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SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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Govt offices reopen with 1/3rd strength

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 20 APR:

As per the order issued by the Government of Sikkim Vide Order No. 595/CS/2020 dated 17 Apr, 2020, Government offices across the state resumed work at 1/3rd strength today. The HoDs and officers of the level of Joint Secretary and above joined work from today.

The heads of offices have prepared rosters and circulated to all the officers and staff of the department. The officers and staff called for duty will be using the roster as the permit for to and fro movement from home to office.

The district police will permit the movement of officers and staff



to and from the office only on the production of valid photo ID cards and only during the hours from 9.00am to 10.00am and 4.30pm to 5.30pm. The departments, if nec-

essary, are to arrange for car pool service.

Permits shall be issued for resuming construction activities engaging more than 5 workers at a site, execut-

ed by various government departments in the district either departmentally or through an agency from 20 April onwards. Permits shall be obtained from con-

cerned SDMs.

All the employees have been encouraged to install Aarogya Setu Mobile App according to the direction of the State Government.

Border unlikely to open for Trade

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 20 APR:

Border Trade over Nathula, which usually begins on the first Monday of May every year, is unlikely to begin on schedule this year in light of the Novel Coronavirus pandemic.

While an official de-

cision is still awaited, it is unlikely that at a time when interstate borders have been closed and even inter-district travel regulated, Nathula will be opened for international border trade.

It may be recalled that when the nCoV scare gathered steam, even

tourist visits to the border had been closed.

Senior officials inform that Government will take the final decision on border trade as soon as the lockdown ends. The lockdown, currently in its second phase, is scheduled to continue till 03 May.

Hail destroys standing crop in West Sikkim

RUDRA KAUSHIK

GYALSHING, 20 APR:

The hailstorm which hit West Sikkim on Sunday evening has caused extensive damage to standing crop at Uttarey and adjoining areas.

The high reaches of Uttarey, Sopakha, Lungyak, Kumuk Sepi and others nearby places were hit by a severe hailstorm which has damaged fields of corn, potatoes, peas, beans, cabbage and cauliflowers just as they were getting ready for harvest.

Farmers of the affected areas are a dejected lot.

"We toil hard in our fields everyday in the hope that we will make



ends meet with the harvest but nature sometimes has disastrous designs and we lose our investment, sweat and labour," a farmer said.

They are hoping that the State Government will take cognizance of their loss and make provisions to compensate their loss.

Centre objects to Kerala easing lockdown restrictions

NEW DELHI, APR 20 (PTI): The Centre has come down heavily on the Kerala government for its decision to allow opening of restaurants, bus travel in cities and opening of MSME industries in urban areas, saying it amounts to dilution of lockdown guidelines and also a Supreme Court observation.

However, the Pinarayi Vijayan-led Left government in Kerala said there was some "misunderstanding", due to which the Centre had objected to dilution of the lockdown protocol for controlling coronavirus.

In a letter to the Kerala government, the home ministry said the state government on April 17 circulated revised guidelines for lockdown measures which allowed opening of activities which are prohibited in the Centre's consolidated revised guidelines issued on April 15.

Such additional activities allowed by the government of Kerala, include opening of local workshops, barber shops, restaurants, book stores, MSMEs in municipal limits, bus travel in cities and towns for shorter distance (upto 60 km), two passengers in the back seat of four wheeler and pillion riding on scooters.

In his letter sent on Sunday to Kerala Chief Secretary Tom Jose, Union Home Secretary Ajay Bhalla also drew his attention to the consolidated revised guidelines issued for the implementation of the lockdown.

The guidelines categorically stated that the State and UT governments shall not dilute them in any manner and shall strictly enforce the same.

The States and UTs may, however, impose stricter measures than the guidelines as per requirement of local areas.

Bhalla also pointed out to the recent Supreme Court observation that all concerned -- state governments, public authorities and citizens of this country -- will faithfully comply with the directives and orders issued by the Union in letter and spirit in the interest of public safety.

The observations, which must be treated as directions of the Apex Court, was conveyed in my letter dated April 1 to all States and UTs, he said. "I would urge you to rectify the guidelines of government of Kerala in line with the consolidated revised guidelines dated April 15 and 16 without any dilution and to ensure strict compliance of lockdown measures," the Union home secretary said.

Kerala Tourism Minister Kadakampally Surendran denied there was dilution of the lockdown guidelines.

"We have given relaxations in accordance with the Centre's guidelines. I think there is some misunderstanding, based on which the Centre has sought an explanation. Once we give an explanation, it will all be sorted out. The Centre and the state have the same stand with regard to fight the pandemic. There is no contradiction in the stand taken. It's just a misunderstanding we will clear it," Surendran told mediapersons in Thiruvananthapuram.

The Kerala government has announced relaxation of COVID-19 lockdown restrictions in two zones, allowing among others private vehicles movement in an

turn to pg02

CM presents financial incentive to journos for working through nCoV pandemic



GANGTOK, 20 APR [IPR]: Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang [Golay] today presented financial incentive to journalists based out of Sikkim in recognition of their noteworthy service in this difficult time.

The cheque was presented to president, Press Club of Sikkim, Joseph Lepcha, in the presence of Secretary, IPR Department, Namrata Thapa and members of the Press Club.

The financial incen-

tive is being provided to journalists from print (both daily and weekly publications), electronic and social/ digital media working on the forefront during the ongoing Covid-19 crisis.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chief Minister extended his gratitude to members of the media for their valuable contribution in ensuring timely dissemination of news and information to the general public on Covid-19.

He said that the fi-

nancial incentive was a small gesture from the Government to express thankfulness towards the media who have been risking their lives in the process of news gathering and dissemination.

He said that media-persons working on the field as well as those on the desk are warriors who are continuously rendering their valuable service to society even in these challenging circumstances.

The Chief Minister

Amid lockdown, migrant workers a content lot in Kerala

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, APR 20 (PTI): Television, indoor games like carrom and chess for entertainment and even recharge for mobile phones are just some facilities provided for 'guest workers', as migrant labourers are called in Kerala, by the LDF government, setting an example to the rest of the country.

While migrant labourers in many states are up in arms over lack of facilities given to them, including transport to their states, the more than 3.5 lakh 'guest workers' in 19,764 camps in Kerala have no complaints and are waiting for the dangers of the pandemic to pass.

"The basic needs of the workers like drinking water and cooking facilities have been ensured. Those who prefer to have food like chapathi and sabji are given that. Milk is supplied to the camps through state-run Milma.

Along with that, food from community kitchens has also been provided to the workers. Besides, if they wish to prepare their own food, the required items are supplied to them," a senior official from the Labour Department told PTI.

The state government has also been issuing posters, making announcements and video messages in various



languages, including Assamese, Odia, Hindi and Bengali, among others, to sensitise the guest workers on the deadly COVID-19 and the importance of social distancing and cleanliness.

Most of the guest workers who shared their thoughts with P T I, expressed the hope that they would be able to meet their families after the lockdown ends, but were also worried about the jobs in the future.

"I came to Kerala years ago from Maharashtra. My whole family is still there. I go there once in a year. Everything was well and fine here till this issue," Babu Lal, a guest worker,

now lodged at a make-shift camp in a school located in the capital city of the state, said.

He said those in the camp get breakfast, lunch, snacks in the evening and dinner and they have been following the social distancing norms.

"After all this (pandemic scare) is over I will visit my family. But before going to Maharashtra, I will have to work here for one or two months so that I can save some money before I meet my family," Lal, who speaks and understands Malayalam well, told P T I.

These workers, the major labour force of Kerala, were employed in

construction, road works and in hotels, supermarkets and also as private security guards.

Some of them have considered this lockdown period as a vacation from their hectic work schedules.

"I have been working in various hotels for nearly a decade in Kerala and at restaurants. The work starts early in the morning and goes on till late at night. Now our hotel is closed and we are in this camp. We don't have any work, but have food and accommodation, along with TV," Gautam, a worker from Odisha, said.

Gautam's camp, a government school which houses at least 215 workers from various states, has two televisions with cable connection.

Another worker said he was bored of sitting idle without any work and was also worried also whether there would be any jobs for them after the lockdown ends.

"We are staying here without any work. The only issue is that we don't have any income as of now. I don't know whether there will be any jobs after all this ends. We need to send money to our families also," Prem Kumar, an Uttar Pradesh resident said.

turn to pg02

Control room set up at Namchi for COVID-19 queries



NAMCHI, 20 APR (IPR): A control room to cater to all the various queries regarding COVID-19 has been set up by the South District Administration at Namchi Police Station.

This room has a dedicated 24x7 helpline number which is 03595-263722 for advising and providing suggestions to the masses on the issue

of this disease and guidance on other miscellaneous enquiries.

It was informed that calls are coming in on a regular basis and the public are requesting for medical supplies and other essential activities. These callers are provided with adequate assistance by the Namchi police personnel.

SKM youth distribute essentials at Singtam Bazaar



YOGEN THATAL SINGTAM, 20 APR: Sikkim Krantikari Morcha CLC Members, Uma Shaker, Sanjay Reg-

mi, Rupesh Prasad and Krishana Prasad distributed food items to people in need at Singtam on 19 April.

Fruits distributed to Singtam Hospital patients



SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 20 APR:

All Sikkim Labour Social and Welfare group distributed fruits to patients admitted at District Hospital, Singtam. Hira Chhetri and Dipendra Sharma in-

formed that 11kg apple, 12kg orange and 7dozens of bananas were distributed to 38 patients admitted in the Hospital. Thanking all the staff for their support they also provided lunch to the staff in the hospital.

SDM office resumes work in Jorethang



JORETHANG, 20 APR [IPR]: Consequent upon the lockdown in view of COVID-19 outbreak, the Sub-division Magistrate office at Jorethang sub-division in order to conduct regular office work smoothly, has resumed work from 20 Apr, 20 effectively.

The office which has a collective strength of 22 staff has ensured 1/3rd attendance of its staff. Similarly, the installation of Arogya Setu app has been strictly mandated

to allow entry of the staff inside the office.

The office is following all safety and hygiene norms and wearing of masks by the staff and public visiting the office is being strictly followed. Cleaning and disinfection of the office and it's premises is being carried out by the safaikarmachari and the office has ensured adequate provisions of hand washing units and sanitizers inside the office.

Painting exhibitions...

"Being confined to the four walls of your house for days on end is not easy, but our minds are free and our imaginations have no limit. Beyond the black and white that we are seeing now, we believe and hope that there is more," Richa Agarwal said on behalf of organizers.

Meanwhile, the ICCR is organising an online competition 'United Against Corona - Express Through Art'.

"The exhibition will be in the fields of contemporary painting, folk art, tribal art, illustration, cartoon, digital and new age art. We are inviting entries till May 1. Winners will have their works displayed in big cities across the world and online," an ICCR spokesperson said.

The entries can be sent to two ICCR links.

Basibiyalo's Mumbai holds first ever online session

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 20 APR:

For the first time in its journey of regular monthly gathering, Basibiyalo's Mumbai chapter successfully organized an online session of its 24th episode today. The session was participated by literary figures from all over the country and abroad, a press release informs.

This three-hour episode of Basibiyalo was hosted by writer Hira Chhetri from Mumbai as Gharpati as per the customs of Basibilayo. The programme commenced with the recitation of code of conduct of the Basibiyalo which was read out by Mr Chhetri from Mumbai and collectively followed and chanted by all participants.

In the session, literary figures delivered their introductory speeches and also read out their latest creative writings. In view of the corona pandemic, most of the recitations were based on this is-



sue. All the participants expressed their personal viewpoints after giving a patient hearing of the

poems recited in the session.

Since the programme was held online for the first time, Basibiyalo Mumbai is still learning and has been trying to organise follow up programmes by inviting more literary lovers from across the planet. This was announced by Mr Chhetri while thanking all the participants of this historic 24th episode of Basibiyalo.

Among the participants were renowned poet Ashim Sagar from Nepal, satirist Min Liwang from Barpeta, Assam, poet Bilok Sharma from Ludhiana Punjab, short story writer Sudesh Khatri from Kalimpong, travel writer Laxman Sharma from Siliguri, journalist and poet Keshav Sapkota from Sikkim, poet and social activist Sanjeeb Gurung from Kolkata and a regular reader and sincere follower of Nepali literary activities Meena Lama from Rangpo, Sikkim.

North contributes to CM's Relief Fund

MANGAN, 19 APR (IPR): The representatives of Chungthang Gumpa, called on Roads & Bridges Minister, Samdup Lepcha at Pegong and handed over a cheque of Rs. 1,00,100 towards the Chief Minister's Relief Fund in order to support the government's effort to fight against the global crisis of COVID-19.

The cheque was handed over by the In-charge of Chungthang Gumpa, Denlok Lepcha. The Minister, Samdup Lepcha expressed his heartfelt gratitude towards Chungthang Gumpa and thanked them for the generous and compassionate contribution at this time of crisis.

The representatives



of Chungthang GPU's five wards also called on the Minister and handed over a cheque of Rs. 50,000 towards Chief Minister's Relief Fund.

Similarly, Pegong Youth Club handed over a cheque of Rs. 50,000 towards Chief Minister's Relief Fund.

Social Worker-cum-Contractor, Karma Pinto Bhutia has contributed Rs 1 lakh towards Chief Minister's Relief Fund.

The Minister, Samdup Lepcha expressed his heartfelt gratitude and thanked them for the generous contributions.

Governor takes stock of Education Dept preparedness



SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 20 APR:

Governor of Sikkim, Ganga Prasad convened a meeting with Minister of Education, KN Lepcha and Addl Chief Secretary Education Department, GP Upadhyaya today with regard to the preparedness of the department in resuming classes in educational institutions and Universities once the national lockdown is lifted, a Raj Bhavan communiqué informs. Additional Chief Secretary to Governor, Dr K Jaykumar and other officials were also present during the meeting.

The Governor drew the attention of the Minister and the department towards the concern of Universities and higher learning institutions in the State. He urged the department to come out with policy guidelines and plan of action with regard to the safety protocol and arrangements to be in place before the resumption of normal classes in schools, colleges and universities. He further stressed on formulating a revised strategy of operationalising the education sector in the State taking all concern into factor.

The Minister informed about the steps taken by the department after consultation with various stakeholders to

strategize the post lockdown plan of action. He further mentioned about undergoing consultation process of the department and its efforts to come out with comprehensive policy guidelines for all educational institutions operating in the State in consonance with the guidelines from Union Government and MHRD.

ACS Education Department informed about various modes of online and distance classrooms the department is running during the lockdown which include the classes being run through AIR Gangtok and Samvaad Cable Television, Gangtok.

Centre objects...

odd-even basis and dine-in services at hotels from Monday

Kerala on Sunday reported two positive cases of COVID-19 in the state, taking the total number of affected to 401 while the health department announced that 13 people were cured

The Union home secretary has also sent a letter to all States and UTs asking them to strictly comply with the lockdown measures announced to combat coronavirus and not to dilute them at any level

In this letter to Chief Secretaries of all state governments and UT administrations, the Union home secretary said some of the States and UTs are issuing orders allowing activities which have not been allowed as per the guidelines issued by the home ministry under the Disaster Management Act, 2005

"I would again urge you to ensure compliance of the revised consolidated guidelines, and direct all concerned authorities for their strict implementation in letter and spirit without any dilution and to ensure strict compliance of lockdown measures," he said

The consolidated revised guidelines on the measures to be taken by the central ministries and departments, State and UT governments was issued on April 15 after Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced extension of the lockdown till May 3

The lockdown was first announced by the Prime Minister on March 24 in a bid to combat coronavirus. It was further extended till May 3.

Amid lockdown...

He was working as a private security guard and later left that for a job in a hotel.

Those put up at the Government Central High School, which hosts mainly workers from other parts of Kerala and Tamil Nadu and other southern busy themselves in gardening.

"The workers, instead of sitting idle, have been engaged in gardening while maintaining social distancing. By the time school reopens, I am sure they would beautifully alter the landscape. The city corporation has been providing the necessary equipment which they sought for the purpose," Shine, a city corporation staff in charge of the camp, said.

He said if any worker required medical help, an ambulance is brought from the nearest government hospital and they are taken there for a checkup.

The state has appointed a rapid response team headed by Labour Commissioner Pranab Jyothinath to look into the welfare of the guest workers.

A district-level team inspects the labour camps in the state every day to monitor the situation.

In Kochi, Border Security Force jawans spoke to guest workers at a camp in suburban Perumbavoor, which is home to the most number of workers from other states.

"There are many workers from other states, including Assam, Odisha and West Bengal. Our jawans spoke to them in their language so that they understand the situation properly.

We have explained to them what is being done for them in Kerala," an officer said.

A video of a home guard conversing in Hindi with workers from outside Kerala on March 30 and telling them about the dangers of COVID-19 and the need to stay at home and maintain social distancing, went viral in the social media recently.

The measures were intensified after March 29, after hundreds of migrant workers at Chengannassery in Kottayam district came out on the streets violating the 21-day lockdown restrictions imposed by the Union government to prevent the spread of pandemic COVID-19, demanding that arrangements be made for their travel to native villages in north India.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan had said that the government has made all arrangements for medical assistance to guest workers and was constantly engaging with them to ensure their well-being.

He had lashed out at "forces trying to create unrest in society by provoking the guest workers to the streets during the pandemic.

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LAND FOR SALE

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

LAND FOR SALE

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

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Sikkim must continue to fight COVID-19: Governor

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 20 APR:

The Governor of Sikkim, Ganga Prasad has appealed to all Sikkimese to continue supporting the efforts of the government in preventing the COVID-19 from entering Sikkim and follow lockdown regulation in letter and spirit.

"With the exemplary restraint and discipline that my fellow Sikkimese have shown, complementing the efforts and measures taken by the government in the last 28 days, we have been able to keep Sikkim safe from COVID-19 and have become the only State in the country to achieve this. However, we must be vigilant and extra cautious in our pursuit and there should be no space for complacency as far as our collective efforts are concerned to keep our rare status of COVID-19 free State till the logical end of battle with COVID-19.

I also appeal my fellow Sikkimese not to pay heed to fabricated and false information circulated through various social media platforms related with COVID-19, which can endanger our unity, harmony and weaken our collective resolve to fight the crisis unitedly. Let us all act responsibly and do our bit as a responsible soldier in unprecedented battle against this invisible enemy of humanity."

No, pets will not give you COVID-19

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 20 APR:

Dr Arjun Adhikari, of Paksam Veterinary Clinic, has said that despite the lockdown, the number of animals injured on the road by moving vehicles has not come down. He has appealed to the public to drive responsibly to ensure the safety of animals on the road.

Dr Adhikari also informs that he has been getting queries regarding the danger of animals spreading the Corona virus to humans. To this, he says that as per WHO and international veterinary organizations, there is no danger of animals/pets spreading the virus.

He has requested people to follow COVID-19 protocol of one client per pet, wearing face masks and maintaining social distance while visiting veterinary clinics, outlets and hospitals.

Paksam Veterinary Clinic has eight branches across the State and one in Siliguri, and they have been providing services throughout the period of lockdown, informed Dr Adhikari.

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SLICE OF LIFE

Of starry nights and cosmic insignificance

TENZIN C TASHI

Many moons ago, an Indian medicine man sat at the foot of his patient's bed and.. I digress -- Many years ago, our Bengali hotel manager called me and started a palpably excited conversation in the inimical way peculiar to Bengalis alone, in strident tone and rapid intonation, with words combating each other to slip out of his mouth- I only caught on 'is-tars' 'paint' and 'bachche ke kamre' (children's room). He wanted me to paint stars in the children's room?! I spoke verrrrrry slowly, and he took the cue to slow down reasonably enough to suggest that there was a painter at the hotel and he wanted to send him down to paint glow-in- the- dark stars on the ceiling of the children's room. I thought it was very sweet of him to have thought of my boys and asked him to despatch said painter pronto to my house.

Aah, but I did not have a children's room yet. Both my boys were very young; they curled up, wriggling worms, in my bed in my girlhood room. But it had a ceiling and that would be the celestial canvas for the painter. The painter was a very enthusiastic exponent of his art. He came in his work wear, paint- flecked shirt and trousers, wiry hair that was also streaked with white paint, hugging his 'especial' paint close

to his chest as he was rescued, goggle- eyed but calves intact, from our many dogs.

He spent a laborious few next hours, precariously balanced on a step, craning his neck at a most alarming angle as he painted a crescent moon, Saturn, some other planets, comets, meteorites and the ubiquitous stars, large, medium and small. He used stencils but largely worked using his imagination, methodically painting a vast night sky on my ceiling like an impassioned maestro conducting a cosmic orchestra as my boys watched, stars shining in their own eyes.

Finally, the moment of truth. We kept the lights on sometime that evening for the fluorescent paint to juice up and then switched them off to reveal a bedazzling, well bedecked night sky. Indoors. On my ceiling. The clever juxtaposition of differently sized stars created an impressive impression of depth and vastness. The boys loved it; they were sucker- punched. Who am I kidding? I loved it too. I have always loved looking at the skies; many nights at B-school, my late friend and I would be under the stars on the football field, talking of everything that thrived under them.

Gangtok power supply being as erratic as it was and still is, there were many nights when

our inverter sulked because the boys and I would be lost in our own world of starry nights, wrapped up in invisible cosmic threads of love and imagination. An old folktale- are there any other kind- talks of how women are the bows that launch the arrows, the children, and how each arrow chooses its bow. Humbling, and so wise an analogy. Our duty to bear and launch the arrows well and then to quiver in quiet trepidation as moms are wont to, no matter how fast and straight the arrow flies.

There was something so comforting about being under this hand- painted, make-believe sky with my sons. About loving my boys so hard it hurt and hoping to be as wise, as constant and as giving as the skies. About the gift of progeny and how it is man's greatest conceit to want to continue his line. To watch the crescent moon and imagine it winking at me in solidarity as I navigated the perils of parenthood with faith in my heart and stardust in my eyes. To want to be the mother planet for my children- hoping to be the kind of mom they would just gravitate towards in any situation in life, never demanding a preeminent place in their lives simply because I had been a bow.

Days passed and morphed into years. The paint faded. Small starry-eyed boys grew into

huge hunks, towering over me. And moved into their own rooms. I have painted my room several times since the painter did a Merlin on my ceiling. But I have never allowed my ceiling to be painted over. The night sky is an immutable part of my and the boys' memories. It is a still standing testimonial to an intrinsic link in our lives- many dark nights were dispelled along with inchoate, nameless fears as we took succour in our night skies and let our imagination soar.

There are still nights when my young adult children will come and plonk themselves on my bed and stare companionably with me at the night skies which are still going strong despite the passage of many years. It is comforting to know that I have shot good arrows, and I hope the real skies will guard them and smile down on them always.

There are still nights when I am in sweet slumber and the stars shine down on me. Smiling sleepily at the illustriousness and immensity of the night skies, I am reminded of my own father's principal advice to be humble and grounded always because really, we are just a totally insignificant blip in the vastness of the universe and its grand scheme of things. I feel the moon still winks at me in solidarity.

Ireland captain Balbirnie delivers virtual batting class

NEW DELHI, APR 20 (PTI):

Ireland captain Andrew Balbirnie has used the extra time in hand amid the COVID-19 pandemic by providing a virtual batting lesson, which included tips on how to play spin in India.

Balbirnie took a 45 minute interactive session with 19 members from the men's senior side and emerging squads of an academy along with a few coaches.

"I felt if I could help them by providing an insight into what my thinking was in certain scenarios, that might be of value," Balbirnie was quoted as saying by the

BBC. "I haven't done too many 'virtual' sessions, but it was very interesting," he added.

The 29-year-old, who leads the national team in all three formats, touched upon a number of topics including how to navigate though the difficult spin conditions in the subcontinent.

"Playing in subcontinent conditions is a big part of any international cricketer's career, so we talked about how to go about setting up an innings, particularly in testing conditions like India where spin plays such a huge part."

"Our performance analyst Jay Shelat was able to

integrate footage from my unbeaten century against Afghanistan last year into the session, which was very useful as the guys could actually see what I was doing while I was explaining to them my approach and reasoning around certain decisions I made."

The coronavirus outbreak has brought the sporting world to a standstill. Cricket has also been affected.

Ireland's tour of Zimbabwe and a seven-match series against Bangladesh in May have been postponed because of the pandemic, while the summer matches with New Zealand are in doubt.

53 mediapersons test coronavirus positive in Mumbai

MUMBAI, APR 20 (PTI):

At least 53 mediapersons from Mumbai have tested positive for coronavirus, a city civic official said on Monday.

During a special camp organised at the Azad Maidan here on April 16 and 17 for COVID-19 testing of scribes, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) collected swab samples

of 171 mediapersons, including electronic and print media journalists, photographers and cameramen.

"Out of the 171 mediapersons, 53 tested positive for coronavirus," BMC spokesperson Vijay Khabale said, adding that most of those who tested positive are asymptomatic at present.

All the mediaper-

sons found infected with coronavirus will be kept in isolation and a process was underway to find out suitable places to the purpose, he said.

Efforts were also on to trace their high and low risk contacts.

Till Sunday, Mumbai recorded 2,724 coronavirus cases and 132 deaths due to the disease.

Rajya Sabha secretariat resumes normal functioning

NEW DELHI, APR 20 (PTI):

The Rajya Sabha secretariat on Monday partially resumed its functioning on the 27th day of the nationwide lockdown amid safeguards against COVID-19. As partial relaxations came into effect, Rajya Sabha Secretary General Desh Deepak Verma firmed up plans of work agenda.

The Rajya Sabha secretariat was shut in the last week of March due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Sanitisation of all vehicles entering the Parliament House complex, including the annexe, temperature screening of all employees and checking number of incumbents in each vehicle were among the safeguards undertaken on the first day of resumption of work.

According to the RS secretariat, this will continue as a norm till the lock-

down restrictions are in force. All officials and staff attended office wearing masks and many even wore gloves, besides carrying their own water bottles and lunch boxes. They stood in earmarked circles waiting for lifts to maintain social distancing.

Rajya Sabha Secretary General Desh Deepak Verma firmed up the agenda of work for the lockdown period through video conferencing with 17 senior officials of the rank of joint secretary and above.

He also prepared a plan of action for reducing expenditure in the Upper House.

The issues discussed included oath-taking by newly-elected members of Rajya Sabha, orientation programme for such members, including preparation of 10 updated booklets in this regard for use of members, payment

of salaries to members and employees of the secretariat, finalising retirement benefits for those superannuating, firming up action plans further to decisions taken earlier regarding major issues.

He asked senior officials to make maximum use of e-office in view of rational deployment of manpower.

Verma directed that all the norms regarding ensuring social distancing and other safeguards like sanitation shall be done during the lockdown period, besides deployment of manpower based on the need for transacting essential business.

About 100 of the total 1,300 personnel of the Rajya Sabha secretariat attended office on Monday as per the deployment plan on rotation drawn up by the concerned divisional heads.

No Coronavirus cases in Mizoram since March 25

AIZAWL, APR 20 (PTI):

Mizoram has not reported any case of novel coronavirus after the state reported its first positive case on March 25, a senior official said on Monday. A 50-year-old pastor, who had travel history to Amsterdam, had tested positive on March 25.

He is undergoing treatment at the Zoram Medical College in the state. State health and family welfare board vice chairman and ruling Mizo National Front (MNF) legislator Dr ZR Thiamsanga said, at least 132 samples were collected and tested for the virus till date.

According to Thiamsanga, 16 samples were tested at the states lone medical college- Zoram Medical College (ZMC) on Monday and the results were awaited.

Officials from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare on Monday visited the ZMC and interacted with officials over measures to fight the novel coronavirus pandemic.

The ZMC is a dedicated Covid-19 hospital in the state. Meanwhile, samples of 35 inmates of the Mizoram house in Mumbai tested negative for novel coronavirus on Monday, Thiamsanga said.

The samples of another 21 inmates, who had earlier tested negative for the virus, have been collected for secondary test and their results are yet to be declared, the official said.

Till date, four persons from the state had tested positive for COVID-19 in Mumbai.

On April 13, a 22-year-old woman from Aizawl, was found infected with the virus in Mumbai.

The patient had arrived in Mumbai in February and was lodged at Mizoram house.

She was initially undergoing treatment for cancer at a hospital in Mumbai.

On Saturday, state health minister Dr R Lalthangliana had announced that three more people from Mizoram had tested positive for novel coronavirus in Mumbai.

APPEAL

Due to nationwide lockdown in the wake of the Covid-19, the farmers of Sikkim have been facing unprecedented difficulty in marketing their farm produce; especially flowers. However, with the combined efforts of Horticulture Department, SIMFED, Farmers Producers Organizations and individual farmers the marketing of vegetables at this hour of crises has been quite successful. Vegetables collected from different clusters are being graded, packaged and transported to different markets within Sikkim as well as to Siliguri regulated market. Efforts are also been regularly made to reach vegetables to the doorstep of consumers so that they don't face any difficulty during lockdown period. It is heartening to note that our hard-working farmers with the intervention of Government have been able to successfully produce and market more than 1500 MT of vegetables till date during lockdown period ensuring no shortfall in supplies. The farmers of Sikkim will be able to ensure production in similar pace in future too.

However, flower marketing has suffered to a large extent due to mass absence of customers as well as inability to export cut flowers outside the State due to lockdown. The livelihood of large number of floriculture farmers are being affected due to non availability of markets during lockdown period. In order to mitigate the situation and facilitate marketing of floriculture items, the Department has launched the initiative to tie up with agency like "Mitho", for sale of cut flowers and potted plants through home delivery system. This system will also be extended in a sustainable manner for marketing garden fresh organic vegetables sourced directly from the farmers in future.

Therefore, the Horticulture Department would like to appeal all our esteemed consumers to support this initiative by placing online orders with Mitho for delivery of flowers so that some relief could be provided to our farmers. Similarly, we would also like to appeal our farmers to continue with their uninterrupted farming activities as they are exempted from lockdown. In the event of any difficulties, they can contact at our district wise Helpline Numbers or any officials of the Department for instant support.

Sd/-
Secretary
Horticulture Department



What is Novel Coronavirus - nCoV?

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

Symptoms of nCoV

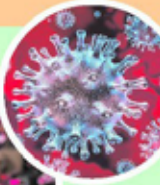
- Fever
- Difficulty in breathing
- Dry Cough
- Severe acute respiratory syndrome
- Pneumonia - like symptoms

Treatment

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

Precautions to Prevent nCoV

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



If you seek help, you may call :
-Toll free no. 104
District surveillance Officer
EAST : 7029372100
WEST : 9593297809
NORTH : 9641957468
SOUTH : 7407691463
New STNM
AMS : 9434711402

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE
GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM

Ignorant? Or do They Just Don't Care?

The authorities continue to ignore the underprivileged

Yes, these are unprecedented times, but these are also times when we are learning a lot about agencies we otherwise trust with much more intelligence and empathy. And they continue to fail us, reinforcing suspicions that they care only for the applause of bhakts and shabashis of masters. They forget that we are a nation of citizens who need to be taken into confidence, not subjects who can be ordered around and notified into obedience.

Every Indian should have noticed that when the Pradhan Mantri locked down the nation on a 4-hour-notice, he made no mention of the majority which subsists on daily wage, doesn't have the luxury of working from home or even staying at home and whom the system has routinely failed. The lakhs of migrant workers stranded in places their desperation has landed them in were let down and recompensed only with superficial tokenism. Clearly, we learned nothing from this phenomenal embarrassment and continue to blindsides the poor and the desperate. What is also worrying is that the pandemic is also shredding the federal nature of the country and the reason this is especially problematic is that the best preparation demands an extremely localized response and customized approach. With the Centre dictating everything, all nuance is lost, all uniqueness brushed aside and also weakens local resilience and organizations. This approach also mocks the years of experience that officers have acquired working among the people and reduces them to the role of bots repeating what the MHA decrees. Sikkim, for instance, does not need a Chief Secretary to repeat MHA's relaxations, including mention of businesses that don't even exist in Sikkim, but is in desperate need of a senior officer who will adapt and customize the guidelines to meet Sikkim's needs for safety, convenience and commerce. It needs officers who will figure out why migrant workers forced to stay back in Sikkim continue to wait for promised relief. Sikkim needs officers who will notice the obvious disconnect which delivers ironies like official circulars ordering social distancing in government offices while directing that car-pools be used to pack employees into cars so that they can sit at least a metre apart while at work.

We can roll our eyes at the daftness that passes for administration nowadays, but we also need to be scared and worried. Take the orders from District Magistrates making the downloading of the Aarogya Setu app compulsory for everyone. Where the MHA directive called on its proxies in the administration and state governments to "encourage" the use of the said app, authorities have gone ahead and made it compulsory. Coercion is always distasteful. It was the wrong approach when the lockdown was enforced with lathis and is wrong in this instance as well. If the app is really all that the government claims it to be, convince the people that it is useful. It is ethically wrong to even force government employees to download this app and it is downright offensive to demand it of everyone wishing to visit a government department. It is morally wrong to impose it on people wishing to access government services because it preys on their desperation to sign up for something they don't understand. Even if one keeps aside the privacy issues this app is in conflict with, what cannot be ignored is that the order once again reveals an inexcusable ignorance of a large section of Indians. Do the desperately poor, the ones in most need for government services, the ones in most desperate need to travel for work, own a smartphone? Or have the literacy required to find their way around the app? Have Sikkim's DMs checked whether the app is available in languages that people here are comfortable with or understand? Or do they take for granted that every Sikkimese is fluent enough in English or Hindi, the only two languages in the app's option of 11 languages people here might be conversant in [unless Gujarati too has been mandatory here while no one was looking]? Before they decided to pass a diktat, did it cross their minds to advise people up the chain of command to include languages people here can understand the complications of giving up all their personal details entails? Or do the authorities think that only people with smartphones and mobile data plans deserve to be counted as Indian?

The questions can go on, but the pandemic will ensure that no explanations are forthcoming. What is certain though is that the underprivileged don't really exist for authorities who have proven that they care only for the applause of bhakts and shabashis of their masters...

WRITE US:

Readers are invited to comment on, criticise, run down, even appreciate if they like something in this paper. Letters carrying abusive/indecent language and personal attacks, except when against people responsible in this newspaper (who are fair game), will have to be ignored. Letters which carry forward a conversation or initiate a dialogue will command immediate attention and receive prominence. Mail us at: news@summittimes.com

Are you worried someone you care about is thinking of suicide? Here's how you can support them from afar

MILENA HEINSCH IS DARA SAMPSON
& FRANCES KAY-LAMBKIN
theconversation.com

We've now been social distancing for several weeks. While these measures have allowed us to slow the spread of COVID-19, they've also ended our day-to-day lives.

If you've found yourself experiencing feelings of fear, anxiety, depression, boredom, anger, frustration or irritability, you're not alone.

Older adults, health-care workers, people with pre-existing mental health conditions and people experiencing financial pressure could be particularly vulnerable to psychological distress at this time.

When feelings of psychological distress increase, suicidal thoughts and behaviours may also increase.

So how do we know when to be worried about someone we love, and how can we support them from afar?

RECOGNISING THE SIGNS

During COVID-19, we may all be feeling more stressed than usual. That's why we need to stay connected with each other online, on the phone and via text messages.

But it's important we're attuned to whether this extra stress and uncertainty is developing into something more for any of the people we care about.

Some warning signs for suicide might be easier to recognise when you can see a person's facial expressions and gestures. But there are cues you can pick up on during text, phone or online communication.

Social withdrawal can indicate a person is at greater risk. Perhaps a friend or relative is increasingly difficult to contact via phone or text, disappears from social media or starts saying they just want to be alone.

A persistent drop in mood might be revealed on the phone by a flat tone of voice, talking less than usual or more slowly, and by shorter text messages or none at all.

Some people might say things like "you'd be better off without me" or "there's nothing to live for", which suggest they can't see a way out of their situation and may be thinking about suicide.

If you're worried someone you know might be suicidal, reaching out and having a conversation could save their life.

TALKING ON THE PHONE OR ONLINE

Choose a time and place where you can talk openly and without getting interrupted. This might be challenging when whole families are at home

together for extended periods. But these can be sensitive and confronting conversations and it's important to protect the person, as well as people in your family or household.

You could start the conversation by asking your friend or loved one how they are. You might also let them know you've noticed a change in them: "you don't seem yourself".

Starting the conversation may look different if you're online. Perhaps someone has posted a comment or image on social media that seems unusual for them, or which makes it seem like they're thinking about suicide. If so, contact them directly by sending a private message. It's OK to talk online, just not in a public forum.

communication isn't face-to-face. And sometimes people find it easier to communicate via emoji, GIFs or images rather than having to find the words to express how they're feeling.

Further, listening on the phone or via messaging gives us time to think about how to best respond, and to let our initial reactions pass.

This is important because negative reactions, like criticising or dismissing someone's feelings, may make the person less likely to seek help and increase their thoughts of suicide.

ENCOURAGE THEM TO GET HELP

If you're worried about someone and you think they're at risk of suicide, offering help is important. Our research with people who had previous-



Once you've started the conversation, ask directly about suicidal thoughts and intentions (for example, "are you thinking about suicide?").

And be prepared they may answer "yes". Then you just have to listen with supportive statements. Say things like "that sounds really tough" rather than "don't be silly".

BEING AT A DISTANCE CAN BE AN ADVANTAGE

You might feel worried about having a difficult conversation on the phone or online, but this style of communication actually has some benefits.

People may feel more comfortable revealing suicidal thoughts, without fear of stigma, when

ly attempted suicide found although participants wouldn't necessarily seek help, many said they would accept it if it were offered.

While talking with the person you're worried about is an important first step, you may be able to guide them towards professional help. For example, they may want help to make an appointment with a GP or counsellor, or to call a crisis line.

[Milena Heinsch is Senior Research Fellow, Centre for Brain and Mental Health, University of Newcastle; Dara Sampson is Academic Research Manager, University of Newcastle; Frances Kay-Lambkin is Professor, University of Newcastle]



In India's cities, life is lived on the streets – how coronavirus changed that

LAKSHMI PRIYA RAJENDRAN
theconversation.com

India's coronavirus lockdown of 1.3 billion people is unprecedented in size and scope, particularly in a country where city streets are so thronged with life in all its guises. After an initial three-week shutdown, the Indian prime minister, Narendra Modi, announced the lockdown would be extended until May 3.

Mobility data from Google published on April 11 showed that compared to the baseline, there had been a 52% drop in visits to parks, plazas and public gardens in India, and a 69% decrease in visits to public transport hubs such as bus and train stations.

Stunning images of India's deserted landmarks and public places are being posted daily on social media.

Meanwhile, debates continue about the various economic, social and environmental impacts of the lockdown.

As an architect and urbanist who is interested in everyday life in cities, I've been thinking about the significant role of public spaces, and their

relationship with people's daily life in India.

DAILY INTERACTIONS

In Mumbai there is merely 1.28 sq metres of public space per person, compared to 31.68 sq metres in London or 26.4 sq metres in New York. In this context, public spaces in India such as railway stations, bus stops, or local parks serve multiple functions. They often contain informal market places, space for spontaneous social gatherings or interactions, and act as a matrix where everyday life can occur.

These public spaces are often noisy, congested, vibrant and lively. For a visitor they can seem chaotic but for locals they display a deep-rooted order, grounded in the socio-cultural mileu. Shopping or just browsing through local markets is an integral part of everyday life for most Indians. Navigating a busy marketplace is a spontaneous act, a daily ritual.

These ordinary everyday public spaces facilitate social interactions and bring economic and social benefits, particularly to the poorer sections of society who often live in cramped accommodation.

Architect David Sim talks of the concept of a "soft city", in which the experience of urban life adapts to people's changing needs. In India, it's these soft public spaces that make cities more liveable. Unfortunately, the significance of these spaces often take a back seat in city planning and development. For example, the Indian government's much-debated Smart Cities Mission to create 100 futuristic cities by 2022 largely focused on efficient energy, mobility and waste management, overlooking the experience of urban public spaces.

URBAN RHYTHMS

While India's famous landmarks remain deserted during the lockdown, people are still navigating the public spaces to buy from street vendors and corner shops.

There have been cases of transgression of social distancing guidelines in the country's busy markets. Rather than seeing these transgressions as stemming from a lack of awareness or a deliberate breaking of the rules, they are largely a spontaneous outcome of the existing social patterns of behaviour. In these markets, people often spend time talking

to their family, friends or even engage strangers in casual discussion on politics, movies or sports.

The way citizens behave and interact in public spaces helps to create a sense of familiarity and belonging in cities, and plays a key role in shaping people's quality of life.

While people experience new kinds of physical interactions during this coronavirus crisis, such as waiting in queues a few metres apart as they shop, the sudden and unexpected interruption of their other outdoor activities makes it a good moment to reflect on the significance of the mundane yet multi-layered spaces in India's cities.

Once the lockdown lifts, it's possible that the long disruption could create more enthusiasm and appreciation for these spaces. And people – including India's city planners – should take a moment to appreciate the everyday rhythms of urban life, and the way well-designed public spaces can allow some much-needed slowness amid the bustle.

[the writer is Senior Research Fellow in Future Cities, Anglia Ruskin University]

Plea in SC for allowing migrant workers return to hometowns after COVID-19 tests

NEW DELHI, APR 18 (PTI):

A plea has been filed in the Supreme Court seeking direction to authorities to allow migrant workers across the country to return home after conducting necessary COVID-19 tests and also arrange their safe travel by providing necessary transportation.

The plea said that in wake of the extension of the nationwide lockdown, the migrant workers who are among the worst affected category of people must be allowed to go back to their homes after being tested for COVID-19.

The plea filed by Jagdeep S Chhokar, former director in-charge of Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, and Gaurav Jain, a lawyer, said those migrant workers who test negative for COVID-19 must not be forcefully kept in shelters or away from their homes and families against their wishes.

"In view of the facts and circumstances, it is submitted by the petitioners herein that, now, when the second period of nationwide lockdown has been announced for a period of April 15 to May 3, the state authorities must arrange for the safe travel of those mi-



grant workers who wish to go back to their native villages and hometowns in other states," the plea said.

The petition, settled by advocate Prashant Bhushan, said there is a large number of migrant workers who wish to go back to their native villages, and this was evident from the sudden rush in the wake of the initial 21-days national lockdown announced on March 24, that led to uncontrollable chaos at various bus terminals.

"It is submitted that recently there have been media reports which show that migrant workers are protesting on streets in some places

due to non-payment of their wages and demanding to return to their native villages. It is further submitted that there have been various media reports which show that the migrant workers are being harassed by the local residents and even beaten in some cases," it said.

The petition said that although the national lockdown has been necessitated because of the unprecedented pandemic of COVID-19 and its imposition is much needed, it is submitted by the petitioners that the fundamental right of the migrant workers enshrined under Article 19(1)(d) (right to move

freely throughout India) and Article 19(1)(e) of the Constitution (right to reside and settle in any part of India) cannot be suspended for an indefinite period.

It said that these migrant workers cannot be forced to stay away from their families and living in unpredictable and arduous conditions, as the same is an unreasonable restriction beyond what is envisaged under Article 19(5) of the Constitution.

"Further, as this extension of lockdown is casting an unreasonable and heavier burden on the migrant workers who are stranded in cities of their migra-

tion as compared to those who are living with their own families at their own residences, the same is also violative of Article 14 of the Constitution of India," it said.

The petition said that necessary transport services may be provided by the state governments in abundance so that the purpose of 'social distancing' is not defeated.

"Further, necessary arrangements for testing of COVID-19 can be made for all those migrant workers who wish to travel to their native places, either in the state of their departure or in the state of their arrival," it said.

7 more test COVID-19 positive in Odisha; total cases rise to 68

BHUBANESWAR, APR 20 (PTI): Odisha has reported seven fresh COVID-19 cases, taking the total number of virus cases to 68 in the state, a health and family welfare department official said on Monday.

Of the 951 samples tested on Sunday, seven reported positive, the official said, adding that so far a total of 10,641 samples have been tested in the state.

The number of active

COVID-19 cases in Odisha is now 43. A total of 24 patients have been cured and a 72-year-old man died of the virus

The seven fresh cases were reported from two districts - Bhadrak (five) and Balasore (two).

Following detection of five new cases, the Bhadrak district administration on Monday declared Containment Zone in five gram panchayat areas in Basudevpur and Bhandaripokhari blocks.

Three of the five fresh cases are from Basudevpur block and two from Bhandaripokhari.

While Khurda district comprising Bhubaneswar reported the highest of 46 COVID-19 cases, it was followed by eight in Bhadrak, three in Balasore, two each from Jajpur, Kendrapara, Sundergarh and Kalahandi and one each from Cuttack, Dhenkanal and Puri, the official said.

West Bengal reports 54 fresh COVID-19 cases

KOLKATA, APR 20 (PTI): West Bengal has reported 54 fresh cases of COVID-19 in the past 24 hours, taking the total number of active cases in the state to 245, a senior official said.

According to the state health department, a total of 330 people have tested positive for the deadly disease in the state so far.

Of them, 12 have succumbed to the dis-

ease, and 73 have been discharged after recovery, the department said.

The Union Health Ministry, however, put the total figure in the state at 339.

BAI hold first-ever online coach development programme



NEW DELHI, APR 20 (PTI): The Badminton Association of India (BAI) in collaboration with the Sports Authority of India (SAI) on Monday launched an online coach development programme, under the leadership of chief national coach Pullela Gopichand.

The online programme will be held five-days a week for three weeks and the entire course has been divided into 39 topics, giving an enriching opportunity for coaches at various levels to interact and learn from elite level coaches.

The first session, which was conducted by Gopichand and foreign coaches -- Agus Dwi Santoso and Namrih Suroto, saw an overwhelming response from over 800 participants from all over

the country.

"This is a great platform where the experience of our foreign coaches will help to sharpen the skills of coaches at all levels throughout the country. This kind of wonderful insights into coaching and basic perspectives is something nobody thought was possible in lockdown," Gopichand said.

The online programme focussed on badminton discipline and the process to develop technical skills for beginners on the first day.

Experienced Indonesian coach, Santoso said, "It is very important to be sleeping on time as that helps in having better oxygen flow in the blood, which, in turn, helps in a more active and energetic performance from the player in

the morning. This and a nutritional breakfast are crucial components for a disciplined regimen."

The programme will continue till May 8 with development of footwork, single stroke and double stroke, types of multi-shuttle drills and how to prepare a player for a match being some of the topics to be discussed apart from sessions with physiotherapists.

"Badminton is one of the most played sports and the most growing Olympic sport in India. Today's great response from coaches is a testament to that. And it gives us more motivation to continue to do such innovative reach-out programmes in the future," said BAI General Secretary Ajay Singhania.

AirAsia cuts staff salaries by up to 20 pc for April

MUMBAI, APR 20 (PTI): AirAsia India has cut the April salary of its staff by up to 20 per cent to tackle the airline's finances amid the suspension of all commercial services till May 3 due to the lockdown, a source has said.

Those drawing Rs 50,000 per month or less have been spared from the wage cut.

The Bengaluru-headquartered budget carrier is the latest to join the other domestic airlines such as IndiGo, SpiceJet and Vistara, who have already taken similar measures to cut fixed cost amid grounding of their fleet.

"AirAsia India has cut the April salary of its employees by up to 20 per cent. The senior management will take a pay cut of 20 per cent while the wages of the executives falling in others categories have been reduced by 17 per cent, 13 per cent and 7 per cent, respectively," the source who is privy to the development told PTI.

However, employees who are earning Rs 50,000 per month or less have not been given any pay cut as of now, he said.

AirAsia India spokesperson refused to comment on the developments when contacted.

Chennai HC moved for decent burial of COVID-19 victims

CHENNAI, APR 20 (PTI): Citing incidents of protests by locals against burial of COVID-19 victims in their area over fears of spread of coronavirus, a PIL was filed in the Madras High on Monday seeking to invoke provisions of the stringent Goondas Act against those indulging in such inhuman acts.

A decent burial/cremation was a fundamental right of every citizen of this country guaranteed under Article 21 of the Constitution and it cannot be denied under the garb of protests, petitioner A P Suryaprakasam, an advocate, said.

Authorities were prevented by residents of a locality in Kilpauk here on Sunday from cremating the body of a neurologist who died of COVID-19 infection, he said in the public interest litigation petition, likely to be taken up for hearing this week. The ambu-

lance in which the body was taken and its driver were attacked, he said adding such people have not only violated law, but also committed a grave crime against humanity.

The failure on part of the police to register an FIR and arrest such people have emboldened them to deprive the victims of COVID-19 a decent burial, he added.

He pleaded the court to direct the Chennai police Commissioner to invoke provisions of the Goondas Act against those preventing burial of people who die of coronavirus and provide adequate police protection. Earlier this month, when a doctor from Nellore in Andhra Pradesh died of COVID-19, his cremation was delayed after residents of a city area objected to it. The body had to be taken back to the hospital mortuary and later cremated in another locality.

Bethany Hospital in Shillong evacuated for sanitisation



SHILLONG, APRIL 20 (PTI): The Meghalaya government has evacuated the Bethany Hospital here, a week after its founder John L Sailo Rynthiang tested positive and died of coronavirus infection at the facility, Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma said on Monday.

Sailo, who founded Bethany Hospital that also has a branch at Nongpoh in Ri-Bhoi district, tested positive on April 13 and died two days later. Eight of his family members, including his wife, have tested positive, besides two domestic helps.

All patients and staff of Bethany Hospital have been evacuated and kept in safe locations. We are in the process of sanitising

the hospital, Sangma said. He said the health conditions of all the COVID-19 patients in the state are stable.

According to the chief minister, all doctors and employees of the hospital have been tested.

All the reports that have come in are negative, and only three are awaited. Those who have tested negative have been shifted to various isolation facilities, he said.

A total of 7,500 rapid test kits have also arrived in the state and another 4,000 are awaited.

Sailo's over 140 primary contacts and nearly 5,000 secondary contacts have been traced and they are in strict isolation at their respective

homes. The state government is trying its best to conduct swab test of all the primary and secondary contacts," Deputy Chief Minister Prestone Tynsong said.

Sangma said the state government has purchased 25 ambulances with money from the Chief Ministers Relief Fund and they will be arriving soon.

People from all walks of life and age groups have donated over Rs 5.5 crore to the fund so far, officials said.

Meanwhile, the lockdown and curfew imposed in Meghalaya have been relaxed from 9 am to 4 pm everyday till Thursday to allow people to buy essential commodities.

Dharavi's tally of COVID-19 cases goes up by 30 to 168

MUMBAI, APR 20 (PTI): Dharavi slum sprawl in Mumbai on Monday reported 30 new COVID-19 cases, taking the total number of the affected people to 168, a BMC official said.

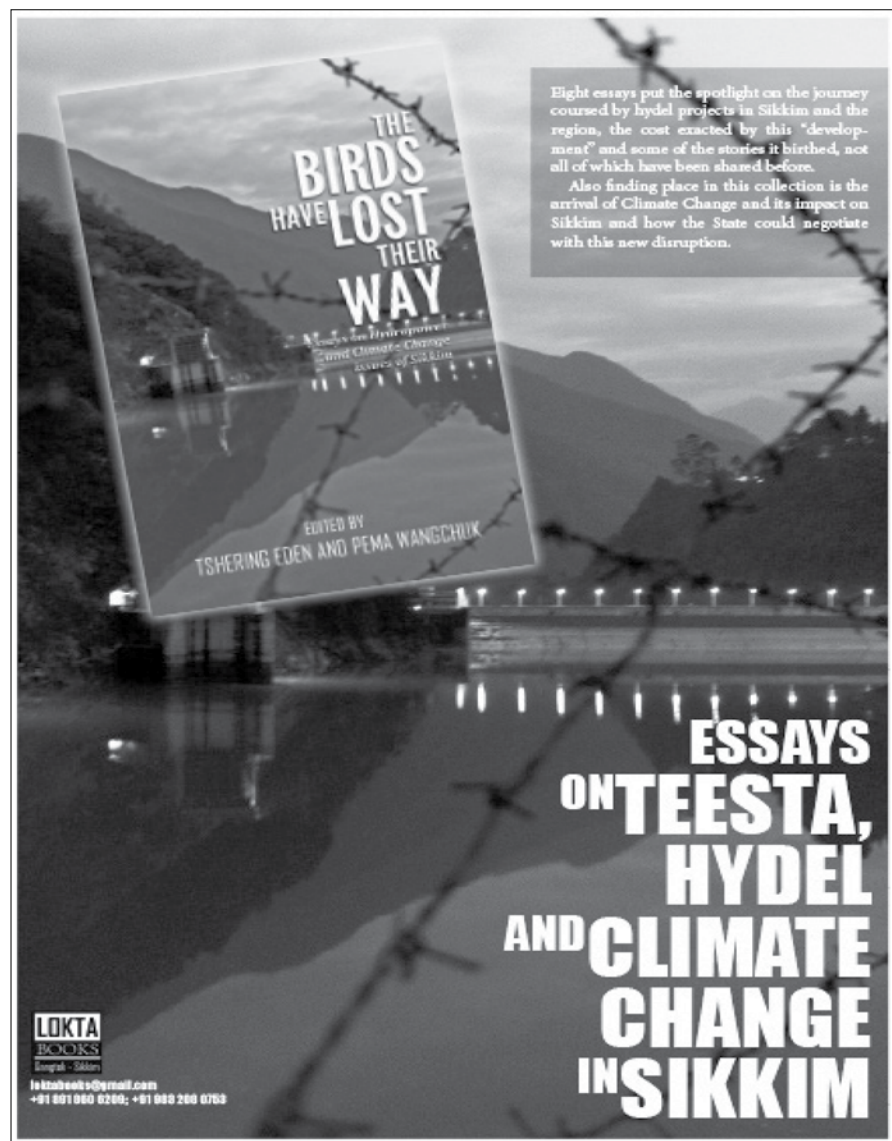
Dharavi, one of the prominent coronavirus hotspot in the worst-hit Mumbai, reported 11 deaths so far.

The new cases, including eight women, were detected from Dhorwada, 60 feet road, Shashtri Nagar, Minajud-



din Khan Gala, PMGP colony, Padmagopal Chawl, Matunga Labour camp, Kalyanwadi, Kala Killa, Kunchi Kurve Nagar, Mukund Nagar and other areas from the slum colony, he said.

Meanwhile, three more coronavirus positive cases were reported from Dadar in central Mumbai, taking the tally from that area to 25.



Japan virus expert 'pessimistic' Olympics can be held in 2021

TOKYO, APR 20 (AFP): A Japanese expert who has criticised the country's response to the coronavirus warned Monday that he is "pessimistic" that the postponed Olympics can be held even in 2021.

"To be honest with you I don't think the Olympics is likely to be held next year," said Ken-aro Iwata, a professor of infectious diseases at Kobe University.

Japan and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) agreed last month to delay the Tokyo 2020 Games until July 2021, after pressure from athletes and sports federations.

But in recent days, as the coronavirus pandemic continues to spread worldwide, there have been questions about whether even a year-long delay will be sufficient.

"Holding (the) Olympics needs two conditions, one: controlling COVID-19 in Japan and (two) controlling COVID-19 everywhere, because you have to invite the athletes and the audience from all over the world," Iwata told journalists at a press briefing.

"Japan might be able to control this disease by next summer, I wish we could, but I don't think that would happen everywhere on Earth, so in this regard I'm very pessimistic about holding the Olympics Games next summer."

Iwata said he could only see the Games being held next year if they were significantly altered, "such as no audience, or very limited participation".

Iwata hit the headlines earlier this year for his public criticism of Japan's handling of the coronavirus-wracked Diamond Princess cruise ship that docked off the country's coast.

Japanese officials opted to carry out an on-ship quarantine, but more than 700 people on board ended up contracting the virus, and 13 died.

The decision to postpone the Olympics is unprecedented in peacetime, and followed a wave of complaints from athletes facing travel bans and lockdowns.

The postponement is a huge undertaking, but organisers have insisted they are working towards the new opening date despite ongoing uncertainty about when the pandemic will be over.

There is "no Plan B", Tokyo 2020 spokesman Masa Takaya told reporters at an online briefing on last week.

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Number of footballers with depression symptoms doubles during shutdown

NICK AMES LONDON, 20 APR [THEGUARDIAN]: The number of footballers reporting symptoms of depression has doubled since the sport shut down because of Covid-19, a survey by the global players' union, Fifpro, has found. Anxiety symptoms have also risen amid significant concerns about the long-term impact that coronavirus may have on the football community.

Fifpro's study of 1,602 professional players, conducted between 22 March and 14 April, discovered that 22% of 468 female players and 13% of 1,134 male players reported symptoms consistent with a diagnosis of depression. It also found that 18% of the women and 16% of men reported markers of generalised anxiety. England, Scotland and the Republic of Ireland were among 16 countries – all of which have implemented drastic measures to contain Covid-19, such as home confinement – whose footballers were surveyed.

It is a troubling rise when set along another Fifpro study, conducted in December and January while football seasons were still active in most locations globally, involving a smaller set of 307 players.



Back then, 11% of the women and 6% of the men reported symptoms characteristic of depression. Scientific research generally finds women report depression and anxiety in higher numbers than men.

Fifpro said that players who felt worried about their future in football were significantly more likely to report depression or anxiety symptoms. Although footballers at the very top level may find themselves financially secure, the average

contract length globally is less than two years and the majority experience the same financial considerations as those in other walks of life.

Economic uncertainty may partly explain the rise in depression symptoms but other factors are thought to be involved. The mean age of those surveyed was 26, among the male players, and 23 among the female players. Many footballers are young adults who are living, in many cas-

es alone, in foreign countries without families in close proximity. Such an uncertain time appears to be taking a toll on mental health.

"In football, suddenly young men and women athletes are having to cope with social isolation, a suspension of their working lives and doubts about their future," the Fifpro chief medical officer, Dr Vincent Goutteborge, said. "Some may not be well equipped to confront these

changes and we encourage them to seek help from a person they trust or a mental health professional."

More than 75% of those surveyed said they had access to sufficient resources and support to aid their mental health. Fifpro is developing a mental health toolkit to provide basic primary care for footballers.

There is no suggestion from Fifpro that its members' concerns are more severe

than those of people in other areas. Rather, it believes the results of the survey – conducted with Amsterdam University Medical Centres – is a reflection of problems in broader society and confirms that a vast number of footballers are affected similarly.

The union wants to stress the social responsibility that comes hand in hand with economic decisions made on the nature of football's continuation, and that it is far more than a question of an entertainment industry returning.

"These findings ... underline how important it is that football stakeholders work together during these uncertain times by making collective agreements that maintain social stability and relieve pressure for all employees in the industry, including the players," the Fifpro general secretary, Jonas Baer-Hoffmann, said.

Baer-Hoffmann emphasised that Fifpro was not using the survey's findings as an argument to rush into resuming the football season. Only a resumption in a safe environment in which players felt comfortable and secure would reduce the number of stressors that can contribute to depression and anxiety, he said.

Bit surprised by CA's financial health but we will work together to overcome crisis: Hazlewood

MELBOURNE, APR 20 (PTI): Fast bowler Josh Hazlewood is a "bit" surprised that Cricket Australia is struggling financially due to the COVID-19 pandemic but said players will work together with the governing body to overcome the crisis.

With the coronavirus outbreak halting all cricketing action, Cricket Australia (CA) has laid off 80 per cent of its staff for the rest of the financial year which ends on June 30. Reports suggest that CA will run out of cash by August.

"I was a bit surprised there but there has to be some impact, no doubt," Hazlewood was quoted as saying by 'Sydney Morning Herald'.

Hazlewood said the financial crisis will hit cricketers too and they are ready for a reduced salary.

"We are no different from any other sport. It just depends how long it hangs around as to how much it is going to affect us, I guess. If it leads into next summer, it will be quite serious," Hazlewood said. "We're



obviously partners in the game and we've always said that. We have ridden the highs and now its probably time to ride the lows, a little bit."

CA and Australian Cricketers' Association (ACA) had an ugly pay dispute in 2017 but Hazlewood said relations have improved since and hoped this crisis will be handled better this time.

"I think the relationship is a lot better now, between the ACA and CA. It's developed a long way

in the last 18 months to two years, probably," he said.

"... so that will go a long way towards having this episode (handled) a lot better than last time. It's all positive from our end and I think, from both ends.

"Hopefully it's a lot better communication this time and I think you will see that in the coming weeks and the coming months. As long as they show a lot of transparency on all the

numbers, all the players will be pretty happy with that."

According to the MOU signed in 2017, CA has to provide ACA with revenue estimates and a national contract list for the upcoming summer by April 30 and Hazlewood expects the deadline to be met so that players can be better prepared for the financial fallout.

"April 30 is what the players want and it's in the MOU but I guess these are strange times. Anything can happen," Hazlewood said.

"The ideal (situation) is that they're put out before April 30 and obviously then we will know, financially, what we can get ready for and how much of a percentage is lost and how much of our contracts are affected.

"The sooner we know that, the more we can plan for the next 12 months."

The global health crisis, which has killed more than 1.6 lakh worldwide, has put this year's T20 World Cup and India's tour of Australia under threat.

ating," said Mohd. Mush-taque Ahmad, President Hockey India.

In the umpires groups, the officials will share their daily fitness activities and training regimes.

Hockey India has also suggested a few training options and the officials can find a suitable regime to maintain their fitness and flexibility.

A total of 30 Hockey India Member Units are also conducting these sessions across their respective regions.

Over 1100 officials are taking part over 70 WhatsApp groups formed by the various Member Units.

I'm concerned about impact of T20 on cricket, things should be reassessed in shutdown: Turner



CHRISTCHURCH, APR 20 (PTI): New Zealand legend Glenn Turner is concerned about the impact of T20 cricket on the "more worthwhile forms" of the game and feels that the coronavirus-forced break is a good time to "reassess" the future of the sport.

The 72-year-old Turner, who is also the former chairman of New Zealand's selection panel, believes that cricket administrators have "gone down a path of capitalism".

"...money rules and you've got Twenty20 dominating to such an extent where it is putting what I consider to be more worthwhile forms of the game virtually into the background," Turner was quoted as saying by 'stuff.co.nz'.

"That is only happening because of the money that they can get from that and of course the argument too, is that it is getting more people interested in the game," he said.

"But if you dine at a fast food takeaway, does that mean that you are going to go on to fine dining? I don't think so and that doesn't appear to be happening."

Turner, who has written a new book 'Crickets Global Warming' with noted author Lynn McConnell, said the shutdown

due to the COVID-19 pandemic is an opportunity to reassess the future.

"More and more money is going to the top end and it's a bit like society where the gap between the rich and the poor as got greater. Hopefully after this pandemic things are going to be reassessed," the former New Zealand captain and coach said.

"I think they should be reassessed in cricket as well because your top players are really taking most of the cream and even the next group are really struggling," he pointed out.

"Then, of course, they (administrators) don't have the sort of money I believe they need to foster the game further down. That's the real concern."

Turner said in the last few decades players have more power than the boards which govern them.

"The power has shifted almost totally to the players where boards step back and let the game be run largely by senior players. Things have turned 180 degrees and I don't think either is ideal," Turner said.

"But the thing that is happening, which I see as a mistake, is that they are getting full 12-month retainers while being able to sign contracts with

as many other people as they can and not making themselves fully available for New Zealand.

"That's too big a sacrifice I feel."

The 72-year-old, who scored 2991 runs in 41 Tests and 1598 runs in 41 ODIs, was also not happy with the outcome of last year's World Cup where England were adjudged winners on the basis of boundary-count after regulation play and subsequent Super Over ended in a tie in the final against New Zealand.

During the final, New Zealand were left to rue a last-over overthrow from Martin Guptill that went for four after getting a deflection off England all-rounder Ben Stokes' bat, helping England take the match into Super Over. Turner said Stokes should have been given out for obstructing the field.

"I think that they gave the wrong result. But to have given out the man of the match at the time for obstructing the field which ought to have happened would have of course changed the result," he said.

"Now that you are getting third umpires involved and they are seeing replays of things they will be able to make those sorts of decisions in the future I would hope," he added.

Oil prices collapse on storage fears, Asia equities mixed

HONG KONG, APR 20 (AFP):

Oil prices collapsed to more than two-decade lows Monday as traders grow concerned that storage facilities are reaching their limits, while equities were mixed, with some support coming from signs that the coronavirus may have peaked in Europe and the United States.

US crude benchmark West Texas Intermediate briefly plunged almost 20 percent to below 15 -- its lowest since 1999 -- as stockpiles continue to build owing to a crash in demand caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Analysts said this month's agreement between top producers to slash output by 10 million barrels a day was having little impact on the oil crisis because of lockdowns and travel restrictions that are keeping billions of people at home.

WTI was hit particularly hard as its main US storage facilities in Cushing, Oklahoma, were filling up.

ANZ said "crude oil prices remained under pressure, as projections of weaker demand weigh on sentiment". "De-



spite the OPEC+ alliance agreeing to an unprecedented cut in output, the physical market is awash with oil," it said, referring to the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and non-OPEC partners.

And AxiCorp's Stephen Innes added: "It's a dump at all cost as no one... wants delivery of oil, with Cushing storage facilities filling by the minute.

"It hasn't taken long for the market to recognise that the OPEC+ deal will not, in its present

form, be enough to balance oil markets." Stock traders were in slightly more buoyant mood as governments start to consider how and when to ease lockdowns that have crippled the global economy.

Italy, Spain, France and Britain reported drops in daily death tolls and slowing infection rates.

"We are scoring points against the epidemic," said Prime Minister Edouard Philippe, while insisting "we are not out of the health

crisis yet". Meanwhile, in the US, Andrew Cuomo, governor of badly hit New York state, said the disease was "on the descent", though he cautioned it was "no time to get cocky".

Mounting evidence suggests that the lockdowns and social distancing are slowing the spread of the virus.

That has intensified planning in many countries to begin loosening curbs on movement and easing the crushing pressure on national economies. Adding to the sense

of hope was a report indicating promising research on a drug to treat coronavirus. Hong Kong, Shanghai and Seoul were each up 0.1 percent, while Wellington added 0.4 percent.

However, Tokyo went into the break 0.9 percent lower, while Sydney and Manila dropped one percent apiece. There were also losses in Taipei, Singapore and Jakarta.

"The longer investors have to contemplate future economic issues while they wait for more countries to be on the downward slope of the pandemic curve, the more scope there is of risk assets pricing in a difficult future," Chris Iggo, of AXA Investment Managers UK, said.

Investors are keeping an eye on Washington, where Congress and the White House are working towards a 450 billion economic relief plan for small business to add to the trillions already pledged to support the economy.

Big-name companies including IBM, Netflix and Coca-Cola are due to deliver their earnings reports.

Positive tests at Afghan presidential palace



KABUL, APR 20 (AP):

At least 20 employees at Afghanistan's presidential palace have tested positive for COVID-19, according to a senior government official who asked to remain anonymous because he was not authorized to comment on the subject.

It wasn't clear whether President Ashraf Ghani had been in contact with any of the employees or whether he had been tested himself. The presidential palace has refused to comment.

Ghani has reportedly been self-isolating, although he still meets

daily with some senior officials.

At 70 and a cancer survivor, Ghani is considered in the higher risk category.

Afghanistan has reported only 993 positive cases even as the International Office of Migration, which monitors the movement of refugees, says more than 200,000 Afghans have returned from Iran in the last two months.

Iran is one of the hardest-hit countries in the region with more than 82,000 confirmed cases and over 5,000 deaths. Many of the return-

ing refugees scattered throughout Afghanistan without testing, generating widespread fears of an outbreak of cases that could overwhelm the country's war-ravaged health care facilities.

The United Nations has called for cease fires to conflicts around the world but, still the war goes on in Afghanistan as both sides in the conflict the Taliban and the Afghan administration squabble over details in an agreement signed between the United States and the Taliban in February.

Young climate activists slowed by pandemic, but not defeated

WASHINGTON, APR 20 (AP): Jamie Margolin had not expected to be sitting in her bedroom right now.

The high school senior had prom and graduation coming up, but so much more: A multi-state bus campaign with fellow climate activists. A tour for her new book.

Attendance at one of the massive marches that had been planned this week for the 50th anniversary of Earth Day.

Then the pandemic arrived in Seattle, her hometown, and her plans went out the window.

But still so much to do, Margolin said, perched in front of her computer for a video interview from that bedroom.

Like many other young activists who've helped galvanize what's become a global climate movement, Margolin is not letting a spreading virus stop her. They are organizing in place, from the United States to Ecuador, Uganda, India and beyond.

And while some fear they've lost some momentum in the pandemic, they are determined to keep pushing and for now, to use technology to their advantage.

Unable to gather en masse as they'd planned this Earth Day, these activists are planning livestreams and webinars to keep the issue of climate front and center on the world stage and in the U.S. presidential race.

One event, Earth Day Live, is being organized by a coalition of youth-led climate groups, including Zero Hour, of which Margolin is a leader (her Twitter profile includes the tag #futurepotus).

Trump says he's close to a deal with Congress on virus aid

WASHINGTON, APR 20 (AP):

The Trump administration and Congress are nearing an agreement on an aid package of up to USD 450 billion to boost a small-business loan program that has run out of money and add funds for hospitals and COVID-19 testing.

President Donald Trump said Sunday, We're getting close to a deal. Along with the small business boost, Trump said the negotiators were looking at "helping our hospitals," particularly hard-hit rural health care providers.

A deal could be announced Monday, the president said at a White House briefing.

With small-business owners reeling during a coronavirus outbreak that has shuttered much economic activity, Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said earlier Sunday he was hopeful of a deal that could pass Congress quickly and get the Small Business Administration program back up by mid-week.

I think we're very close to a deal today. I'm hopeful that we can get that done, he said.

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., said he believed a deal could be reached late Sunday or early Monday. We still have a few more details to deal with, he said.

The Senate is scheduled for a pro forma session Monday, but no vote has been set.

The House announced it could meet as soon as Wednesday for a recorded vote on the pending package, according to a schedule update from Majority Leader Steny Hoyer,

D-Md.

Under the emerging deal there would be USD 300 billion for small-business payroll program, and USD 50 billion would be available for small business disaster fund.

Additionally, it would bring USD 75 billion for hospitals and USD 25 billion for testing, according to those involved in the talks. On a conference call Sunday afternoon that included Trump, Mnuchin and Republican senators, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., indicated the only remaining item for discussion involved the money for testing, according to a Senate GOP leadership aide who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss a private call.

Under the emerging deal, the government's Paycheck Protection Program for small businesses would get roughly USD 300 billion, according to Mnuchin.

The program has been swamped by companies applying for loans and reached its appropriations limit last Thursday after approving nearly 1.7 million loans. That left thousands of small businesses in limbo as they sought help. An additional USD 50 billion in the evolving deal would go for disaster loans.

About USD 75 billion would go to U.S. hospitals, for those straining under a ballooning coronavirus case-load as well as those struggling to stay financially afloat after suspending elective surgeries during the pandemic. About USD 25 billion would be added for COVID-19 test-

ing, something states have said was urgently needed. The money for hospitals and testing were priorities sought by congressional Democrats.

But additional aid to state and local governments would be left out, Mnuchin said. Democrats have been keen to boost funding to cash-strapped states and local governments whose revenues have cratered, but the issue threatened to provoke fights between large, high-tax states like California and New York and smaller states more typically run by Republicans.

The president is willing to consider that in the next bill, but wants to get this over the finish line with a focus on small businesses, hospitals and testing, Mnuchin said.

He said he's been in touch with GOP leaders including McConnell and House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., and all are on board with the same plan. On the Sunday call with senators, Mnuchin and McConnell reiterated that money for state and local governments as well as food stamps would not be included in the package, according to the GOP aide.

I'm hopeful that we can reach an agreement, that the Senate can pass this tomorrow, and that the House can take it up on Tuesday, and, Wednesday, we'd be back up and running, Mnuchin said earlier in his TV interview.

Schumer said Democrats would insist on aid for state and local governments.

They had submit-

ted a compromise offer Friday that would provide USD 150 billion for states as well as cities, counties and towns based on need. Key swing states for Trump in the November presidential election Pennsylvania, Michigan, Ohio and Wisconsin would receive billions in new aid under the proposal, according to a senior Democratic aide who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss details of private negotiations.

We are pushing hard, Schumer said. We don't want our police, our firefighters, our EMTs, our bus drivers this is not an abstract issue. We don't want them fired. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., predicted an agreement would be reached soon. I am pleased to report that we have been engaged in bipartisan negotiations on our interim legislation, and our progress is encouraging, she said in a letter late Saturday to Democratic colleagues.

Republican Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan, who leads the National Governors' Association, said he and other governors believe that aid for state and local government is desperately needed, but that it may not be an issue worth fighting over for now.

I don't think the deal is finalized yet, he said. But, look, we do not want to hold up funding to these small businesses. And we hope that the Democrats and the Republicans in the Senate can come together in a bipartisan way and get something moving for the American people.

NEW YORK, APR 20 (AP)

As residents at a nursing home in Kirkland, Washington, began dying in late February from a coronavirus outbreak that would eventually take 43 lives, there was little sign of trouble at the Cobble Hill Health Center, a 360-bed facility in an upscale section of Brooklyn.

Its Facebook page posted a cheerful story encouraging relatives to quiz their aging loved ones about their lives, and photos of smiling third graders at a nearby school making flower arrangements for residents. That quickly changed. By the middle of March, the CEO began sending increasingly alarmed emails about banning visitors, screening staff, confining residents, wiping down all surfaces, and having all-hands-on-deck meetings to prepare everyone for the coming coronavirus freight train."

I'll be darned if I'm not going to do everything in my power to protect them, Donny Tuchman wrote before

things got worse. More than 100 staffers, nearly a third of the workforce, went out sick. Those left began wearing garbage bags because of a shortage of protective gear. Not a single resident has been able to get tested for the virus to this day.

Now listed with 55 deaths it can only assume were caused by COVID-19, among the most of any such facility in the country, Cobble Hill Health Center has become yet another glaring example of the nation's struggle to control the rapid spread of the coronavirus in nursing homes that care for the most frail and vulnerable.

Cobble Hill's grim toll surpasses not only Kirkland's but the 49 deaths at a home outside of Richmond, Virginia, 48 dead at a veteran's home in Holyoke, Mass., and five other homes in outer boroughs of New York City that have at least 40 deaths each.

Out of an Associated Press tally of 8,003 nursing home deaths nationwide, a third of

them are in New York state. AP interviews with friends and relatives who have visited the Cobble Hill Health Center in recent weeks, as well as the home's own statements, paint a picture of a facility overwhelmed and unequipped to deal with its coronavirus outbreak, with shortages of staff, personal protective equipment and the availability of reliable testing.

They were under siege, said Daniel Arbeen, who brought his ailing 88-year-old father from a hospital to the home in late March. They were doing the best they could, as far as we could tell at arm's length, under siege.

Tuchman told the AP on Sunday that he believes many other homes have more deaths than Cobble Hill but his has been singled out for its honesty. He said it responded to the state's voluntary survey with cases in which it was possible COVID-19 could be a factor, since his home wasn't able to test any due to the lack of available kits.

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BOLLYWOOD KITCHEN CONFIDENTIAL

NEW DELHI: Quarantine cooking got Bollywood celebs to brush up their culinary skills with Instagram as their new scrapbook. From Deepika Padukone preparing a four-course Thai meal to Alia Bhatt just learning to cook, every celebrity kitchen is getting a new flavour every day, making fans drool on Instagram. While some celebs can consider being chefs as alternate career options, there are those like Katrina Kaif and Rahul Bose, who are embracing their failures in the kitchen with a sporting spirit. We've curated some of the fun-filled, delicious looking cooking posts from celebrity chef diaries. Get ready to drool, you can thank us later.

DEEPIKA PADUKONE, THE PERFECTIONIST:

Deepika Padukone and Ranveer Singh went on a date to their dining room. And Deepika was in complete chef mode. Ranveer, who is always busy with wife appreciation posts, shared glimpses of Deepika's hard-work on his Instagram stories. At the end of all the cooking-shooking, Deepika plated out Thai delicacies like Chopped Thai Salad with Sesame Garlic Dressing, Tom Yum soup and Thai Green Curry. Deepika and Ranveer ended their date on a sweet note - they baked the desert cake together!

BAKER SISTERS ALIA AND SHAHEEN'S KITCHEN SMELLS AWESOME

Alia Bhatt, who is "learning something new" everyday, shared photos of delicious looking Banana Bread baked by her and accompanied it with a photo of a chocolate cake made by sister Shaheen. Alia also has cooking videos shared on her YouTube channel, in which she's just learning the basics. She did a good job here: "Stayed home and baked a little with the sister. Sha-

heen made the real chocolate cake and I made the grain free paleo banana bread."

AT LEAST, KATRINA KAIF TRIED!

Guys, don't laugh at Katrina Kaif's meal, okay? At least, she tried! Katrina shared a video of a meal prepared by her and her sister Isabelle but couldn't tell what it was actually. But she was sure to

is Shilpa's partner in all. "Spending time with Viaan usually entails a baking/cooking session once a week," Shilpa captioned her baking video while for another video of the mother-son duo plucking vegetables from the garden, she wrote: "The Baingan Ka Bharta we had for lunch was delicious."

PREITY IS A MASALA DOSA GIRL:



have the chef's hat on. "We're not sure what it is either... we'll let you know when we do," she wrote. LOL.

SIT BACK AND ENJOY. SONAM KAPOOR IS ON A COOKING SPREE:

Sonam Kapoor, who is currently in Delhi with Anand Ahuja and his parents, has been preparing healthy and yummy meals since the beginning of the lockdown. Sonam is also on a baking spree, which prompted her mother-in-law to worry about "weight gain" because "everybody is loving them so much!"

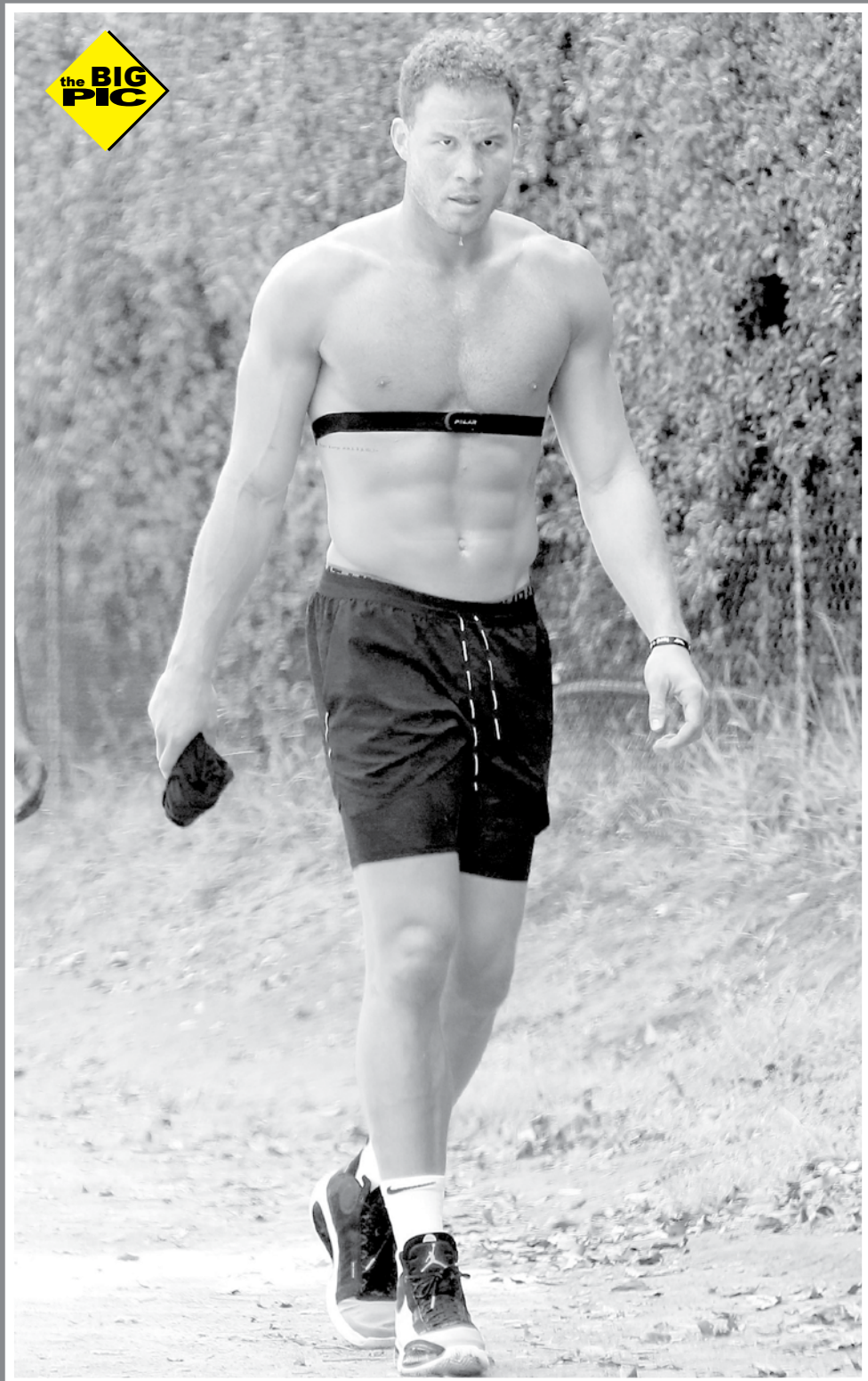
SHILPA'S COOKING PARTNER IS HER 7-YEAR-OLD SON VIAAN:

Shilpa Shetty and her son Viaan, 7, make an adorable baking duo. From baking healthy cakes to preparing lunch with home grown organic veggies, Viaan

Preity Zinta, who is a complete foodie, is in Los Angeles with her family. Meanwhile, she's brushing up her culinary skills under the supervision of her mother. She recently perfected her hands at making Masala Dosa and was delighted: "It's really nice to hang with mom and learn recipes of some of my fave dishes."

ANANYA IS THE PERFECT (NOT) KITCHEN ASSISTANT FOR HER SISTER:

Ananya Panday and her sister Rysa felt like some cookies on Sunday. Unable to step out of the house, they baked some chocolate delights. Umm... correction. It wasn't "they" who baked because: "I mean Rysa Panday baked cookies - I just danced around the kitchen and ate chocolate chips."



TOO HOT TO TROT! Basketball player, Blake Griffin opted for a shirtless, outdoor workout in Los Angeles.

Broadway star Nick Cordero had his leg amputated due to coronavirus complications

(CNN)-Broadway actor Nick Cordero is recovering after having his right leg amputated following complications with coronavirus, his wife said.

The Tony Award-nominated star has been battling coronavirus for more than two weeks. His wife, Amanda Kloots, has kept fans informed by sharing updates on his health on her Instagram.

Saturday was day 18 of him being sedated in the intensive care unit, Kloots told her social media followers. While hospitalized, he started having clotting issues on his right leg, and could not get blood down to his toes. The blood thinners he got to fix the clotting issues were affecting his blood pressure and causing internal bleeding in his intestines, Kloots said.

He is hospitalized at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles, where he lives with his family while performing in "Rock of Ages."

"They had him on blood thinners for the clotting, unfortunately the blood thinners were causing other issues," she said Saturday. "The right leg will be amputated today."

Kloots started the hashtag #wakeupnick on Instagram and asked fans to send her videos of them dancing and imploring him to wake up. Later Saturday, she shared an update that his surgery had gone well.

"He made it through the surgery, which is



really big because obviously his body is pretty weak," Kloots said. "Hopefully he'll just kind of relax and rest." Their friends have started a GoFundMe campaign to help them pay for hospital bills and make their home wheelchair accessible, Kloots said.

"I'm really blown away guys ... I wanna thank anyone that has given anything that they can," she said through tears. "It's just overwhelming, I really thank you so much."

Prince Harry and Meghan shun British tabloids over 'salacious gossip'

This latest sign of the breakdown in relations between the royals and a swath of the U.K. media came in a letter to the editors of leading tabloids.

By Claire Beers

Weeks after officially leaving their roles as senior royals, Prince Harry and his wife, Meghan, have told British tabloids that they will have "zero engagement" with the newspapers.

This latest sign of a breakdown in relations with a swath of the media came in a letter to the editors of The Sun, Daily Mail, Daily Express and Daily Mirror.

"The Duke and Duchess of Sussex have watched people they know — as well as complete strangers — have their lives completely pulled apart for no good reason, other than the fact that salacious gossip boosts advertising revenue," the letter said, according to a version sent to NBC News Monday.

"With that said, please

note that The Duke and Duchess of Sussex will not be engaging with your outlet. There will be no corroboration and zero engagement," the statement added.

The new arrangements under this policy would mean the tabloids would not be given access to the duke and duchess' photographs or updates that will be shared with other news outlets from the couple's media team. It is unclear if the tabloids will also be banned from media events the couple organize.

This policy comes after years of tabloid attention surrounding the Duke and Duchess of Sussex, and the British royals in general. Prince Harry last year spoke out against the "ruthless campaign" the British press have waged against his new wife. Sharing the couple's struggles with tabloids in that statement Harry said "I have been a silent witness to her private suffering for too long."

Maddie Ziegler to star in 'The Fallout'

LOS ANGELES, APR 20 (PTI): Maddie Ziegler, best known for starring in singer Sia's "Elastic Heart" music video, has been tapped to feature in high school drama film 'The Fallout'.

According to The Hollywood Reporter, the actor-dancer joins "You" star Jenna Ortega who also features in the film.

The movie, which hails from Clear Horizon, will be written and directed by actor Megan Park.

"The Fallout" will follow high schooler Vada (Ortega) who navigates the emotional fallout she experiences in the wake of a school tragedy.

Relationships with her family, friends and view on the world are forever altered.

David Brown and Giulia Prenna will produce for Clear Horizon, along with Cara Shine Ballarini.

"Maddie is an exceptional talent, and we couldn't be more thrilled to bring her on board. She will bring so much to the production," said Brown.

Two years after her breakout performance opposite Shia LaBeouf in "Elastic Heart", Ziegler made her feature acting debut in 2017's "The Book of Henry" and will next be seen in Steven Spielberg's "West Side Story".

Gurinder Chadha's aunt dies of COVID-19 complications

MUMBAI, APR 20 (PTI): Indian-origin British filmmaker Gurinder Chadha's aunt has died due to coronavirus complications. The director said her aunt passed away on Sunday in a hospital in the UK.

"Today we said goodbye to my dearest bhuaji /aunt from #covid19 complications. She was my dad's little sister,"

Gurinder wrote alongside a family picture. "She survived the Partition of India and sadly for us, her family no one could be with her in person in her final moments," she added. The "Bend it like Beckham" director thanked two nurses in the Surrey hospital who held her aunt's hand, FaceTimed her children who all chanted Sikh prayers.

ARIES:

You may have settled for less in the past, but that's not your style anymore. You are honing your skills, realising your magical abilities, and coming into your power. Knowing what you deserve will prove to be a turning point for you, Aries. You are ready to attract opportunities that are in alignment with who you are right now. Rule #1: learn to stay open. If you've had any guilt around self-care or choosing yourself, you're learning to let go of that too. How about starting (or ending) your day with a ritualistic bath followed by a cup of sereni-tea?

Tip: You know your worth.

TAURUS:

You may feel like everything is falling apart. Is it really, though? Look beyond the illusion. Understand your vantage point here. This is the secret to overcoming the given obstacle. Yes, it's true that there are people who may be trying to get in the way of your success or poison others against you. Don't feel threatened by the juvenile games. Focus on what you came here to do.

Tip: Understand your vantage point in any given situation.

GEMINI:

No love story is devoid of drama. But you're learning to take everything with a pinch of salt and focus on the essence of your relationship—the love that brought you together. Date night promises to start early in the Gemini headquarters. Single or away from your partner? You're likely to spend quality time with your siblings or somebody you consider as one. Share stories, both old and new. Know that it is vulnerability that is bringing you together.

Tip: Love like nobody's watching.

CANCER:

There were times in the past when you resisted self-care and considered turning inwards a colossal waste of time. But you're letting go of this limiting belief. You're learning the importance of giving yourself the love you deserve. It's all about coming up with small, simple rituals that make you feel celebrated. Movement meditation is also going to be a big theme for you today.

Tip: Give movement meditation a shot.

LEO:

As a fire sign, you revel in living on the edge. The idea of slowing down has always sounded more appealing on paper than it does in practice. But what you're experiencing now is a deep inner alchemy. Yes, there are days you resist the process. But the days you embrace mindfulness outnumber them. Remember, awareness is about the small, simple things, like connecting with the ground when you walk or sipping on your tea like it's source of ecstasy.

Tip: Slow down.

VIRGO:

While the new moon is synonymous with beginnings, la luna in her fading glory encourages us to face our shadows; to release and to let go. Inner work is the need of the hour, Virgo. You already have a sense of what you need to part ways with. It's now time to set a strong intention and take the required action. Want to take the witchy route to liberation?

Tip: La luna, in her fading glory, is encouraging you to release.

LIBRA:

Your relationship with confrontation has always been a complicated one. What's keeping you from speaking your truth? Do your needs not deserve to be met, Libra? Remember, the wounded child is now an empowered adult. Befriend courage, stand up for yourself, and speak your mind. This is the only way the world will meet you halfway. If you're feeling especially sensitive today, be mindful of your boundaries. Be mindful of what you may be consuming consciously or unconsciously. Most importantly, take time to ground your energy.

Tip: The wounded child is now an empowered adult.

SCORPIO:

A powerful affirmation by Danielle LaPorte to start your day with: "I call all of my power back to me now. I am whole and complete." This is a time of reclaiming your reins, Scorpio. The limitations that once held you back are now intimidated by your very presence. It's true that there are certain things in our life that are predetermined, but don't forget the role of free will. Steer your chariot in a direction that you feel called towards, and know the Universe will realign itself for you.

Tip: Call your power back to you.

SAGITTARIUS:

You're craving solo time like never before, especially if you've been sharing space with other people. It's okay to check out once in a while as long as you're not harming anybody in the process. Let your loved ones know your need for space as you bury yourself underneath a pile of books. You may or may not have a way around the chores though. By tapping into the gift of awareness, you will find a way to make the most mundane tasks meditative.

Tip: Your need for space is real.

CAPRICORN:

We all have an army of angels, guides, and masters assigned to us at birth. We may not be able to see them through our naked eyes, but we can perceive them via our third eye or the 'ajna chakra'. Tune in, Capricorn. Feel their presence. Become aware of the many miracles they are manifesting on your behalf. As you do, be sure to express your gratitude for each one of them.

Tip: Your spirit team is trying to get through to you!

AQUARIUS:

You may have been at loggerheads in the past, but you're slowly finding your balance. You're learning to appreciate their contribution to your life, and acknowledging the love that brought you together. Domestic bliss is on the cards, Aquarius. As such, interpersonal relationships are taking centre stage. Be mindful of the wounds that are calling for your attention.

Tip: Love conquers all.

PISCES:

Your time away from the matrix has provided you with the opportunity to not just inculcate new habits, but also to put them into practice. It's not just about who you are becoming in this time period, it's about what you are taking into the world with you. Make it count, Pisces. There are positive changes on the health and wellness front too. You couldn't fathom the idea of not having access to your gym or your trainer, but look at you now! The cheat code to staying motivated: workouts that allow you to be your most playful self as you sweat it out.

Tip: Make this period of self-isolation count.