 hours. One of the channels of the electronic media compared this exodus (leading to ‘Assembly’ near Delhi-Ghaziabad border) with the outflow & inflow of the refugees soon after partition of the country in August, 1947.
b) By sheer magnitude and scale, all the norms & rules concerning much stressed & publicised ‘Social Distancing’ went to the doldrums for more than 36 hours.
In the backdrop of above, shall we ask-Will the ML’s and DW’s go back to their earlier work stations located both in filthy

rich agricultural and quasi- industrial settings?
Based on gathered information, if not proper data,the answer will be plain & simple NO.
c) In my considered view, we have MISSED an opportunity of the lifetime in first Week of May by not utilising the ‘leftovers’ in re-opening shops, small establishments, factories and resuming the priority road & construction works in the towns & villages getting gradual freedom from the menace of ‘Corona Auntie’.
What they would have aspired for are:
Free two meals, Shelter & Adequate cash in their empty, miniscule pockets for



a period of three to four months. By sensing the point of virtual no return(deadlock between the owners & the ML’s), the GoI had no option but to introduce Shramik Special passenger trains exclusively for the labourers.In a record of sorts, 58 lakh labourers of two categories were safely taken to their roots. It is understood that they may have to undergo a compulsory quarantine of 14 to 21 days on reaching their destinations.
d) By no stretch of imagination,there is a guarantee that anyone from the two lots(Marchers of March & ‘Trainers’ of May 1st Week) would plan to REVERT to take up jobs in their erstwhile places of work/ farmlands/green pastures surrounding Bengaluru,Chennai,Hyderabad,Coimbatore or Thiruvananthapuram.
e) Most immediate need is of harvesting the Rabi crops followed by sowing of the Kharif crop.The fate of sale of ready food grains may have to be left to the mercy of God. Tons & tons will be lying idle in the Mandis AND the erstwhile shrewd middlemen will have no option but to cry in wilderness. I should not be saying but will not hide it from the fellow right thinking countrymen that the collectivity in question will be at last,defeated in their own territory even if they have managed to escape and skip Corona Auntie.
f) If it is considered right to resume production,there should be clear cut distinction between Agriculture,Industry and the Tertiary sectors by duly taking note of rising curve of unemployment within the country from 23 % to 27.1 % during the first Week of May’20(source NDTV,24X7) as opposed to preety high figure of 29 % in the USA and similar trends in other developed countries .
g) With a view to preserve & protect environment and to perpetuate the obvious advantages of Sustainable Development,mainly the Green & Organic agricultural practices should be short listed for setting the ball rolling.
It may,however be noted that use of chemical fertilisers can not be stopped in one go. These will have to be tapered off in two to three years.Also fully organic areas,such as, Sikkim should be given an adequate financial filip for not using fertilizers since 2006 or so.
SALE of Commercial & Non- Commercial Agricultural Produce has to be arranged as soon as possible by ensuring fixing of a MSP as against the notional one which normally is dependant on the whims & fancies of the dreaded & politically palatable Middlemen.
h) Once Agriculture is taken care of, emphasis should be on re-opening the es-

sential shops,mills,factories & the industries of non polluting & green nature.The subsidy element in both the agricultural and industrial sectors should be gradually withdrawn to make people ‘Self-reliant’ (SR) in tune with the spirit of the address of the PM on 13th May.
I)Coming to MSME, though a large allocation has been made under the Economic Recovery Plan(ERP), one has to guard against rude,crude & shrewd employers. There is no dearth of Labour related legislation and pro- labour Orders of the Government,the High Courts and the Supreme Court but how many of them are actually implemented and enforced in real


life ,is any body’s Guess.
INFRASTRUCTURE WORKS
7) These priority works in all the under-developed States especially those ravaged by the recent Natural Calamities,as also located in the remote pockets of the NORTH EAST and flood affected regions in the plains, will have to be finished within a year or so.Actual Monitoring & Evaluation should precede fund flow & there is an urgent need to be strict in this regard.
SUCCESS STORIES OF 152 INSPIRATIONAL DISTRICTS SHOULD BE SHARED & DISCUSSED TO ENSURE GOOD ROLE MODELS
FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT
8) FDI has to be restricted to the minimum as the domestic enterprises of high quality are not only available but they are also willing to venture into new,unexplored territories.
With a view to preserve national integration,unity and to safeguard national defence interest ,it will be suicidal to encourage PPP model in management & control of airports,Space Exploration and Defence Production.This will be also according to the basic tenets of the Selfreliance (SR)dictum.
POWER SECTOR
9) Instead of concessions and subsidies for traditional sources of power, these should be extended in large scale to the Renewable Sources on the pattern of hugely successful and sustainable solar plants of Germany.
A part of Economic Package to the MSME, in the same way, may be used to INFUSE capital for Energy Efficiency Upgrades.
CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY
10)The percentage of CSR vis-a-vis total profit will have to be raised to 4 % from the present requirement of 2% to take care of recent set backs in the Health & Power sectors.
Side by side,better facilities should be ensured to the village shops, poor households,Anganwadi Centres and the rural secondary level schools.
TAKING ADVANTAGE OF EMERGING TRENDS OF CORONA PHASE
11) In view of the fact that E-schooling & E-health consultation seem to have picked up momentum during the NLD since 24th March, these will have to be further encouraged & scaled up in wider national interest.This will also lead to a greater
Degree of austerity in public domain.
12) Similarly, improvements can be brought about for reviving and further bolstering TRAVEL,TOURISM & HOSPITALITY and sale of genuine traditional

Handicraft & Handloom items by providing eco-friendly packaging & branding and re-strengthening Market Outlets & Value Chains,specially in the clean & green eight states of the North East
DEMOGRAPHY
13) Having a little bit background of this branch of Social Science, I may submit that there is nothing called ‘Vibrant Demography’.
Most of India’s concerns & challenges emanate from this front and NOW with the INVASION & ONSET OF CORONA, we are paying HEAVY PRICE of our sheer NEGLIGENCE over the years. The whole planning process,execution framework , Monitoring

& Evaluation etc. goes haywire when one finds, either in rural or urban India that number of aspirants normally far exceeds the beneficiaries initially listed at the time of approval of a plan,scheme or a project. (A average gap of three to five years)
SLUMS , THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE
As slums like DHARAVI are a big health & environment issue, this is the RIGHT TIME to clear them from all densely populated pockets of the metros of the country, to begin with.
The slums are solely responsible for everising numbers of confirmed cases of Corona in Maharastra, Tamil nadu, Gujrat, Delhi & West Bengal .
I reiterate, Dharavi will certainly be a WATERLOO in our Corona Fight.
In addition,there are a plethora of players & agencies who systematically & religiously ensure cost and time over-run in a regular manner.And to supplement and hone up these nefarious deeds, element of CORRUPTION is indulged into, in some form or the other by a majority of functionaries & stake holders in a shameless fashion.
One won’t be surprised if the essential,nobel & human task of Corona rescue,relief & restoration is also en-croached upon by this DEMON.
14) Reverting back to the topic,this socially conscious ‘insignificant’ individual in his brief Concept Note to the V.C.,NITI AAYOG(2nd Week of Feb.’20) has advocated the cause of Revival of the National Population Commission.
Launched with a high degree of fanfare in the last Quartar.of 2001-02 by the then Planning Commission,it had 100 high pro-

file & influencial members,including the PM,many senior Cabinet Ministers,Chief Ministers and hold your breath,the Bollywood Heroines, such as, Sharmila Tagore and Shabana Azmi.
The Commission,however,could only convene one conference.
My strong submission in the national interest will be to use and spruce up the dormant office of Population Stabilisation Fund(PSF),at present under the Ministry of Health & F.W.) to convene a National Conference with all the Chief Secretaries & important Secretaries to GoI on the urgent NEED to stabilise population growth which should be followed by a de-

tailed Brain-Storming with all the stake holders,including the NGOs ,Vice-Chancellors & religious Heads.
To begin with, the revamped office of PSF should post its representatives (not below Director) in all the State Capitals with adequate & regular monthly interaction with the District Collectors & the regional Joint/Deputy Directors of the Census Operations.A country wide data bank/ net work should be alive all the time to assist both the GOI & States in their Planning & Implementation works aimed at the uplift of the marginal man.
15) With this I would like to conclude my submission.
A face to face interaction with all stakeholders with a meaningful Q & A is urgently called for,as soon as LockDown is finally lifted.
To sum up, times are very very tough.
No one is trying to check reverse migration.
Unless most important component of our patient, hard working and dedicated labour is easily available, we cannot even think of 2 percent growth rate during c.f.y, what to talk of going even closer to the unrealistic 8 percent growth during the next fiscal.
“pretence is always different from possibility.”
Let us help each other in saving water,electricity, maintaining the spirit of swachhata & in ensuring a corruption free india
Sustainable development has been the mantra, it will continue to be so.
[the writer retired as Chief Secretary to the Govt of Sikkim]



CONTRIBUTIONS INVITED FOR THE UPGRADATION OF LIBRARY AT RATEYPANI SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL.

CONTACT 7384639193 TO CONTRIBUTE & HELP US IN LAYING A FOUNDATION FOR BETTER FUTURE

Still Not Cast Away

Much to Sikkim's shame, caste discrimination remains illegally in practice

The Constitution of India rejected the concept of an untouchable caste in 1950. Caste discrimination was outlawed the day the Constitution, the supreme law of India, was adopted, and yet, even though no longer officially sanctioned, the idea of untouchability remains alive in our country. What remains a continuing challenge is that caste consciousness is not just a privately held prejudice, but continues to manifest in dastardly acts of violence running the entire spectrum from physical to emotional and societal. One would have hoped that more than six decades of having been seen as a criminal offence would have dulled the propensity of caste discrimination from expressing itself publicly, but that remains wishful thinking in a society that continues to shame itself by refusing to accept all people as same. Thousands of attacks on Dalits because of the caste they belong to occur every year, and hundreds of people are killed because of it. Newspapers continue to report reprehensible acts of violence from across the country directed against people only because they belong to the scheduled castes. And of late, these attacks have grown even bolder and more brazen because it ties in well with the more reprehensible traits of the dispensation with too much power in the country. And it is not as if Sikkim is untouched by this vileness. Even here is a society which allows such depravity as targeted cruelty against some castes despite it being not only illegal, but also offensively immoral.

Some years ago, a 68-year-old was arrested on charges of murder in West Sikkim after he allegedly bludgeoned a 24 year old to death with a wooden beam. This was a hate crime – the youth was attacked because he belonged to a caste which the suspected murderer did not want crossing his hearth! This was no mob lynching, but that should make it any less disturbing even four years since the incident occurred. Disturbing not only for the worry that it occurred, but also because it did not result in any soul-searching.

Murder, after all, is rarely the first crime of a demented mind and in most cases builds up to such inevitability after the perpetrator gets away with smaller acts of violence and his hate remains ignored by the society at large and the law & order agencies. It will not come as a surprise if one were told that this was not the accused person's first hate crime or learn that he has a history of caste discrimination. Every time his hate was not admonished by the society he lives in and every time the law compromised the cases, he was emboldened. And then a youth died in his hands, as much because of the madness of caste, as due to the society's continuing condoning of those who discriminate on the grounds of caste.

And before anyone jumps up claiming that caste discrimination is essentially an upper-caste Hindu turpitude, one needs to point out that the practice is as disturbingly observed by other communities as was codified by those who promulgated it. Notwithstanding anything that the Constitution of India or the laws of the land might say, caste, as institutionalised inequality, oppression and discrimination characterises Indian society itself, practiced as much by those who benefit from it as even by those whose religions have no place for it. Social get-togethers in most parts of rural Sikkim continue to observe caste segregation and although no one gets beaten up for not observing the code, the fact that people continue to peddle caste divisions in the name of culture or tradition makes a mockery of all the tenets of equality that the Constitution strives to deliver.

It is important to realize that it is from a series of soft peddling on such issues that shockers like the fore-mentioned murder manifest. A hate crime might not result in a death every time, but it remains a possibility so long as casteism is allowed to express itself in public, even if in physically nonviolent gestures like segregation [for everyone at social events] or in private interactions of individuals. More importantly, it is when people see nothing wrong in mediating on behalf of the perpetrator of hate when he/ she is officially charged with such crimes that chances of real equality and ending discrimination get compromised. The society's elders, instead of trying to convince victims into "settling" their differences, should be encouraging the young [and others] to report instances of discrimination the moment they notice it. Laws can only go so far, the move towards reform will have to come from the society itself...



What sets good and bad leaders apart in the coronavirus era

LAWRENCE HAMILTON
theconversation.com

Crises bring out the the best and worst of politicians and populations. Folly, fear and fortitude are on display everywhere. In the main, democracies have fared better than non-democracies in handling the coronavirus pandemic.

But the record is very varied indeed. What explains this? What can be done about it?

Among democratic regimes, at the one extreme we have seen denialism, the denigration of scientific advice and an obsession with putting the economy before lives. This is especially evident in the United States and Brazil. At the other we have witnessed the organised, prudent, empathetic responses of countries such as South Korea, New Zealand, and Finland. South African president Cyril Ramaphosa initially did very well, but some subsequent decisions might damage his good record.

These two extremes of leadership style were evident even before COVID-19.

The USA and Brazilian responses to the pandemic, led by President Donald Trump and President Jair Bolsonaro, have been characterised by secretive, narcissistic, paranoid, hubristic and impulsive decision-making. These actions have endangered the lives and livelihoods of their residents, over which they have a duty of care.

The data bears this out well. Despite having arrived on their shores relatively late, the pandemic has ripped through their populations, with no sign of abating. They lead in infections and deaths.

At the other extreme, a common denominator has been a firm attempt by political leaders to "follow the science" and control the spread of the virus and fake news from the outset. A combination of transparency, prudence, empathy, timing and courage has produced excellent results in South Korea, New Zealand and Finland.

South Africa's response has been lauded, though it is beginning to attract criticism for heavy-handed policing and some inexplicable decisions.

DEMOCRACY AND LEADERSHIP

What becomes clear is that in these fast-moving and life-defining times in democracies a great deal depends on the quality of the elected leadership. Democracies that happen to have leaders who simultaneously engage empathetically with those

they govern and are informed by good science are best able to deal with the crisis.

They gather clear-eyed knowledge of their countries' particular circumstances, and display courage and timing in making critical and sometimes unpopular decisions. They are able to overcome many of the challenges that the pandemic throws up.

Democracy helps, but it is not the deciding factor. What matters most is what kind of leader is in place, where his or her priorities lie: the well-being of the populace or the interests of a small group.

Four of the top five performing countries in terms of lives saved and control of the spread of the virus have women leaders: New Zealand's Jacinda Ardern, Finland's Sanna Marin, Germany's Angela Merkel and Taiwan's Tsai Ing-wen. These women display empathy and firm focus on the well-being of their populations.

Politicians judge best when they listen to their populations and learn from the science. That is why democracy is uniquely placed to engender good judgements, as the Indian economist Amartya Sen argued with regard to famines, and I have argued elsewhere.

Yet, it would be mistaken to think that democracy guarantees good judgement. If the purveyors of conspiracy theories and exemplars of prejudice are also your democratic leaders, democracy itself cannot resolve things. It only gives citizens the power to remove those leaders at the next election.

BREAD, CIRCUSES AND CRISES

In the current crisis, Ramaphosa has done a much better job than Trump and Bolsonaro.

Ramaphosa got off to a great start. He acted firmly, quickly, with clear justification and impressive results. South Africans have just emerged from one of the most severe lockdowns imposed anywhere in the world. This kept the infection rate nearly as low as that of South Korea, though it is now shooting up.

During this period, however, there have been at least two problematic decisions that undermine public trust and thus how people may behave.

The first is the decision to ban the sale of tobacco. Even if we could distinguish sharply between basic needs and other needs – something I dispute – the idea that addiction to smoking falls into the latter category, and that, along with the fact that COVID-19 is a respiratory disease, justifies the ban, is misguided. For an addict, the need for a cigarette

may often trump even the need for vital nutrition.

The second is the decision to allow religious gatherings to resume under lockdown level 3. Having spent so long restricting gatherings, to now allow larger gatherings seems like folly. It is well known – cases abound from South Africa to South Korea – that, like funerals, large religious gatherings are super-spreading events.

Along with the ban on tobacco products and the incorrect assumption that the state could directly meet the basic nutritional needs of the population via the delivery of food parcels, the response to the religious lobby is reminiscent of Juvenal's comment under imperial Rome some two thousand years ago that all the people really want is "bread and circuses". This is not what people want or need. They require the power to express their actual needs and interests and the democratic means to ensure that government responds to these.

Ramaphosa's good leadership has been undermined by a paternalistic attitude to people's needs and seeming deference to South Africa's powerful religious lobby.

LESSONS TO BE LEARNT

Two things can be learnt from the varied responses to the coronavirus crisis.

First, we must use it to find a roadmap for how we can properly make the health and well-being of a state's population the raison d'être of its government. The first thing to identify is that health is not the "absence of disease" but the status we each have when our ever-changing needs are optimally satisfied. For this, we need a politics that allows us to express and assess our needs, and determine who is best placed to represent us in responding to these needs, all in non-dominating conditions.

Second, given that it is no accident that those leaders who have responded worst to this crisis have also been the main sources of countless conspiracy theories and misinformation, we must learn to keep oligarchs away from political power. Under representative democracy, bar outright revolution, we do not have the power to affect the everyday decisions of our representatives, but we can keep those with exclusive social and economic interests out of positions of political power.

[the writer is SARChI/Newton Research Professor in Political Theory, Wits and Cambridge, University of the Witwatersrand]

5 tips to get you off the sofa — because sitting more during COVID-19 is hurting your health

WUYOU SUI
theconversation.com

With the Canadian government continuing to recommend physical distancing measures, many people are finding themselves confined to their homes more than ever before. While some are citing the benefits of being able to work from home and having time for self-care, the closures of recreational facilities and commercial gyms make physical distancing a barrier to physical activity for many.

In response, several health organizations and groups are emphasizing the importance of meeting physical activity guidelines. The Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology recommends 150 minutes of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity per week, which is roughly 30 minutes of exercise a day, five days a week. Assuming people are spending half an hour a day exercising, and then factoring in the 7.5 to eight hours of sleep the average adult gets, that leaves 15.5 waking hours unaccounted for.

So, what are people doing in the other 97 per cent of the day they spend awake? If you're like the average Canadian, then 9.5 hours of your day is spent sitting.

THE SCIENCE OF SITTING

Sitting, a form of sedentary behaviour (along with lying down and reclining), is one of the most prevalent,

habitual and "invisible" behaviours we perform. We sit in nearly every aspect of our lives from eating to commuting and working to screen time and more.

This is especially true of home-based sitting given the current stay-at-home recommendations. Netflix and other streaming services announced significant increases in traffic and new subscribers recently, while app downloads and weekly time spent on apps have also skyrocketed in the past months.

But why is sitting this much so bad? It may sound harmless, but chronic excessive levels of sitting have been associated with an increased risk of developing heart disease, Type 2 diabetes, hypertension and even some cancers. Even among young people, for whom chronic disease risk isn't as immediately concerning, excessive sitting poses a potential harm through an increased risk of depression and anxiety.

Perhaps most concerning is that these increased risks are independent of physical activity levels — meaning even if you exercise regularly, you're still placing yourself at risk for all of these diseases if you spend too much time sitting.

TIPS TO SIT LESS

So, what can be done to combat all the sitting we do? Put simply — just standing up. Merely standing up or walking for about five minutes for every 30 minutes of sitting can help

reduce your risk of heart disease, cancer and even death.

Unfortunately, it's not as easy as it sounds. As a health behaviour researcher at Western University, I help people to develop action plans to reduce their sitting. Because we are so used to sitting everywhere, all the time, we typically don't mention sitting when describing activities we are doing. For example, we think of watching TV, not sitting down and watching TV.

It's difficult enough to change a habit or behaviour when you know it's happening. Things get harder when you also consider that nearly every environment is designed for sitting: couches, chairs, cars, offices, etc. However, there are things we can do to make "sitting less" easier. Here are some practical strategies that I've found to be useful for my participants to leave you in "good standing":

- Shape your environment: Just like being physically active is easier with the right equipment, modifying your space for standing and moving will make it easier to do so. This can be done by stacking some books for a standing desk or creating a route to pace in the house while on chatting on your phone.

- Remind yourself you're sitting: Because sitting is so habitual for most of us, we often need a reminder to break it up. Setting an alarm for every 30 minutes before sitting down, or simply putting a sticky note on your

computer screen or desk of when you sat down can be a useful prompt to get up more often.

- Pair it up: A break from sitting isn't necessarily a break from what you're doing, such as working or watching TV. But if standing/moving distracts you from your task, then pair it with another healthy behaviour like drinking more water. Getting up to drink water will break up your sitting time, as will going to the washroom more often as a result. Plus, you'll get all the benefits of drinking more water too.

- Go the distance: When it comes to breaking up sitting time, the more frequent the breaks, the better. Incidental movement — the moving we do while going about our day such as doing laundry or the steps we take while walking around our home — is an easy way to break up sitting time. Try tracking your steps, and setting a step goal (aim for 2,000 more this week!) to help you monitor your progress.

- Tell a friend: Keeping accountable with a housemate or friend can help keep you motivated. Most smartphones have a built-in activity tracker that can track your steps, with apps available to share this data with your social network. Competing for steps with a friend can put the "health" in "healthy competition!"

[the writer is PhD Candidate, Exercise and Health Psychology Lab, Western University]

Adherence to lockdown keep Daman, Diu coronavirus-free

DAMAN, JUN 7 (PTI): The Daman and Diu districts of the Union Territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli have not reported any COVID-19 case so far, and the administration has attributed this to strict implementation of the lockdown orders and commitment of 'corona warriors'.

There are nearly 2.5 lakh industrial workers in Daman and Diu, which are also quite popular among tourists, the Union Territory's administrator Praful Patel said on Sunday.

Despite bordering Gujarat and being close to Maharashtra, two of the worst affected states, Daman and Diu have remained free of the viral disease so far because public followed the lockdown guidelines, he said.

While Dadra and Nagar Haveli has reported 19 COVID-19 cases, there has been no case so far in Daman and Diu.

"We have managed to achieve this success because our 'corona warriors' worked with full commitment. We succeeded in making people adhere to the lockdown



for 75 days. We managed to have zero cases in Daman and Diu because people followed the lockdown with full commitment," Patel said.

However, authorities remain alert as the Union Territory lies close to Gujarat and Maharashtra.

According to the data provided by the health department of the Union Territory, as many as 17,965 samples have been tested so far for CO-

VID-19, including 12,130 in Dadra and Nagar Haveli, 4,723 in Daman and 1,112 in Diu.

Of these, 19 samples from Dadra and Nagar Haveli have so far tested positive for coronavirus, but none from Daman and Diu, a health official said, adding that results of 1,039 samples are awaited.

As many as 6,026 people, including 3,444 in Dadra and Nagar

Haveli, 977 in Daman, and 1,605 in Diu, were kept under quarantine and completed the mandatory period, he said.

As of now, 2,290 people are still under quarantine, the official added.

"We have collected samples of people with travel history, those showing symptoms, and also random samples as per the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) guidelines," the Union

Territory's programme officer for communicable diseases Meghal Shah said.

"Travels were restricted during the lockdown, and we screened and collected samples of each and every person travelling to Daman, Diu or Silvassa. Now, with the lockdown being eased, people can enter the border through checkpoint only with a valid e-pass," he said.

Noida: 41 fresh cases push coronavirus tally to 632



NOIDA (UP), JUN 7 (PTI): Forty-one more people tested positive for coronavirus in Uttar Pradesh's Gautam Buddha Nagar on Sunday, pushing the infection count in the district to 632, officials said.

So far, the district has reported eight infection deaths.

"On Sunday, 41 people tested positive for COVID-19. The total number of positive cases till date stands at 632, District Surveillance Officer Sunil Dohare said.

He said 31 people were discharged from hospitals after treatment, taking the number of recovered patient to 413 till

date. There are 211 active cases now," he said.

According to a statement, the fresh cases included three minors, aged 12 and 14. Four elderly people--aged 67, 68, 71 and 72 were also found infected with the virus, it said.

Among those discharged, 16 were under treatment at the Government Institute of Medical Sciences (GIMS); 10 at Sharda Hospital; and five at Kailash Hospital, all three in Greater Noida.

The recovery rate of patients on Sunday improved to 65.34 per cent from 64.63 per cent the previous day, according to official statistics.

Tripura to conduct raids to stop govt school teachers from giving private tuitions

AGARTALA, JUN 7 (PTI): The Tripura administration will start conducting raids from Tuesday onwards to stop government school teachers from giving private tuitions, state Education Minister Ratan Lal Nath said.

The minister said teachers of government and aided schools who are giving private tuitions are violating a 2015 Tripura High Court order banning the practice.

"Despite serving several notices to such school teachers, they are continuing with the practice without any hesitation. I am warning them

for the last time to choose either government jobs or private tuitions. We will conduct raids from Tuesday onwards and take strict action against them," he told reporters on Sunday.

The high court had ruled that only private school teachers can give private tuitions to students above 14 years of age and only if they are from other schools, Nath said.

Many teachers of government and aided schools are also not maintaining social distancing while giving private tuitions, which is another violation, he added.

92 new COVID-19 cases in Assam, tally increases to 2,565

GUWAHATI, JUN 7 (PTI): Assam reported 92 new COVID-19 cases on Sunday, taking the total number of infections in the state to 2,565, Health Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said.

Of the fresh cases, 39 are from Hojai, 24 from Dhubri, 10 from Nagaon, seven from Golaghat, six from Majuli, five from Lakhimpur and one case was from Dhemaji district, he said.

The number of cases in the state has nearly doubled in a week from 1,339 on May 31 to 2,565 on June 7.

COVID-19 cases have been reported from all the districts, with Hojai, Dhubri, Kamrup (Metro) and Golaghat leading the tally. Altogether, 74 trav-

ellers have so far tested COVID-19 positive, including 30 air passengers from Kuwait, since flight operations resumed on May 25.

Meanwhile, 27 more patients were discharged on Sunday after they tested negative for the disease twice, taking the number of those cured to 615.

Of the 27 discharged patients, 13 are from Silchar Medical College Hospital, five from Hailakandi Civil Hospital, four from Diphu Medical College and Hospital, two from Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed Medical College and Hospital, two from Jorhat Medical College and Hospital and one from Assam Medical College and Hospital,

Dibrugarh.

Of the total 2,565 COVID-19 cases, 1,943 are active, four patients have died and three others have migrated to other states, Sarma said.

The number of cases in the state has recorded a steep increase since inter-state movement began on May 4.

Sample testing facilities in the state have been increased and the Assam government's aim now was to reduce institutional quarantine, increase home isolation and further ramp up testing, Sarma said.

Assam has so far tested 1,46,605 samples for COVID-19, the Health and Family Welfare Department said in its daily bulletin.

11 fresh COVID-19 cases in Nagaland; count rises to 118

KOHIMA, JUN 7 (PTI): Eleven more people have tested positive for COVID-19 in Nagaland, taking the northeastern state's tally to 118, officials said on Sunday.

Ten of the new patients had returned to the state from Chennai and one from Delhi, said Shanavas C, principal director of the School Education Department and a member of the state government's high-powered committee on COVID-19.

They were kept in government quarantine centres in Dimapur district, Health and Family Welfare Minister S Pangnyu Phom said.

A total of 338 samples were tested in the last 24 hours and results of 11 people who are from Dimapur have come back positive for COVID-19, he said.

Of the total 118 pa-



tients, 110 are active while eight have recovered, the minister said, adding that all those who have been cured are from Dimapur.

Dimapur has reported the highest number of cases at 95, followed by Kohima (17), Tuensang (five) and Peren (one), Health Department officials said.

All the patients are being treated at COVID-19 hospitals and surveillance is being carried out to prevent further spread of the disease, said Neiba Kronu, minister for planning and

coordination and government spokesperson on COVID-19. The eight recovered patients have been discharged from hospitals and placed under observation at a COVID-19 care centre in Dimapur; Deputy Director of Health and Family Welfare, Dr Kikamren Longkumer said.

They will be tested again and if their reports return negative for the third time, they will be placed under 14-days home isolation, he said.

Nagaland has tested 4,264 samples till date, Health Department officials said.

Restaurants in Goa allowed to reopen from Monday

PANAJI, JUN 7 (PTI): Restaurants in Goa will be allowed to reopen from Monday, although the ban on operations of other establishments like schools, colleges, cinema halls, gyms, will continue as earlier, an official said on Sunday.

In its fresh set of guidelines regarding the lockdown issued on Sunday, the state government also gave relaxation of two hours for movement of individuals for non-essential activities, the official said.

While the current ban on such movement is between 7 pm and 5 am, from Monday onwards, it would be restricted to 9 pm and 5 am.

The collectors of both the districts- South Goa

and North Goa- issued these guidelines separately.

"As per the new guidelines, restaurants will be allowed to function from Monday. But they will have to follow the social distancing norms. Directorate of Food and Drugs Administration will issue guidelines for the restaurants," state health secretary Neela Mohanan said.

When asked about when the hotels will be allowed to reopen, she said, "The state tourism department will collect the data of all the hotels before taking a decision on allowing resumption of their operations."

"As per the latest set of guidelines, the movement of individuals for non-essential activities

will be banned between 9 pm and 5 am. Earlier this ban was between 7 pm and 5 am," Mohanan said. The ban on schools, colleges, educational/ training/coaching institutions, cinema halls/theatres, swimming pools, casinos, river cruises, multiplexes, consumption of liquor at public places, among other things, will continue in the state.

Restrictions on establishments like gymnasia, sports complexes, auditoriums/community halls, assembly halls and similar places, will continue, the official said.

The state government had earlier allowed sale of liquor at wine shops. However, bars have not been allowed to function.

Tiger straying in human habitats quarantined at national park



BHOPAL, JUN 7 (PTI): A tiger having the tendency to stray into residential areas has been brought to Bhopal's Van Vihar National Park where it has been kept in a quarantine facility, an official said on Sunday.

The tiger, named 'Saran', was first caged in December 2018 in Madhya Pradesh's Betul district after it strayed into a residential area from neighbouring Maharashtra.

It had killed two persons in Maharashtra's Amravati district in October 2018, an official from

the Van Vihar National Park here said.

Later, the feline wandered into territories of Madhya Pradesh and was rescued from a residential area of Sarani town in Betul, bordering Maharashtra, on December 11, 2018.

It was, however, given an opportunity to live in a natural habitat and released in the forest of Madhya Pradesh's Satpura Tiger Reserve, the official said.

"But, the striped animal continued to show the tendency of straying into residential areas,"

he said. On February 10, 2019, it was again rescued from a residential area of Sarani and kept in an enclosure in the state's Kanha Tiger Reserve, the official said.

"After the failed attempt to rehabilitate the tiger in its natural habitat, the tiger was brought from the Kanha Tiger Reserve to the Van Vihar National Park on Saturday and is currently kept in a quarantine facility," he said.

With this, the number of tigers in the Van Vihar National Park has now gone up to 14, he added.

COVID-19 cases in Tripura rise to 750

AGARTALA, JUN 6 (PTI): The number of coronavirus cases in Tripura rose to 750 on Saturday after 55 more people tested positive for the disease, officials said.

Most of the new patients have a recent travel history to other states.

Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb in a Tweet said, "Alert. 55 people

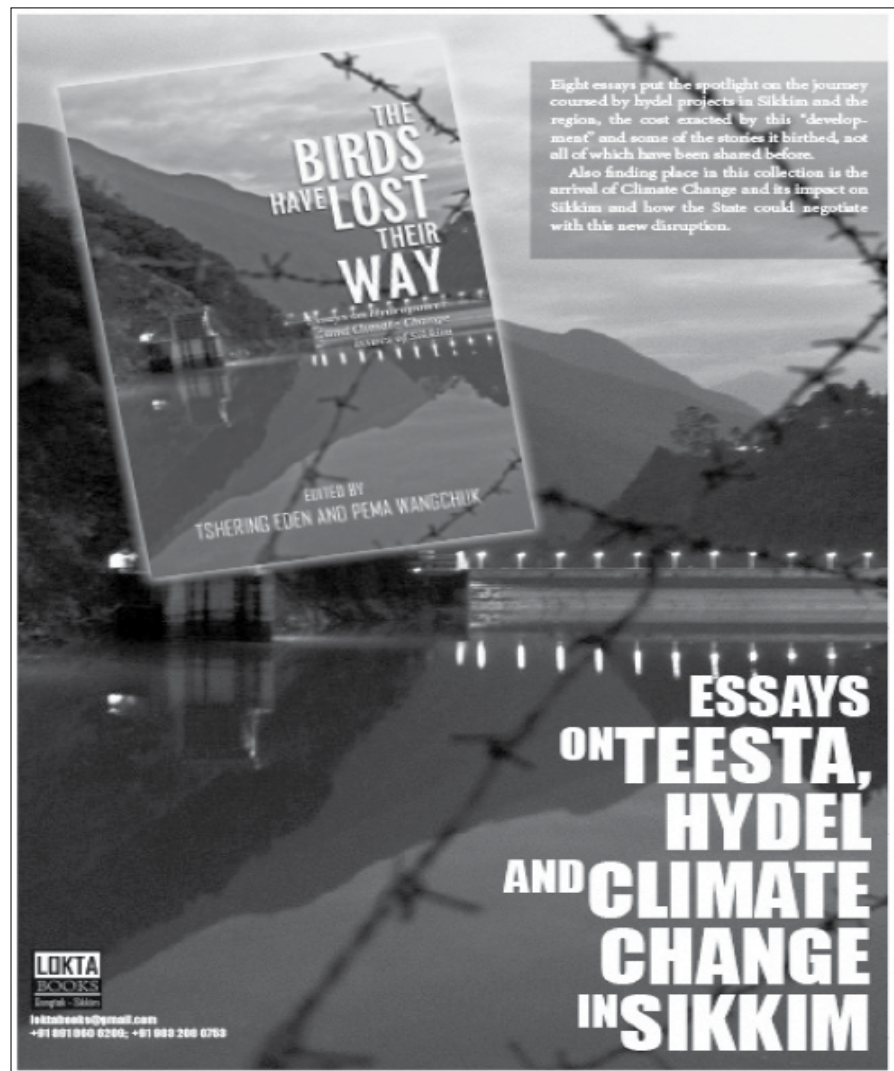
found COVID-19 positive cases in Tripura today out of 1125 samples tested. Majority of the positive patients have travel history and others were in contact of COVID-19 patient. Stay Cautious & Safe."

Of the total 750 patients in the state, 173 have been cured.

According to latest

reports, 24,826 out of 37,761 persons put under surveillance have completed their 14 days observation period and been discharged.

However, 542 people are still in different quarantine centres and 12,093 others home quarantined. The state has so far tested 33,276 people for COVID-19.



‘I’m bored of the game ... I’m over it’: Conor McGregor announces retirement



LONDON, 07 JUNE [PA MEDIA]: Conor McGregor has announced his retirement from UFC at the age of 31. The controversial Irishman, formerly featherweight and lightweight champion and one of the biggest names in the business, tweeted the news following the conclusion of the UFC 250 event.

“Hey guys I’ve decided to retire from fighting,” McGregor wrote. “Thank you all for the amazing memories!

What a ride it’s been! Here is a picture of myself and my mother in Las Vegas post one of my world title wins! Pick the home of your dreams Mags I love you! Whatever you desire it’s yours.”

McGregor, who bows out with a 22-4 record, has made similar announcements in the past – previously ‘retiring’ in 2016 and 2019 before making his way back to the octagon.

He was just one bout into his latest comeback,

having reversed his earlier decision to take on Donald Cerrone in a welterweight contest at UFC 246. McGregor won via TKO in just 40 seconds, his first success in more than three years.

A fight against fellow UFC great Anderson Silva had been on the cards at this year, with the latter publicly touting the bout over the weekend. Other potential opponents included long-time rival Khabib Nurmagomedov and Jorge Masvidal, with

his second fight of 2020 initially planned for July.

“The game just does not excite me, and that’s that,” McGregor told ESPN on Sunday. “All this waiting around. There’s nothing happening. I’m going through opponent options, and there’s nothing really there at the minute. There’s nothing that’s exciting me ... I don’t know if it’s no crowd. I don’t know what it is. There’s just no buzz for me.

“I had my goals, my

plans, the season. I had everything laid out,” McGregor said. “Obviously the world has gone bleeding bonkers at the minute. There’s f-all happening at the minute. They want to throw me up and down weights and offer me stupid fights. I don’t really give a fuck. I’m over it.”

The UFC president, Dana White, who has received criticism from McGregor in the past and who has recently clashed with Jon Jones over a pay issue, said he is happy to let the Irishman retire.

“Nobody is pressuring anybody to fight,” White said. “And if Conor McGregor feels he wants to retire, you know my feelings about retirement: you should absolutely do it. And I love Conor ... There’s a handful of people that have made this really fun for me. And he’s one of them.”

In 2017 McGregor took a high-profile detour into the world of professional boxing, going down in 10 rounds against Floyd Mayweather in a showpiece event in Las Vegas.

Bundesliga’s virtual crowd gives a game context for the TV onlooker



JOHN BREWIN BERLIN, 07 JUNE [THE-GUARDIAN]: As football takes tentative steps into its new normal, the Bundesliga continues to lead. Germany’s cavernous stadiums being emptied of fans took some getting used to and there have been subtle changes to the actual football. Home advantage barely exists, there has been an increase in the rate of injuries and the ball stays in play for a higher proportion of the 90 minutes.

BT Sport audiences in the UK were treated to a further innovation over the weekend: the piped-in crowd noise that had been available in Germany and the US since the Bundesliga’s reboot in mid-May. Judging by a social-media straw poll, the reaction was largely positive. As enlightening as it has been to hear players and coaches barking at each other, the sound of the crowd, faked as it might be, added a warmly familiar ambience.

Those watching Borussia Dortmund’s 1-0 home defeat of Hertha Berlin were treated to the greatest hits of the Westfalenstadion’s Yellow Wall. The sound mixer, operating from Sky Germany’s studio in Munich, conducted a knowledgeable if partisan crowd.

As Dortmund’s Emre Can stepped from defence to clear up some first-half danger, he was the recipient of applause, and when Hertha’s defender Dedryck Boyata appeared to have handled in the penalty area, the “fans” bayed for VAR before booing when the claim was denied by the officials.

For the viewer, there was the comforting embrace of context. Watching a behind-closed-doors game requires an extra level of concentration. The ebbs and flows of crowd noises can tell the viewer when they need to be paying closer attention. During Dortmund’s first game back, their 4-0 defeat of Schalke, the most audible sound in the Westfalenstadion was the throb of the electricians required to power a stadium built to hold 81,000 people. The Hertha game, though it produced a far less satisfactory performance from Dortmund, felt a superior viewing experience.

The return of the Premier League will see a similar service offered for viewers of the remaining 92 matches. For those interested in which of James Milner or Jordan Henderson does more talking or how much invective Chris Wilder launches at his Sheffield United players, there will be the option to hear the sound as it’s heard in the stadium.

Otherwise, there’s the option of a sound mix produced in an outside-broadcast truck or from a TV studio gallery if a game is ‘off-tube’ because health and safety measures mean it must be covered remotely. The broadcasters have league-approved use of a system that means audio can be weighted in favour of the home team to try to give a more “authentic” feel.

Sky, showing 64 matches, promises “a range of bespoke and team-specific crowd noises and chants to bring the vibrant atmosphere of the Premier League” as part of a package that includes an interactive revival of Fanzone, where groups of pals have “the chance to chat about the match and influence the crowd noise they hear on screen”.

On BT there will be a “dynamic noise feature” available via the red button. The BBC will offer audiences “crowd or no crowd” noise to suit individual taste via red button or a different iPlayer stream. Amazon Prime, showing four matches, is expected to offer something similar.

The pressure, then, is on, for the broadcasters to try to produce accurate replications of the Anfield atmosphere, the Emirates Stadium’s indifference or Goodison Park’s groans.

It is unlikely to be a perfect viewing experience, and is not meeting full approval in Germany, where certain ultra groups are dissatisfied that a “pandemic league” is being played without them, let alone broadcast using fake crowd noise. But, like so much else during the coronavirus crisis – conducting social occasions via Zoom, or takeaway pints – it will have to do for the moment.

Fortunate to have played cricket along side Kohli, says Williamson

MUMBAI, JUN 7 (PTI): New Zealand captain Kane Williamson considers himself “fortunate” to have played the game along side Virat Kohli, and said he has been closely following his Indian counterpart’s journey from a young age.

Both Williamson and Kohli featured in the 2008 ICC U19 World Cup in Malaysia, which was lifted by India and since then went on to become modern day greats of the game.

“Yes, we are fortunate to play against each other. It has been great to meet at a young age and follow his (Kohli’s) progress as well as his journey,” Williamson said on Star Sports show ‘Cricket Connected’.

Infact, it was Kohli’s India that beat Williamson’s New Zealand in

a close semifinal of the 2008 U19 World Cup, which also featured players like Ravindra Jadeja, Trent Boult and Tim Southee.

Williamson, who led New Zealand to the 2019 ICC World Cup final, said he and Kohli have shared honest opinions about the game over the last few years.

“It’s been interesting, we’ve had to play against each other for a long period of time,” he said.

“But actually, probably over the last few years we just shared our views on the game, some honest thoughts and found some common grounds despite, perhaps, playing the game little bit differently in terms of physically and may be our on-field characters I suppose,” added Williamson.

Using saliva won’t pose any risk once you’re in a bubble: Pollock

MUMBAI, JUN 7 (PTI): The unplanned nationwide lockdown has forced millions of migrants to return home empty-handed and the government should make a direct cash transfer of Rs 25,000 to each of them to salvage the situation, according to S Irudaya Rajan, an expert on migrant issues.

There are more than 600 million migrants in the country and out of them, at least 140 million are in major cities alone, he said.

Migrant workers have been adversely impacted by the lockdown that was imposed on March 25 to curb spreading of coronavirus infections. With businesses shutdown and economic activities disrupted, a large number of migrant workers lost their jobs and returned to their native places.

“When the first lockdown was announced we had just about 500 cases, and as we unwound it, we are the fifth most-infected country with more than 2.5 lakh infections. After forcing them to suffer too long and too much, which was absolutely avoidable, the government has given them zilch as part of the pandemic package,” Rajan told PTI. Rajan is the professor of population studies at the Centre for Development Studies, Thiruvananthapuram. He has 35 years of research experience, most of which is focused on migrants.

Millions of migrant workers were stranded across the country without food, shelter and transportation after the lockdown was announced.

“How can a family of five live with 5 kilograms of grain a month?... none of the so-called big-ticket announcements has anything for these poor who have been contributing to the growth of our cit-

ies tremendously,” Rajan said.

In May, the government announced it would spend 10 per cent of the GDP to help individuals and businesses to tide over the crisis due to the coronavirus pandemic and lockdown. Out of the R 20.9 lakh crore package, most of the measures are for pushing bank credit and not fiscal support or direct cash support to the needy.

“All that the Modi government has done is to ensure that the migrants, who were the heroes of their families all these years, have been made just zeros. Because overnight, from being the biggest source of support to their families, they have been made a burden as they are forced to return home empty-handed and most likely infected,” Rajan noted.

He said that for the government, the only way to salvage itself is to “announce a cash-transfer of at least Rs 25,000 to each of these migrants as the increased job guarantee scheme (MGNREGA) won’t help them at all”.

The financial outgo for such a move would be “at 1.5 per cent of the GDP or Rs 3.5 lakh crore, which is worth undertaking considering their present plight and their huge contribution to the economy”, he said.

Stating that a large cash support is what is needed, Rajan said his proposal of paying them Rs 25,000 in cash would have much larger fiscal benefit as it would boost consumption demand.

“A larger cash payout of say Rs 25,000 to each of the 140 million migrant worker can create lot of demand, which will help kick-start the economy with increased demand,” Rajan said.

Noting that from this big credit support only the MGNREGA would be

of any immediate help to the poor returning home, Rajan said even if this to be really of any benefit, they need to find the jobs which does not look easy given the crippled economy.

Even the only migrant-specific package of rental housing is a long way away, he said and wondered how many of them would return to the cities and unkind employers. Similarly, the one-nation-one-ration-card scheme is also optional and left to the states and if at all it is implemented, it would again be of long-term benefit, he observed.

So in effect, Rajan said the government made these self-sustaining and to a large extent thriving community of a large swathe of our people to suffer for no fault of theirs but due to the folly of the administration.

“What more, they are not only returning empty-handed for the first time in the history of migrants and also carrying a stigma with them now -- of being a burden and also carrying a deadly virus.

“Many of those who returned to their villages are already in depression and suicides rates already going up. From farmer suicides for many years, we will now have headlines of migrants suicides as they don’t want to fight poverty and starvation,” Rajan warned. On whether migrants would return to the cities when they are reopened, Rajan said he was not sure about their early return.

“My assessment is that at least 30 per cent of those who left the cities will not return even in the medium term due to the bad experience they had. And only those employers who were good to them during the crisis will get them back.

Empty stadiums could affect Ben Stokes’ performance: Darren Gough



LONDON, JUN 7 (PTI): Former England fast bowler Darren Gough believes that World Cup-winning all-rounder Ben Stokes’ performance might be affected if international cricket is played in front of empty stands due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

International cricket is set to resume after the coronavirus hiatus with England scheduled to host the West Indies team in a bio-secure environment for a proposed three-match series in July. “We have seen

Ben Stokes whenever there is a big game on, when there is something really at stake in a match, he steps up and always delivers,” the 49-year-old was quoted as saying by Sky Sports.

“So it will be interesting to see how someone like him, the greatest cricketer arguably in the world at the moment, how he performs with no crowd. I think it might affect his performance just a little bit,” he said.

Gough, who played 58 Tests and 159 ODIs

for England, said it will be interesting to see how different players react to the new normal of playing in spectator-less grounds.

“I don’t think it makes any difference to the players. Of course some players react to crowd more than other. Graeme Gooch is to say that about me. He used to say the bigger the crowd they better I play,” he said.

“But for some players it doesn’t matter, they will still deliver. We are talking about small percentages in performance.

Sammy says he faced racism while playing in IPL

KINGSTON, JUN 7 (PTI): Former West Indies captain Darren Sammy has alleged that he was subjected to racist comments during his stint with Sunrisers Hyderabad in the Indian Premier League.

Sammy’s allegation came after his vociferous support to the ‘Black Lives Matter’ campaign around the world after the killing of African-American George Floyd in the US.

“I just learnt what that ‘kalu’ meant when I played for Sunrisers in the IPL. They call me and Perera by that name. I thought it meant strong Stallion. My previous post tells me something different and I’m angry,” Sammy wrote on his Instagram page on Saturday.

He did not say when exactly he faced these remarks and by whom.

“Oh so that’s what that meant when they

called me and @tp.perera kalu in India when we played for Sunrisers. I just thought they were calling me strong black man I’m more piss (sic) now. Sammy has urged the ICC to take serious note of racism which exists in the gentleman’s game.

“@ICC and all the other boards are you guys not seeing what’s happening to ppl like me? Are you not gonna speak against the social injustice against my kind. This is not only about America,” he had tweeted earlier. Sammy, who played 38 Tests, 126 ODIs and 68 T20 Internationals, captained the West Indies to two T20 World Cup titles.

“For too long black people have suffered. I’m all the way in St Lucia and I’m frustrated If you see me as a teammate then you see #George-Floyd Can you be part of the change by showing your support.

Sri Lanka holds mock poll to test COVID-19 guidelines for parliamentary election

COLOMBO, JUN 7 (PTI):

Sri Lanka's election commission has held a mock poll in the southern Galle district to test the COVID-19 health guidelines and its preparedness for the parliamentary polls likely to be held between late July and mid August.

The parliamentary polls were initially to be held on April 25, but had to be postponed due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic which prompted the authorities to announce a nationwide lockdown from March 20.

Later, the election commission shifted the date to June 20. It was again deemed not suitable in view of the raging COVID-19 pandemic, which has claimed 11 lives and infected over 1,900 people in the island nation. A majority of the patients have been cured and discharged from hospitals.

Some 200 voters from the Ambalangoda polling division in Galle district were chosen to 'vote' at the mock poll, according to an official.

"We wanted to learn from the exercise so that the lessons can be applied at the real election when it happens," senior election commission official Saman C Ratnayake told reporters at the Buddhist temple hall which was used for the mock poll.

The selected voters were given instructions at their homes on Saturday and were asked to bring along a pen to mark the vote while wearing a face mask.

The election commission said they had formulated guidelines to conduct the polls in close co-operation with the health authorities.

Election chief Mahinda Deshapriya said the guidelines were revolving around social distancing, washing hands and wearing face masks.

At the mock poll, attention was given to the time it takes to cast a vote while sticking to the health guidelines.

The poll date to elect a 225-member parliament is yet to be announced.

According to officials, it is likely to be held anytime between late July and mid August.

The opposition parties and civil society groups have challenged the holding of the election in the midst of health risks posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Over 16 million voters are eligible to vote to elect 196 members under proportional representation and a further 29 members on national cumulative votes of each party based on proportional representation.

Brazil govt yanks virus death toll as data befuddles experts

RIO DE JANEIRO, JUN 7 (AP):

Brazil's government has stopped publishing a running total of coronavirus deaths and infections in an extraordinary move that critics call an attempt to hide the true toll of the disease in Latin America's largest nation.

The Saturday move came after months of criticism from experts saying Brazil's statistics are woefully deficient, and in some cases manipulated, so it may never be possible to gain a real understanding of the depth of the pandemic in the country.

Brazil's last official numbers showed it had recorded over 34,000 deaths related to the coronavirus, the third-highest number in the world, just ahead of Italy. It reported nearly 615,000 infections, putting it at the second-highest, behind the United States. Brazil, with about 210 million people, is the globe's seventh most populous nation.

On Friday, the federal Health Ministry took down a website that had showed daily, weekly and monthly figures on infections and deaths in Brazilian states. On Saturday, the site returned but the total numbers of infections for states and the nation were no longer there. The site now shows only the numbers for the previous 24 hours.

Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro tweeted Saturday that disease totals are not representative of the country's current situation. A Bolsonaro



ally contended to the newspaper O Globo that at least some states providing figures to the Health Ministry had sent falsified data, implying that they were exaggerating the toll. Carlos Wizard, a businessman expected to assume a high-level post in the Health Ministry, said the federal government would be conducting a review intended to determine a more accurate toll.

The number we have today is fanciful or manipulated, Wizard said. A council of state health secretaries said it would fight the changes by Bolsonaro, who has dismissed the gravity of the coronavirus pandemic and tried to thwart attempts to impose quarantines, curfews and social distancing, arguing those steps are causing more damage to the economy than the pandemic.

"The authoritarian, insensitive, inhumane and unethical attempt to make the COVID-19 deaths invisible will not prosper, the health secretaries council said Saturday.

While precise counts of cases and deaths are difficult for governments worldwide, health researchers have been saying for weeks that a series of serious irregularities with Brazilian government statistics was making it impossible to get a handle on an exploding situation.

Around the world, coronavirus deaths are being undercounted to varying degrees due to lack of universal testing. Academic groups in

dozens of nations have tried to figure out the magnitude of the undercount by studying the total number of deaths in a set period compared to the average of prior years in a particular nation, state, province or city. Where they find unexplained surges in deaths, it is likely due in large part to undiagnosed cases of the coronavirus. In Brazil, such efforts by academics and other independent experts have been handicapped to an extreme degree by problems with the government statistics that serve as a baseline.

It is very difficult to make predictions that you think are reliable," said Fabio Mendes, an adjunct professor in software engineering at the federal University of Brasilia, who studies Brazilian coronavirus statistics. We know the numbers are bad. At the end of April, 42-year-old Leivane Bibiano da Silva became feverish, developed a bad, incessant cough and diarrhea all symptoms of the new coronavirus that was devastating Manaus, the Brazilian Amazon's most populous city.

Bibiano, who had HIV and tuberculosis, was scared of checking herself into Manaus' overwhelmed hospitals, family relatives said. She died in her home about two weeks later, and was buried in a mass grave at the public cemetery. She was never tested.

I'm upset, not just about my mother, but about all of those who didn't enter into the statistics, said Leonardo

dozens of nations have tried to figure out the magnitude of the undercount by studying the total number of deaths in a set period compared to the average of prior years in a particular nation, state, province or city. Where they find unexplained surges in deaths, it is likely due in large part to undiagnosed cases of the coronavirus. In Brazil, such efforts by academics and other independent experts have been handicapped to an extreme degree by problems with the government statistics that serve as a baseline.

It is very difficult to make predictions that you think are reliable," said Fabio Mendes, an adjunct professor in software engineering at the federal University of Brasilia,

who studies Brazilian coronavirus statistics. We know the numbers are bad. At the end of April, 42-year-old Leivane Bibiano da Silva became feverish, developed a bad, incessant cough and diarrhea all symptoms of the new coronavirus that was devastating Manaus, the Brazilian Amazon's most populous city.

Bibiano, who had HIV and tuberculosis, was scared of checking herself into Manaus' overwhelmed hospitals, family relatives said. She died in her home about two weeks later, and was buried in a mass grave at the public cemetery. She was never tested.

I'm upset, not just about my mother, but about all of those who didn't enter into the statistics, said Leonardo

Bibiano, her eldest son. To be honest, I don't believe in the numbers." Brazil's Health Ministry did not respond to queries about the experts' allegations about problems with the data.

The gravity of the problems with Brazil's data became clear last month when academics reviewing death certificates compiled by the federal Civil Registration office which compiles death data from all Brazilian states found drastic, unexplained fluctuations in the number of monthly deaths in recent years, and puzzling discrepancies between states.

In Rio de Janeiro state, the number of average monthly deaths fell sharply starting in January 2019, a change the Civil Registration office said stemmed from its state court providing duplicate data for 2018 and previous years. The number of average monthly deaths in Manaus, the capital of the northern state of Amazonas, more than doubled when the shift occurred, which the office chalked up to delay in data submission.

On May 14, as independent investigators were questioning the inconsistencies, the Civil Registration office pulled more than 500,000 death certificates from its website, saying most were from Rio and it needed to review how the figures were tallied nationwide in order to make sure statistics were consistent year over year.

Protesters flood streets in huge, peaceful push for change

WASHINGTON, JUN 7 (AP): Massive demonstrations against racism and police brutality filled some of the nation's most famous cityscapes, with tens of thousands of people marching peacefully in scenes that were more often festive than tense.

Wearing masks and urging police reform, protesters on Saturday gathered in dozens of places from coast to coast, while mourners in North Carolina waited for hours to glimpse the golden coffin carrying the body of native son George Floyd, a black man whose death at the hands of Minneapolis police has galvanised the expanding movement.

Collectively, it was perhaps the largest one-day mobilisation since Floyd died 12 days ago and came as many cities began lifting curfews that authorities imposed following initial spasms of arson, assaults and smash-and-grab raids on businesses. Authorities have softened restrictions as the number of arrests plummeted.

Demonstrations also reached four other continents, ending in clashes in two European cities.

The largest US demonstration appeared to be in Washington, where streams of protesters flooded streets that were closed to traffic.

On a hot, humid day, protesters gathered at the Capitol, on the National Mall and in neighbourhoods.

Some turned intersections into dance floors. Tents offered snacks and water. On one block, the chime of an ice cream truck competed with the rumble of a helicopter overhead.

Pamela Reynolds said she came seeking greater accountability for police.

The laws are protecting them, said the 37-year-old African American teacher. Among the changes she wants is a federal ban on police chokeholds and a requirement for officers to wear body cameras.

Many groups headed toward

the White House, which was fortified with new fencing and extra security measures.

Inside the presidential mansion, their chants and cheers could be heard in waves.

President Donald Trump, who has urged authorities to crack down on unrest, had no public events.

The demonstrations extended to Trump's golf resort just outside Miami, where about 100 protesters gathered.

Elsewhere, the backdrops included some of the nation's most famous landmarks.

Peaceful marchers filed across the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco and the Brooklyn Bridge in New York.

They walked the boulevards of Hollywood and the street in downtown Nashville, Tennessee, famous for country music-themed bars and restaurants.

Many wore masks a reminder of the danger that the protests could exacerbate the spread of the coronavirus. Roderick Sweeney, who is black, said he was overwhelmed to see the large turnout of white protesters waving signs that said Black Lives Matter as hundreds gathered near the Golden Gate Bridge.

We've had discussions in our family and among friends that nothing is going to change until our white brothers and sisters voice their opinion, said Sweeney, 49.

The large turnout of white protesters is sending a powerful message. In Philadelphia and Chicago, marchers chanted, carried signs and occasionally knelt in silence. Protesters flooded the streets in a massive showing near the Philadelphia Museum of Art and its famous Rocky steps, chanting No justice, no peace! before setting off for City Hall.

A large crowd of medical workers many in lab coats and scrubs marched to Seattle's City Hall. Signs they held read, Nurses kneel

with you, not on you and Police violence and racism are a public health emergency.

Atop a parking garage in downtown Atlanta, a group of black college band alumni serenaded protesters with a tuba-heavy mix of tunes. Standing within earshot, business owner Leah Aforkor Quayee said it was her first time hitting the streets.

This makes people so uncomfortable, but the only way things are happening is if we make people uncomfortable, said Quayee, who is black.

In Raeford, North Carolina, a small town near Floyd's birthplace, people lined up outside a Free Will Baptist church, waiting to enter in small groups. At a private memorial service, mourners sang along with a choir. At the front of the chapel was a large photo of Floyd and a portrait of him adorned with an angel's wings and halo.

It could have been me. It could have been my brother, my father, any of my friends who are black, said Erik Carlos of nearby Fayetteville. It made me feel very vulnerable at first.

Protesters and their supporters in public office say they're determined to turn the extraordinary outpouring into change, notably overhauling policing policies. In Washington, Minneapolis and elsewhere, marchers urged officials to defund police a demand that has become more common in recent days. Theresa Bland, 68, a retired teacher and real estate agent protesting at the Ohio Statehouse in Columbus, had a broader agenda in mind.

I'm looking at affordable housing, political justice, prison reform, the whole ball of wax, she said.

Some reforms already have been enacted.

Minneapolis officials have agreed to ban chokeholds and neck restraints by police and to require officers to stop other officers using improper force.

Global death toll from COVID-19 passes 400,000



LONDON, JUN 7 (AP):

The worldwide death toll from COVID-19 has surpassed 400,000, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University that health experts say is still an undercount because many who died were not tested for the virus.

The milestone was reached Sunday, a day after the Brazilian gov-

ernment stopped publishing a running total of coronavirus deaths and infections. Critics called the move an extraordinary attempt to hide the true toll of the disease rampaging through Latin America's largest nation.

Brazil's last official numbers recorded over 34,000 virus-related deaths, the third-highest

toll in the world behind the US and Britain.

Worldwide, at least 6.9 million people have been infected by the virus, according to Johns Hopkins. The US has seen nearly 110,000 confirmed virus-related deaths and Europe has recorded over 175,000 since the virus emerged in China late last year.

HAVE A STORY TO SHARE?

email us: news@summittimes.com

Com

VIDEO NEWS SECTION

To book ad-space, contact SummitTIMES at

BANGKOK:
For circulation details contact: +91-9749897698, +91-9647102492
& for advertisement booking at: +91-993427808 or at office no 03592
208/48, Mail us at advertise@summittimes.com
SILIGURI:
Mr. Mani Rai, H/s. Space Ads, B.R. Ambedkar Building, Room No.7, Ist floor, Opp. Ganga Hotel, Hill Cart Road, Siliguri - 735002, Ph. 033-22124348/ fax 033-22124337/ mob. +91-9830547774/ +91-9832080753

KOLKATA OFFICE:
Ishad Ali/ Inteyez, Synapse - 6, Madan Street, Mezzine - 700072, Ph. 033-22124348/ fax 033-22124337/ mob. +91-9830547774/ +91-9832080753

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

the BIG PIC



WEEKEND VIBES! The Fast & Furious star, Jordana Brewster rocks a super cute outfit as she steps out for coffee in Brentwood, Calif.

Fantastic Four' producers refused to cast black Sue Storm, says Josh Trank



LOS ANGELES, JUN 7 (PTI): Fantastic Four director Josh Trank says he got "heavy push-back" from the producers for trying to cast a black actor as Sue Storm.

In the 2015 film, which was a box office debacle, Kate Mara played Sue Storm, Michael B. Jordan portrayed Johnny Storm, Miles Teller played Reed Richards and Jamie Bell was Ben Grimm.

There were a lot of controversial conversations that were had behind-the-scenes on that. I was mostly interested in a black Sue Storm, a black Johnny Storm and a black Franklin Storm, Trank said in a video interview with Geeks of Color.

But when you're dealing with a studio on a massive movie like that, everybody wants to keep an open mind to who the big stars are going to be. When it came down to it, I found a lot of pretty heavy pushback on casting a black woman in that role, the filmmaker added.

Trank said when he looks back he feels embarrassed about sticking to the project, because those are not the values he stands for.

I'm somebody who always talks about standing up for what I believe in, even if it means burning my career out, and I feel bad that I didn't take it to the mat with that issue. I feel like I failed in that regard.

Impossible to be cocky about an enigma like acting: Vinay Pathak

MUMBAI, JUN 7 (PTI): Actor Vinay Pathak says every role requires a performer to be completely honest to the art, and the process is so scary and mysterious, it's impossible to ever feel sure about one's capabilities.

Starting his acting career in the late 1990s juggling small appearances in films and television shows Pathak soon earned the tag of TV's funny man.

Big screen fame, however, eluded him until Dibakar Banerjee's acclaimed 2006 comedy "Khosla Ka Ghosla", which earned him recognition and finally with "Bheja Fry" in 2007, Pathak 'arrived' in the industry.

Twenty years and memorable performances in films like "Johnny Gaddar", "Island City" and "Badlapur" later, the actor said he is yet to feel confident about his craft.

"It's so easy to be cocky about anything. But when you actually get into the details, you realise there's so much to discover. It has been 20 years and I'm still discovering so many things. Till today I feel 'Oh my God I was so clueless about this,'" Pathak told PTI in an interview.

He recalled something his late friend, actor Irrfan would often say about acting: "Let's find out what exactly this is, it's such a mystery."

"I feel acting is an enigma. It's not about delivering a line, it's about the honesty behind it that you've put in a character... It's also so freaky because you've to play different characters, live a reality for imaginary situations.

"How can you be cocky about something you don't have any idea about? In this craft, whoever uses the word 'confidence' must be a great marketing guy. The word is 'vulnerable', which all humans are."

Pathak said he aims to tap into this vulnerability in all his performances. It isn't just about getting a character's ac-

cent right, Pathak said, but taking a deep dive into the headspace of the part.

That is why, the 51-year-old actor said, he's "always nervous" the first few days of a shoot.

"My reaction to a situation my character is in, when I'm not shooting, would be cliched. But when I'm on the floor and reacting physically, things change. I don't like to pretend. I like to be honest about that imaginary cir-

The actor said when the script came his way, he read it twice just to take in the sheer brilliance Devanshu and Satyanshu had infused the story with.

"I told them to involve me in anything for the film, workshops, auditions, whatever it takes, I'd do it. These two talented gentlemen bring so much joy. The script was brimming with positivity."

The script assisted Pathak in getting



cumstance and that's the key for me. That's the soul.

"If I am not emotionally honest about anything the character does, then I'm cheating myself, the director, film and the audience. And I don't like to cheat."

Pathak is currently basking in the glory of his latest, "Chintu Ka Birthday", which released on ZEE5.

Written and directed by Devanshu Kumar and Satyanshu Singh, the comedy-drama chronicles the story of the six-year-old Chintu in Iraq with his family, whose birthday celebration is interrupted by war.

every nuance right for his character of Chintu's father, Madan Tiwary.

What also helped was the decision of the directors to ask the cast to spend time in the house a day before the shoot, so that no one feels "too alien" with the space.

"We lived moments as that family in the house. The language was the easiest for me because I come from Bihar. But a character doesn't just stop at a dialect. It's about the soulfulness of the character and here, the family. All of that helped," he added.

The film also stars Tillotama Shome, Seema Pahwa and Vedant Chibber.

Michael B Jordan calls on Hollywood to commit to black hiring'

LOS ANGELES, JUN 7 (PTI): Actor Michael B Jordan has called on Hollywood studios, agencies and industry insiders to invest in black staff. During a protest against systemic racism and police brutality organised by the Big 4 agencies in the wake of George Floyd's death, the Creed star asked the people in the movie business to commit to hiring more black people.

You committed to a 50/50 gender parity in 2020. Where is the challenge to commit to black hiring? Black content led by black executives, black consultants. Are you policing our storytelling as well? Let us bring our darkness to the light, Jordan said while addressing the crowd.

The actor, who played Oscar Grant, an African American man killed by a police officer in 2013 film Fruitvale Station, said the role made him feel the pain of racial abuse victims.

"I lived with that for a very long time and it weighs on me. Producing that movie made me really realise the lengths that the government and oppressors will go to keep knowledge out of your hands," he said of the film.

Jordan said when he played attorney Bryan Stevenson in Just Mercy, he understood

the importance of being calm and closer to the issue. The actor produced the legal drama, also starring Jamie Foxx.

I learned his tactics. I learned his mental-



ty. I learned his approach to things. Very calm. Very strategic. Very thoughtful. You have to be proximal. You have to be close to (the) issues," he added.

Floyd, a 46-year-old African-American man died on May 25 in Minneapolis, Minnesota, after a white police officer knelt on his neck for nearly nine minutes in an encounter caught on video. The officer, Derek Chauvin, has been charged with murder and manslaughter.

Karan Johar raises awareness about child abuse: Have to do everything to protect children

MUMBAI, JUN 7 (PTI): Filmmaker Karan Johar on Sunday said child abuse in any form is "unacceptable" and one must do everything possible to preserve the innocence of children. Johar took to Twitter and shared a short film, uploaded by Union minister Smriti Irani, which highlights the ordeals of children who are at the receiving end of abuse.

"As a parent, the well being of our children is our utmost priority. So to see scenarios like this play out is unbearable. Child abuse in any form is unacceptable and we have to do everything in our power to protect every child and preserve their innocence.

"If you witness or suspect child abuse just dial 1098. It's our responsibility. #Childline #Spreadtheword," Johar, who welcomed twins Yash and Roohi via surrogacy in 2017, wrote.

ARIES:

Aren't you tired of taking everything so seriously and carrying the weight of the world on your shoulders? The cards are urging you to change the approach a little, to think of the world as if it were a playground. You're here to have fun, make mistakes, and learn a few lessons along the way. So, don't get too attached to the outcome of what you are creating. As for the things you are struggling with, know that you will find creative solutions once you let go of your false sense of control.

Tip: Think of the world as your playground.

TAURUS:

There are times in our lives when we try every trick in the book to no avail. The doors that are locked refuse to open and the people who are meant to assist us in the journey get caught up in their own trials and tribulations. And then there are times when pathways magically clear themselves, our desires manifest with minimal efforts and people we know little about become a catalyst for this positive shift. The Universe is playing for your team, baby! Tip: Spirit is about to manifest major miracles on your behalf!

GEMINI:

You somehow manage to pick up your phone every time it is 11:11am/pm, your pizza delivery bill reads 'Rs 555' and you could swear the raven by your window this morning was here to deliver a message from the higher realms. No, you're not going crazy, Gemini. You're just upgrading to a whole new frequency. Welcome to the new normal! The things about signs and symbols is that they're entirely personal. You could turn to Google to make sense of what's you're coming through. But isn't it so much more powerful to listen to your intuition?

Tip: Trust the messages that are coming through from the higher realms. They are affirming your path.

CANCER:

Your current circumstances bring John Rohn's famous quote to mind: "If you don't like where you are, move. You are not a tree." It's true that certain things are beyond your control, but how you respond to the given challenges is entirely up to you. Tap into the power of free will, Cancer.

Tip: You have the power to bring about change.

LEO:

Anybody can be an influencer, Leo. There's nothing you cannot buy on the internet these days! But few people have what it takes to be the voice of their generation. Do you aspire to join the league of greatness? The secret to getting ahead in the game is staying true to your message rather than succumbing to the numbers game. You owe it to yourself, beautiful. Remember, most revolutionaries were misunderstood in their times. So, don't worry too much about what other people are saying or not saying about your progress! Tip: Wield your power for the greatest good.

VIRGO:

There are times when everything works out effortlessly and then there are times when you push and push with no avail. The Universe is showing you duality at its best. Get ready to witness both ends of the spectrum today. What you need to keep in mind when things aren't working out though is that, at any point of time, your victories outweigh your failures. So be gentle with yourself, Virgo. Learn from your mistakes without giving yourself too much grief for them as you applaud your ability to show up, every single day,

despite life's many storms.

Tip: You're witnessing duality at its best.

LIBRA:

Look at you transforming your negative beliefs about love and allowing yourself to receive what you have been giving so freely to others! This is a magical time in the Libra HQ, one that speaks of bliss, harmony, and togetherness. Say 'I do' if you haven't already, or exchange virtual promise rings. You don't have to look outside for a sign, wild one.

Tip: Let the rhythm of your heart guide you.

SCORPIO:

Scorpio, you are experiencing deep, inner alchemy right now, one that is taking your self-love game to a whole new level. It's true that you've made plenty of mistakes. But then again, who hasn't? Bringing forth the gift of forgiveness is an integral part of this transformation process. Light the torch of awareness in the so-called dark places. Remember, we are not here to be perfect. We're here to be whole and integrated.

Tip: Be gentle with yourself.

SAGITTARIUS:

A Jordan Belfort quote you want to remember now and forever: "If it doesn't bring you income, inspiration or orgasms, it doesn't belong in your life." Sagittarius, you're fully aware of the things that are beginning to smell stale around here. It's time for you to channel your inner dark goddess and cut the cords that are no longer serving you. If you're dealing with a toxic relationship at the moment, find the courage within you to break the cycle. The Universe knows you deserve better. The real question is: Do "you" believe that for yourself?

Tip: It's time to let go of all that is stale around you.

CAPRICORN:

You are stepping into an important phase of your career, one that requires you to be consistent in your efforts. But the hustle is something you have never been afraid of. What you could potentially struggle with is the noise and distraction of the outside world. Word for the wise: establish boundaries at home and put your phone on flight mode. Going on a social media detox is a good way to stay distraction-free.

Tip: The project at hand needs your undivided attention.

AQUARIUS:

Maybe you're not tired because you're doing too much. Maybe you're tired because you are doing so little of what sets your heart on fire. It's never too late to live a life that's purposeful; to find a middle ground between your passion and your profession. Take a moment to make a list of all the things you enjoyed when you were little. If money wasn't a concern, would you consider doing these things for the rest of your life?

Tip: What's the one thing you would do for the rest of your life if money was not a cause of concern?

PISCES:

It's a 'make art, not war' kind of day in the Pisces HQ. You're in the mood to channel your emotions onto the canvas—anger, sadness, joy, ecstasy, and melancholy. For you, art is not just a medium of expression. It's a form of catharsis. A way of emotional release. Remember, you're not here to be perfect. You're here to be you. Stay true to your message and know that those who are meant to connect with it will find a way to align their path with yours.

Tip: Stay true to your message.