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SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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SRM Univ-Sikkim introduces engineering program

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 14 JUN:**

SRM University Sikkim today announced the introduction of its inaugural Engineering Program from the academic year 2020–21.

With the support of expertise from its parent institute, SRM University Sikkim has decided to start with a BTech programme in Computer Science and Engineering from this academic year onwards. The course also offers specialization in Artificial Intelligence & Machine Learning and Cyber Security.

The Computer Science and Engineering curriculum, an official press release informs, is designed to provide students with a strong foundation in the core areas of computing and its tools to address new competencies and challenges.

The specializations have been selected to meet global trends and the needs of the hour, the release adds.

Walk in or call SRM University to learn more about the program and admission procedures.

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India sees record jump in COVID-19 cases; death toll rises over 9K

NEW DELHI, JUN 14 (PTI): India saw the highest single-day spike of 11,929 novel coronavirus cases in the last 24 hours, taking the number of infections to over 3.20 lakh on Sunday, while the toll crossed the 9,000 mark with 311 more deaths, the Health Ministry said

This is the third day in a row there were more than 10,000 cases of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in India, which is the fourth worst-hit nation by the pandemic

There are 1,49,348 active COVID-19 cases, while 1,62,378 people have recovered and a patient has migrated. The total confirmed coronavirus cases rose to 3,20,922, including 9,195 deaths, according to the ministry data updated in the morning

The number of recoveries are more than the active cases as 50.60 per cent of the patients have recovered so far, an official said

As many as 113 out of the 311 more deaths were from Maharashtra, followed by 57 in Delhi, 33 in Gujarat and 30 in Tamil Nadu

There were 20 more fatalities in Uttar Pradesh, 12 in West Bengal and 10 in Rajasthan. Haryana and Telangana registered eight more coronavirus deaths each, followed by seven in Madhya Pradesh, three in Bihar

Andhra Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Karnataka, Punjab and Uttarakhand reported two deaths each

Of the total 9,195 deaths, Maharashtra tops the tally with 3,830 fatalities, followed 1,448 by Gujarat and 1,271 in Delhi

The toll from the pandemic rose to 463 in West Bengal, 447 in Madhya Pradesh, 397 in Tamil Nadu and 385 in Uttar Pradesh. There have been 282 COVID-19 deaths in Rajasthan and 182 in Telangana

The number of fatalities reached 82 in Andhra Pradesh, 81 in Karnataka, 78 in Haryana and 65 in Punjab. Jammu and Kashmir has reported 55 COVID-19 deaths, followed by 39 in Bihar, 23 in Uttarakhand and 19 in Kerala .. **Turn Page 2**

Chhetri among those who glorified Indian football: Stimac

NEW DELHI, JUN 14 (PTI): National team head coach Igor Stimac on Sunday hailed Sunil Chhetri, saying the talismanic captain was one of those who “glorified” Indian football with his dedication in the 15 years of his illustrious career.

The 35-year-old Chhetri on Friday became only the second Indian after legendary Bhaichung Bhutia to complete 15 years in Indian jersey. He made his debut in 2005 against Pakistan in Quetta in a friendly match. He had scored in the 1-1 drawn game.

According to Stimac, Chhetri is someone who always runs the extra yard, breaks some more sweat during training sessions, which encourages youngsters to emulate him.

“I see him as someone who always pushes the bar in training and never compromises with the regime. He drives the team and he is the character who defines the team. Numerous characters have glorified the Indian football history and he’s definitely one of them who have made his country proud, the Croatian tactician said.

“Dedicated, workaholic and team man -- those are some of the attributes which define Sunil Chhetri,” he said in a release issued by the All India Football Federation.

The former Croatian World Cupper, who took charge of the national team last year, recalled seeing Chhetri during the preparatory camp ahead

of the King’s Cup 2019 -- his maiden assignment with the Blue Tigers.

He pointed out that despite being the senior-most member of the team, Chhetri toiled maximum to achieve positive results after the heartbreak in AFC Asian Cup.

“When I first saw him last year, they were back to the National Team camp after a long gap following the AFC Asian Cup. A few boys were new but the fire under his belly probably was more than anyone else. That’s the secret of his long career. Congratulations!” Stimac said.

Former India coach Sukhwinder Singh, who guided the Indians in that match against Pakistan in 2005, had said that he was not sure of Chhetri’s credibility then.

“I needed someone who had the trickery, didn’t have the fear, and had to be quick. Honestly, Sunil wasn’t in my mind at all. He wasn’t my first option. I had my doubts,” Sukhwinder had said.

“I saw him maturing in JCT and there were flashes of what he could do in future. I still remember his hunger. In 19 years of my coaching career, I haven’t seen anyone as dedicated as Sunil. He remained undaunted and was never willing to shy away from working hard.

“Shouldering the responsibility for 15 years demands discipline and he keeps it above everything else.

5 more COVID-positive cases detected, 63 active cases in Sikkim now

**SAGAR CHHETRI
GANGTOK, 14 JUN:**

Five new cases of COVID-19 were reported in Sikkim on Sunday taking the number of active cases to 63.

Among the five new cases, two are from East Sikkim and three from West district. With the discharge of two patients on Saturday after their recovery, the tally of the active cases in the State had come down to 58 but with the five fresh cases, the number now stands at 63.

In his daily health bulletin posted on Sunday, Health Director General and Secretary, Dr Pempa T Bhutia, mentioned that the five new cases were detected from tests conducted on Saturday.

Among those who have tested positive is a 33-year-old woman from East Sikkim who recently returned from Bhiar

and was lodged in facility quarantine in Gangtok. The second person to test positive in East Sikkim is a 32-year-old male who had returned

had brought this person from Siliguri to Rangpo so that he can be screened there as well.

Meanwhile, of the three positive cases reported from



from Siliguri recently and was staying in a paid quarantine facility. Reassuringly, the person with whom he traveled in a taxi from Rangpo to the quarantine centre along and his room-mate, both have tested negative.

Doctors here have also contacted their counterparts in Siliguri and provided them details of the taxi driver who

West Sikkim, two are brothers in their early thirties and the third is a 31-year-old lady.

Dr Bhutia informed that two men patients travelled in a SNT bus from Siliguri till Melli, while the woman had come in a taxi from Siliguri to Melli with her husband and a child and another lady. They were all then lodged at the facility quarantine at Tashiding.

Minister congratulates and thanks doctors and health workers for helping Sikkim face the pandemic

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 14 JUN:**

Health Minister, Dr MK Sharma, underlined that COVID-19 patients recovering and being discharged from the hospital was evidence of the hard work of the team of doctors and health workers pressed into service to battle the pandemic.

While congratulating doctors and health workers of the State, he stated that the state was prepared with adequate manpower and facilities to tackle any situation thrown up by Novel Coronavirus in the State.

The Minister, accompanied by senior officials and health

workers of the State, was here at STNM Hospital, Socheygang, to see-off two more recovered COVID-19 patients who were discharged on Saturday.

Speaking to media persons, the Minister expressed that the State has been working hard throughout and was now even better prepared for the increased number of cases.

He mentioned that while the number of cases has increased in the state due to arrival of stranded Sikkimese, everyone has been kept safe because the State has been following proper protocols and a properly

thought-out system of evacuating stranded Sikkimese and arranging proper quarantine for them on their return.

On the same, the Minister stated that due to proper coordination and regulated approach, the positive cases have been detected while people were still in the quarantine facilities and had not made any community contact.

“We are still working actively and the people should not panic. People still need to stay alert and follow social distancing norms strictly. We have treatment options and preparedness but the

people need to make modification to their lifestyles to learn to live with coronavirus and stay alert and serious and keep vulnerable groups safe at home,” Dr Sharma advised.

Responding to media queries, the Minister informed that STNM Hospital has 200 beds in the isolation ward for COVID-19, but was prepared and ready to handle even more cases.

He informed that isolation wards have also been set-up in the district hospital to keep asymptomatic cases under observation if required.

However, he expressed hope that the number of positive cases would not increase by much now since a bulk of the Sikkimese stranded in red-zones have already returned.

Minister asserted that civil society, social organizations and individuals need to work hard in the present situation as there were chances of social ostracism and stigmatization when these patients return home.

He stressed that the right message should be propagated in the community and stigma combated.

Monsoon progress likely to slow this week: IMD

NEW DELHI, JUN 14 (PTI): Monsoon has covered a significant part of west and central India but its progress will be slower this week, the India Meteorological Department said on Sunday.

The monsoon has advanced into the remaining parts of central Arabian Sea, some parts of northeast Arabian Sea, Gujarat, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, remaining parts of Maharashtra (including Mumbai), some parts of Madhya Pradesh, most parts

of Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand and some more parts of Bihar, the IMD said in a statement.

Conditions are becoming favourable for further advance of Southwest Monsoon into some more parts of North Arabian Sea, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh, remaining parts of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Bihar and some parts of East Uttar Pradesh during next 48 hours, the IMD said.

Thereafter, the progress will be slow for a week, IMD

Director-General Mrutyunjay Mohapatra said.

The low pressure area that helped in the progress of monsoon last week is weakening. So, the progress of the monsoon will be slow for a week, Mohapatra said.

However, another low pressure area is likely to form over the Bay of Bengal next week which will help in the progress of monsoon, Mohapatra added.

A low pressure area is a cyclonic circulation that helps in

the progression of monsoon.

Fairly widespread to widespread rainfall is very likely to continue over Maharashtra, Gujarat, most parts of central and east India during next 4-5 days with isolated heavy to very heavy falls over Konkan and Goa, Madhya Maharashtra, Gujarat, the IMD said.

Isolated heavy over south Madhya Pradesh, Vidarbha, Chhattisgarh and Marathwada are likely during next 2-3 days, the IMD statement added.

Uttarakhand scholars refute Nepal’s claim on Kalapani

PITHORAGARH (U’KHAND), JUN 14 (PTI): Uttarakhand scholars on Sunday cited scriptures and books written before Independence that showed Kalapani as the source of Kali river, a key factor in Indian claim to areas that Nepal has now incorporated in its own map.

The lower house of Nepalese parliament on Saturday approved the controversial map, triggering a strong protest from India.

The new Nepal map lays claim over Kalapani, Lipulekh and Limpiyadhura which India maintains are on its side of the border.

Kali is recognised as the border by both sides, but Nepal has contested that its source is the Kalapani area.

Nepalese commentators have argued that the real source of Kali river also called Mahakali is the Kuti-Yangtvi rivulet which originates in Limpiyadhura, a claim that allows Nepal extra territory in the region.

VDS Negi, a professor of history at the SS Jeena campus of the Kumaon

University in Almora, cited Manas Khanda of the Skanda Purana, which has a reference to Kali river, known as Shyama in ancient times.

“Shloka number 2 of chapter 117 of Manas Khanda of Skanda Purana clearly says that the origin of ‘Shyama’ or Kali river is from ‘Lipi Parvat’ or Lipulekh hill, Negi said.

Manas Khanda of Skanda Purana was compiled in the latter half of the 12th century, centuries before the treaty of Sagauli was signed, he said, referring to the 1816 border agreement between Nepal and British India.

British travellers to Tibet before India’s independence and Indian scholars writing on Kailash-Mansarovar have also cited Kalapani the origin of river Kali, Negi said.

He said Charles A Sheering, a British traveller and administrator who visited Tibet in 1905, also wrote in his book Western Tibet and the British Borderland that Kalapani is considered

the original source of Kali river.

Quoting the book, Negi said over half a dozen small springs combine to form the source of Kali.

He also referred to Swami Pranavananda, an explorer-saint whose 1949 book on Kailash-Mansarovar described Kalapani as the traditional source of river Kali. According to the author, the source was earlier known as Kalipani and later began to be called Kalapani by the locals.

Ajay Rawat, former head of department of history at Kumaon University, said the tribals of Vyas valley have been trading with Tibet through Lipulekh pass since the 6th century.

But there is no evidence to show the Nepalese doing trade through the pass, he argued.

The Kailash-Mansarovar yatra by Indian pilgrims has been going on through the same pass for centuries without any objection from the rulers of Nepal, Rawat said.

Disaster Management Minister convenes meeting to discuss landslide-affected areas of Mangan



MANGAN, 13 JUN (IPR): Minister for Land Revenue & Disaster Management, Kunga Nima Lepcha, chaired a meeting in the chamber of the District Collector, North regarding Mangan Bazar's landslide-affected areas on 13 June. He was accompanied by Roads & Bridges Minister, Samdup Lepcha, who also happens to be the area MLA, District Collector, North, Tenzing T Kaleon, Relief Commissioner-cum-Secretary, PN Sherpa and team, SP North, Ongmu

Bhutia, SDPO Mangan, Officers from BRO, and others officers from line department of the district.

Meeting started with the welcome address delivered by the DC north, followed by the Power Point Presentation on Landslide areas of SNT Complex by the Project Coordinate, Pemzang Tenzing.

Minister Kunga Nima Lepcha stating the landslide area is in worse condition he instructed all stakeholders to expedite

work of restoration as it is almost getting delay. He assured that this meeting is basically conducted to ensure the safety of Mangan Bazar, furthermore he assured to make North District a Model District.

In order to achieve better result he urged all the concerned department needs to work in tandem with each other and quality work is a big factor that leads to true sense of development, he added.

Lastly he urged to

the BRO Officers to get prior concern of the local Public or concern Panchayat members before mentioning name of any place in any signboards.

Minister Samdup Lepcha stated that main aim is to protect the Mangan Bazar Area from landslide therefore quality of work cannot be compromised at any cost. He informed that an Independent body has been formed for execution of work.

He insisted that the work must be completed in stipulated time for this the concerned departments must go hand in hand. He said if NOC from forest department and other procedure of tender have been done work could be started from first week of July. Ministers also visited Landslides areas at SNT complex areas after the meeting.

R&B Minister confers with CMO and Doctors in Mangan

MANGAN, 13 JUN [IPR]: Minister Roads & Bridges, Cultural Affairs and Heritage Department, Samdup Lepcha had a meeting with the CMO and Doctors of the District Hospital Mangan to check the preparedness of arrangements for COVID-19 pandemic as well to take stock of hospital shortages.

During the meeting CMO North, Dr Purna Basnett placed forward some demands on behalf of District Hospital which are as under:

- To expedite the ongoing District Hospital Building Construction Building work.



- All the Specialists Doctors attached to District Hospital Mangan should attend on duty Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday instead of only Friday for more

service to the public of the district.

- New Ambulance, more number of drivers and Safai Karmachari needs to get involved in the duty.

After giving patience hearing Minister, Samdup Lepcha assured that whatever demand have been place would be full filled gradually.



The lockdown had hit livelihoods hard, and now that more relaxations are in place, work, the hard toil type, has begun. In the pic above, two young girls can be seen collecting stones at the confluence of Teesta and Rongi Chu at Singtam. [from YOGEN THATAL]

Rohit wants to play both T20 World Cup and IPL

MUMBAI, JUN 14 (PTI): India's limited overs vice captain Rohit Sharma wants to compete in both the T20 World Cup and the IPL this year as chances are that only one of the two tournaments could be salvaged due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The ICC is yet to decide on the fate of the World Cup, scheduled to be held in October-November in Australia,

while the BCCI has postponed the popular and lucrative Indian Premier League (IPL) indefinitely.

It is being speculated that if T20 World Cup is postponed, the IPL can be held in that window.

Rohit initiated an Instagram chat session to engage with his fans and said he would "preferably play both" when asked which

event he would prefer this year.

Rohit leads four-time champions Mumbai Indians in the IPL. The star opener also said that it will be challenging to play the pink ball Test when the Indian team travels to Australia later this year.

India will engage in a four-Test series with hosts Australia with the first Test to

be played at the Gabba in Brisbane from December 3.

The second Tests will be a day/night affair at the Adelaide Oval. Asked to describe Mahendra Singh Dhoni in one word, Rohit said, "Legend". The Indian vice captain also said that he enjoys watching the batting of Australian Steve Smith and England's Jason Roy.

ViewPoint

Sushant's passing highlights mental health issues

PRIYANKA SAURABH

The issue of mental health due to the coronavirus has also emerged rapidly in the country. Lockdown has changed people's habits but a large section is living amidst stress. This stress is about disease and future worries. People are at home to avoid corona but they are worried about this disease somewhere and it is present in some corner of the brain, due to which human thinking But not only the lockdown has a negative impact, people are also worried about the aftermath because many people are already facing employment, job, and financial crisis.

Sushant's departure seems more soaking because he was our age. But despite our age, we were on top of success. Where the struggle of career and life continues in our life, the struggle of their life may have been different. But, what in this era while the world is in the grip of a terrible epidemic. The situation in the country cannot be said to be very good. Even on that, the situation in some places is getting worse and worse. The future seems to be heading towards bottomless economic uncertainty. No one's stability is visible in life. The news is far from positive. Depressed in homes, depression is multiplied. In such a situation, being able to keep oneself normal is not less than a big challenge.

I am struggling with the big ups and downs of life and know that most young people like me have more or less the same condition. I too have suffered from depression. The servant does not even know about his livelihood. But, I have come out of it on my own without any medicine because it is a little easier for those who know the cause and prevention to get out. But most do not understand the symptoms and causes, then the treatment is delayed. The attitude of the fee society would also be such that you will not be declared sick, but will be declared insane. Then it becomes necessary to keep oneself away from any kind of negativity and there is also an appeal from the relatives to take care of their loved ones.

Loneliness is a great tragedy in itself. So try to save yourself from that loneliness. You have to learn to be content with what you have in life. You have to find your happiness within yourself with or without someone. A few moments are enough for any person

to carry out an event like suicide so we all have to learn to deal with such moments. If you get a call from a friend, a relative, an acquaintance, don't ignore it. These may be the difficult moments of that person's life and his life could be saved by your talking.

In fact, with the onset of lockdown and its escalation, two types of issues are emerging. The first people are constantly living at home and in such cases, interpersonal relationships such as domestic violence and child custody disputes have increased, as everyone is cut off from their daily routine. The second problem is that people are worried about the situation after the lockdown, such as their financial situation and livelihood. Like many other diseases, this time to the lowest level people is affected.

The current situation and future worries are not only plaguing the poor but also those who come from rich families. Migrants working in other cities are worried about moving to their cities and villages. They are also afraid of not getting employment in the coming days. Even those who are going to reach their village are not getting familiar with the village. The villagers are looking at him with suspicion. People in the villages are being suspected that they are not infected somewhere. The mental fear that came with Corona makes the situation more or less the same in a big country like India. Even though most people are not mentally ill, there is a large segment that is concerned about the future. They are confused about their child's future.

However, stress is for everyone. Some have the stress of ending the lockdown, some have the stress of fixing the financial situation, some have the stress of moving around freely sooner rather than later. It can also be called collective stress. Psychiatrists say that people should use their time wisely to deal with situations like lockdown. According to him, books should be read on the subjects in which one is interested, positivity can also be felt from trees and plants in the house. At the same time, he says, one should ignore the negative things that come up on social media and WhatsApp and adopt the positive things. Psychiatrists say that people should keep themselves physically and mentally healthy so that when the time comes they are ready to face the challenge.

Minister Kharel inspects Nagi Pokhari

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 14 JUN:

Transport Minister Sanjeet Kharel, who is also the area MLA, made a daylong visit to Nagi Pokhari to address the water crisis faced by people of the constituency [Namthang-Rateypani].

He also visited different perennial water sources in the area.

In the run-up to the elections, Minister Kharel had pledged to

add water to this pond, and now, the process has begun to deliver on this election promise.

Public Relations Officer of the Governor, Khemraj Bhattarai, ADC, Bikas Seva, Namthang Gram Bikash Adhikari, Ram Muktan, area incharge, Ratna Singh Tamah, Student Cell General Secretary, Kavita Sapkota South District Youth Cell Convenor, Harun Subba, Majdur



Morcha General Secretary, Mohan Ranpal Tista -VI Hydel Power Project Convenor, Hari

Tiwari along with other Youths, Local Residents were present during the day.

Find culprits behind attack on Darnal in a week, SDF demands

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 14 JUN:

Sikkim Democratic Front has demanded that Sikkim Police should trace the culprits behind the attack on JB Darnal within a week,

failing which the party has threatened to go to court. The party has

also decided to present a memorandum regarding the attack to the Prime Minister, Union Home Minister, Governor of Sikkim, Chief Secretary and DGP of Sikkim.

This was decided during an emergency meeting convened by SDF here at the

party headquarter on Saturday. The meeting, which was chaired by the senior vice-president of the party, DB Thapa, has strongly condemned the attack on the SDF spokesperson.

An SDF press release mentions that the meeting passed a

resolution that the party will take legal action if the police fails to trace the culprits behind the attack on Mr Darnal within one week.

This unfortunate incident has established the rule of anarchy and murder of democracy in the State, the party adds.

India sees record jump...

Odisha registered 10 deaths so far, followed by eight each in Jharkhand and Assam, and six each in Chhattisgarh and Himachal Pradesh

Five people have succumbed to the contagion in Chandigarh, followed by two in Puducherry, and one each in Meghalaya, Tripura and Ladakh, the ministry said

More than 70 per cent of the deaths have happened due to comorbidities, it added

The maximum number of cases are from Maharashtra with 1,04,568 infections, followed by 42,687 Tamil Nadu, 38,958 in Delhi and 23,038 in Gujarat

The tally rose to 13,118 in Uttar Pradesh, 12,401 in Rajasthan and 10,698 in West Bengal

The number of COVID-19 cases has gone up to 10,641 in Madhya Pradesh, 76,824 in Karnataka, 76,749 in Haryana and 76,290 in Bihar

As many as 5,965 people have contracted the deadly disease in Andhra Pradesh, followed by 4,878 in Jammu and Kashmir, 4,737 in Telangana, 3,723 in Odisha and 3,718 in Assam

There are 3,063 cases in Punjab and 2,407 in Kerala, while 1,785 people have been infected in Uttarakhand and 1,711 in Jharkhand

A total of 1,512 people are afflicted with the disease in Chhattisgarh, followed by 1,046 in Tripura, 7523 in Goa and 502 in Himachal Pradesh

The number of coronavirus cases rose to 449 in Manipur, 437 in Ladakh and 345 in Chandigarh

Puducherry has registered 176 COVID-19 cases so far, followed by 163 in Nagaland, 107 in Mizoram and 87 in Arunachal Pradesh

Sikkim has 63 COVID-19 cases, while there are 44 infections in Meghalaya and 38 in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands

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ViewPoint

Oil is cheaper than water, but rates skyrocket in India

DR SATYAWAN SAURABH

People around the world are at home because of the lockdown. This is also a major reason for the decline in oil demand. The world has more crude oil than it needs at the moment and the economic downturn has reduced the demand for oil worldwide. OPEC, its largest oil exporter, and its allies, such as Russia, have already agreed to a record reduction in oil production. The United States and other countries have also decided to reduce oil production. But despite the decline in oil production, the world has more crude oil available than it needs to use. Storage is also rapidly filling up at sea and on land. Lack of stores is also becoming a problem. At the same time, even after the Corona epidemic comes out, the demand for oil in the world will gradually increase and it will take a long time for things to return to normal. Because it all depends on dealing with the health crisis.

Crude oil prices have plummeted due to the Coronavirus epidemic and the ongoing price war between Russia and Saudi Arabia. But consumers do not benefit even after the fall in oil prices in India, the oil and gas sector is one of the eight major industries in India and plays a major role in influencing decision making for all other important segments of the economy. Is. Therefore, oil and gas prices are expected to rise further. The government has allowed 100 percent foreign direct investment in many areas of the region, including natural gas, petroleum products, and refineries.

Crude oil cheaper than bottled

water-

Retail prices of petrol and diesel in India are linked to global crude oil prices. This means that if crude oil prices fall, as has been the case since February, retail prices should fall, but the exact opposite happened. Oil companies hiked auto fuel prices after resuming revised prices last Sunday after a gap of 82 days. In the last six days, the petrol price has gone up by Rs 3.31 per liter and diesel by Rs 3.42 per liter.

Last month, oil prices fell so much in the New York oil market that crude oil became cheaper than bottled water. The question arises that the price of crude oil in the world market is lower than water, so why are we getting petrol-diesel so expensive? Even though the demand for petroleum products in India has increased rapidly, the production is not enough. In this case, we have to import about 85 percent of our crude oil. If it is expensive in the foreign market, then petrol/diesel will be expensive in the domestic market and if crude oil is cheaper, then if the petroleum product is cheaper, it will be cheaper. But right now it doesn't look like the fall in oil prices in India is strange in a way - when global prices rise, it has to be paid by the consumer, who has to pay more for every liter of fuel consumed. But when the reverse happens and prices go down, the government keeps it to itself and makes no concessions to consumers, ensuring that it is in additional revenue.

Crude oil being cheap, oil not being cheap-

Despite the sharp fall in crude oil prices, consumers are not benefiting. Crude prices fell from an average of \$ 55 per barrel to \$ 35 in early February and then fell to \$ 20 by the end of March, as demand fell. Since that time, prices have now returned to around 37. In India, on the other hand, retail prices of fuel have been frozen for a record 82 days, even as excise duty on fuel has been doubled by the Center. Although the government claimed that the rise did not affect consumers, the subsequent fall in crude oil prices did not help it reach lower levels. In addition to the Center, many states also increased taxes on auto fuel during this period.

Finance ministry officials have said that the decision to raise oil prices has been taken given the tight fiscal situation and retail prices are being gradually increased. The fact that crude oil prices have gone down does not mean that oil has become cheaper today or tomorrow. The contracts given for the supply of crude oil in May have now gone negative. Oil sellers are asking the countries of the world to buy oil but the countries that spend oil do not need it, because their population of billions is sitting at home so they are not buying oil. Their oil reserves are full, they do not have space to store new oil as old oil is not spent.

India meets demand through imports-

India is a major importer of crude oil. India meets 85 percent of its consumption through imports. So whenever crude is cheap India benefits. In the case of cheaper oil, imports

do not decrease but India's balance of trade decreases. This benefits the rupee as the Indian rupee strengthens against the dollar, which also helps control inflation. Cheap crude oil will also keep its prices low in the domestic market. India is dependent on the supply of Brent crude, not WTI (Texas Intermediate). Brent is still priced above \$ 20. The decline just appeared in May of the WTI, June is still above \$ 20 a barrel. Therefore, the negative impact of US crude on India will not have a significant impact. Whenever the price of crude oil falls by one dollar, India's import bill falls by about 000 29 trillion. That is a saving of 2 lakh 90 thousand dollars from a decrease of 10 dollars. If the government saves so much, then obviously the price of petrol-diesel and other fuels will be affected.

Falling prices benefit the government and oil companies.

It means that all the benefits of falling prices are going to the account of the government and oil companies, not to the public. When crude oil is expensive, prices go up immediately. Now that it is getting cheaper, the price should go down further. Economists also believe that some of the benefits of this decline should reach the common people. The common man should also get some benefit from crude oil being cheaper. At the same time, the government should ensure that the surplus revenue from taxes on oil is used for new investments in the basic sector and social development schemes like MNREGA.

SU Asst Prof participates in webinar on 'Music Importance'

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 14 JUN:

Assistant Professor of Music, Dr Surendra Kumar, Sikkim University, participated in a webinar titled Music Importance in the context of society and literature organized by Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar PG College, Fatehpur Uttar Pradesh.



Governor mourns Sushant Singh Rajput's death

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 14 JUN:

Governor Ganga Prasad has expressed sadness and grief on the sudden demise of actor Sushant Singh Rajput in Mumbai today.

"The news of sudden demise of actor Sushant Singh Rajput has come as a shock to all of us. Passing away of such talented actor at such a young age is the loss to the

nation and younger generation in showbiz industry in particular. He will be remembered for his vibrant and diverse roles with impeccable performances in the films and television programmes he was part of. I convey my heartfelt condolences to his bereaved family," an official press communiqué from Raj Bhawan quotes the Governor as saying.

Plantation drive at Kumrek



SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 14 JUN:

The residents of Kumrek under West Pandam constituency in East Sikkim organised a daylong plantation programme and cleanliness drive at the area today as a celebration of Paryavaran Mahotshav.

General Secretary, Nirmal Chettri, Sikkim Krantikari Morcha, along with several other local leaders and residents of the area actively participated in the drive. They cleaned drainage channels and road side areas and planted more than 300 saplings today.

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New group demands COVID-screening tests for all Sikkimese

ARPAN PRADHAN
GANGTOK, 14 JUN:

A new group by the name of "Concern Citizen and Unite for Sikkim Forum" has suggested that the State government start phase-wise testing all Sikkimese for COVID-19 along with the ongoing testing of returnees from different parts of the country.

The organization has also sought compulsory testing of health workers and other people working on the frontline during the current pandemic.

Addressing a press conference here on Sunday,

Tsewang Rinzing Bhutia of the forum claimed that most of the COVID-positive people in the State are asymptomatic and hence could have transmitted the virus to people hence it was important to have compulsory testing of frontline workers. Frontline workers, it may be recalled, are already being screened for the virus.

He suggested that since RT-PCR testing was being done for people returning to the State, the government should use TrueNat testing for the general public. TruNat machines, health officials have explained in



the past, have been kept as backup for the RT-PCR tests.

He also suggested that the government should quarantine centres as per the different zones.

Mr Bhutia demanded

insurance cover for all frontline workers of the State.

Likewise, another member of the forum, Sonam Wangdi Dorjee Bhutia expressed his dissatisfaction over the

government decision on to close free facility quarantine from 18 June onwards.

He stated that stranded Sikkimese were still returning home and not all of them can afford paid quarantine services. He suggested that the State government make some arrangements for such people.

Mr Bhutia further alleged that the State government announce a COVID-specific budget. He also demanded that the Economic Revival Committee confer with all stakeholders before finalizing its recommendations.

Health insurance claims not contestable after 8-yr of premium payment: Irdai

NEW DELHI, JUN 14 (PTI): Health insurance companies will not be allowed to contest claims once the premium has been paid for a continuous period of eight years, regulator Irdai said in a fresh set of guidelines.

Irdai said the objective of the guidelines is to standardise the general terms and clauses incorporated in indemnity based health insurance (excluding personal accident and domestic/overseas travel) products by simplifying the wordings of general terms and clauses of the policy contracts and ensure uniformity across the industry.

"All policy contracts of the existing health insurance products that are not in compliance with these guidelines shall be modified as and when they are due for

renewal from April 1, 2021 onwards.

"After completion of eight continuous years under the policy no look back to be applied...After expiry of moratorium period (of eight years) no health insurance claim shall be contestable except for proven fraud and permanent exclusions specified in the policy contract," Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (Irdai) said.

The policies will, however be subject to all limits, sub-limits, co-payments, deductibles as per the policy contract.

This period of eight years is called as moratorium period.

The moratorium would be applicable for the sums insured of the first policy and subsequently completion of 8 continuous years would

be applicable from date of enhancement of sums insured only on the enhanced limits, the regulator said in the guidelines on 'Standardization of General Terms and Clauses in Health Insurance Policy Contracts'.

On claim settlement, Irdai said the insurance company should settle or reject a claim, as the case may be, within 30 days from the date of receipt of last necessary document.

In the case of delay in the payment of a claim, the company will be liable to pay interest to the policyholder from the date of receipt of last necessary document to the date of payment of claim at a rate 2 per cent above the bank rate.

It also said the policy will become void and all premium paid will be

forfeited to the company in the event of misrepresentation, misdescription or non-disclosure of any material fact by the policyholder.

On portability, the guidelines said the insured person will have the option to port the policy to other insurers by applying to such insurer to port the entire policy along with all the members of the family, if any, at least 45 days before, but not earlier than 60 days from the policy renewal date.

If such person is presently covered and has been continuously covered without any lapses under any health insurance policy with an Indian general/ health insurer, the proposed insured person will get the accrued continuity benefits in waiting periods.

Sales in Kolkata shopping malls on the rise

KOLKATA, JUN 14 (PTI): Sales in shopping malls of Kolkata are on the rise due to increasing footfalls in the establishments since the relaxation of lockdown norms.

Authorities of the establishments said more people are buying goods and services as against total footfalls in the shopping centres, causing the conversion rate to shoot up considerably when compared to pre-COVID times.

The shopping malls had suffered zero revenue during the complete lockdown

period but despite that, they had to incur maintenance expenses and repay loans.

However, the phenomenon of 'revenge shopping' frantic buying of goods and services by consumers who missed it during lockdown witnessed recently in China, is yet to be seen in the shopping malls of Kolkata for the luxury brands.

"Conversion rate has shot up drastically. Almost every visitor has bought something. This was not the case before the lockdown. The conversion rate

was much lower then," Acropolis Mall head K Vijayan told PTI.

Footfall in the shopping mall increased considerably on June 13 when compared to June 8, the day it was reopened.

Sales are improving and more than 90 per cent of the stores are open, he said.

Authorities of the Quest Mall have also claimed that more than 90 per cent of the stores in the establishment are open.

"Footfall in our mall has nearly doubled when compared to the day

when it was reopened. Sales are also on the rise.

However, till the multiplexes are reopened, alcoholic beverages served and restaurant timings extended, the number of visitors is not expected to rise considerably from this level," Quest Mall vice president (operations), Sanjeev Mehra said.


Authorities of the South City Mall have also claimed that most of the stores in the establishment are open and that footfall increased to 10,000 on

Saturday.

Both City Centre I and II have witnessed high turnouts and spending trends. On the first day of reopening of the establishments, only around 40-60 per cent of the stores were opened in these two malls.

Opening of stores and shops has also been influenced by the level of handholding by the mall authorities.




While the Acropolis Mall has offered a complete waiver of rents during the lockdown period, others have offered a 50 per cent discount on rents.



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.

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

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

Contribute to Social Capital Engage, get involved and develop

Writing in 1958, influential political scientist and thinker, Edward Banfield, presented what he saw as the reason for backwardness – communities which cannot work together.

In his seminal book, “The Moral Basis of a Backward Society”, he studied the reasons behind the underdevelopment of a village in the southern tip of Italy. His conclusion: “The extreme poverty and backwardness is to be explained largely by the inability of villagers to act together for their common good.” His work was followed up thirty-five years later by a Harvard professor Robert Putnam who returned to the same theme and villages in 1993. In his book “Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy”, he concluded that local governments work in northern Italy and fail in south Italy because northern Italians are more likely to get involved in neighbourhood activities like singing groups, football clubs, cooperatives and networks of small entrepreneurs, while the southern Italians remain aloof and uninvolved, and also backward. Both tips of Italy were governed by the same government and subject to the same policies, and yet, while one region progressed, the other refused to develop. Banfield’s central thesis was that social capital was a key ingredient to high institutional performance and the maintenance of democracy.

Surf the net or search Wikipedia and you will find gigabytes of more details on the findings encapsulated in the two tomes, but even the condensed essence presented above is convincing enough. Putnam set out to understand the conditions required for developing “strong, responsive, effective representative institutions,” each, a necessary building block for effective democratic expression.

Turn the mirror on Sikkim in this light and it becomes apparent that societal engagement and community participation has not achieved the spontaneity required for expressions to become free and assertions more frank and forthright. There will always be those who try and secure positions and berths for themselves, and while these aspirations are not always conspiratorial, they are never healthy either. When people distance themselves from public engagement and shy away from collective action, they end up building distrust even in an environment of democracy which should have inspired confidence.

One has often rued the absence of an active civil society in Sikkim, and if one looks at how people, by and large, have refused to engage voluntarily even in local area issues and have instead waited for someone to claim leadership role, the hollowed out building blocks of a civil society explain the absence. Even the Chief Minister has spoken often about the civil society’s reluctance to engage in Sikkim, but one must realise that third-party enforcements cannot fabricate a civil society. Social capital is of value only when it is voluntary and cooperative; it is worthless when it is stage-managed. Take the Bhanu Jayanti celebrations which will be held across the State later this week. At one level, they involve a wide swathe of people, but take away the organising committees [which remain same for this celebration as well as plantation drives] and the event will flounder. How many members of the Sikkimese community will be moved to make private contributions to sustain something they have grown up with if State patronage is withdrawn? There might be many who will be willing to, but few will step forward and do so. And therein lies the engagement-deficit.

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Racism, COVID-19, and the inequality that fuels these parallel pandemics

LIAM PETTERSON
THECONVERSATION.COM

The protests against systemic racism and police violence sweeping the globe highlight the intersection between two pandemics: COVID-19 and racism. Researchers are pointing out that structural inequalities mean people of colour are hit harder by the coronavirus.

Politicians are also concerned the protests may trigger an increase in the spread of COVID-19, so public health experts are providing tips on how to protest safely.

And while many countries grapple with increasing rates of COVID-19, New Zealand has declared it has eliminated the virus, and is now aiming to keep it that way.

In this week’s roundup of coronavirus stories from scholars across the globe, we explore the disproportionate impact of COVID-19, New Zealand’s success, and the latest on drug trials.

PANDEMICS EXPOSE
INEQUALITY

Past pandemics have exposed existing inequalities, and this one is no different. Our experts explain why COVID-19 is having a greater impact on people of colour and other marginalised groups.

- Disproportionate impact. Black Americans have been dying from the coronavirus at nearly three times the rate of white Americans, while black people in the United Kingdom are four times more likely to die from COVID-19 than their white compatriots. Medical historian Mark Honigsbaum writes about the relationship between pandemics and inequality.

- Social justice is crucial to healthcare. Systemic racism means marginalised groups have limited access to resources that impact health, according to an interdisciplinary team of US health researchers. Doctors need to be trained to understand the social determinants of health to deal



with problems like COVID-19, argue researchers from Rwanda’s University of Global Health Equity.

- Safely protesting. Public health experts are concerned the protests will increase the spread of COVID-19. An infection prevention researcher at Monash University gives some tips on how to minimise the risk of transmission when taking to the streets.

- “Fear of what others might think when they see a Black man in a mask”. Despite masks providing increased safety during the pandemic, black and other minority groups are often subjected to racist abuse or discrimination when wearing them. Jasmin Zine of Wilfrid Laurier University explores the racial politics of mask wearing.

- A lack of clean water. Clean water is crucial for hygiene and hand washing, key elements of infection control. But many people do not have access to good quality water, especially in slums and refugee camps, according to researchers from the National University of Singapore and the University of Glasgow.

NEW ZEALAND ELIMINATES
THE VIRUS

New Zealand has hit the historic milestone of zero active cases, and lifted almost all its coronavirus restrictions. Two of the leading public health experts behind the successful elimination now explain the challenge of maintaining it.

Meanwhile, across the Tasman Sea,

experts chart Australia’s journey in controlling the virus.

- Cautious celebration. New Zealand has successfully eliminated COVID-19, but elimination is not one point in time: it requires ongoing work. Two public health professors from the University of Otago describe five ways the country can protect itself in the long term.

- Asymptomatic cases. Removing coronavirus restrictions in New Zealand increases the chance of a new outbreak to 8%, according to modelling from an interdisciplinary research team. This is because there may be hidden asymptomatic cases that haven’t been uncovered by testing.

- Australia’s success. On the other side of the Tasman, Australia’s response has also been one of the most successful in the world. Yet small outbreaks continue to crop up. Steven Duckett and Anika Stobart from the Grattan Institute explain four factors behind the success, and four ways Australia’s response could have been even better.

- Testing is key. The success of both New Zealand and Australia is supported by a high number of tests per thousand people, according to a researcher from the University of Sydney, who poured over the worldwide data. Bahrain, Qatar, Lithuania and Denmark are also among the countries with the highest rates of testing per thousand people.

THE LATEST ON DRUG TRIALS, SPREAD, CONTACT TRACING

As the world awaits a vaccine that might not arrive, intensive research continues into possible drugs to treat COVID-19. Trials of hydroxychloroquine, the anti-malaria drug spruiked by US President Donald Trump, continue in the face of ongoing controversy.

- Study retracted. One study had previously made global headlines after concluding hydroxychloroquine and the related drug chloroquine were associated with an increased risk of death. But the study has been retracted by prestigious medical journal The Lancet because of concerns over the data. Some clinical trials have been paused, while others continue.

- The history of clinical trials. The concept of clinical trials might be new to many of us, but they have an ancient history. One of the earliest experiments happened almost 1,000 years ago in China, writes Adrian Esterman from the University of South Australia.

- Will it burn out?. The original SARS virus disappeared in 2004. But Connor Bamford, a virologist from Queen’s University Belfast, says COVID-19 is unlikely to do the same because it spreads more easily than SARS. Instead, SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, might become an endemic virus that settles into the human population.

- Contact tracing isn’t new. Contact tracing has been an important tool in controlling COVID-19 in many countries. Two researchers from the University of Glasgow examine the history behind the idea, and how it was used to tackle the bubonic plague 500 years ago.

- Development risks. Pregnant women have experienced greater anxiety and depressive symptoms since the start of the pandemic. This could affect the development of foetuses, writes Berthelot Nicolas from the University of Quebec (in French).

[the writer is Assistant Editor, Health + Medicine, The Conversation Australia]

Tear gas and pepper spray are chemical weapons. So, why can police use them?

SHIREEN DAFT

THECONVERSATION.COM

In the ongoing protests over the killing of George Floyd and the broader issue of racial injustice, we have been bombarded with images of demonstrators being hit with tear gas and pepper spray.

In the US state of Ohio, a 22-year-old protester died two days after being exposed to tear gas and pepper spray. Police also used riot control agents to break up a demonstration near the White House to clear the way for President Donald Trump’s photo op outside a church – a move that prompted a federal lawsuit to be filed by the DC chapter of Black Lives Matter.

The use of riot control agents against protesters is nothing new. Tear gas has been used repeatedly against protesters in Hong Kong, the Arab Springs protests and the Occupy protests, just to name a few major examples.

But now the debate over their use in law enforcement has been reignited. And the fact that toxic chemicals are banned in warfare, but permitted for use against protesters, is at the centre of that debate.

A group of Democratic lawmakers in the US is now trying to prohibit police from using tear gas in such situations, introducing a bill to Congress this week.

WHAT ARE RIOT CONTROL AGENTS?

Tear gas and pepper spray both fall under the wider banner of “riot control agents”. Tear gas usually refers to the chemical compounds known as chloroacetophenone (CN) and chlorobenzylidenemalononitrile (CS). Pepper spray (or oleoresin capsicum) is a weaponised form of the chemical that adds heat to chilli peppers.

Both are toxic chemicals intended to produce a rapid sensory irritation or disabling physical effect, which disappears within a short time.

It is telling the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has described these agents as “poison”. Medical experts have also raised concerns they may increase the spread of COVID-19.

SO ARE THEY CHEMICAL WEAPONS?

The Chemical Weapons Convention, which came into force in 1997 and currently has 193 state parties, places a comprehensive ban of the use of toxic chemicals as a weapon, “for the sake

of humankind”.

It explicitly prohibits the use of riot control agents as a method of warfare.

One significant concern with the use of chemical weapons is they cause unnecessary suffering.

Indeed, in a profile of the head of the US Chemical Warfare Service in the 1920s, writer Theo Knappen described the suffering caused by tear gas as a selling point for the weapon:

“The tear gases appear to be admirably suited to the purpose of isolating the individual from the mob spirit ... he is thrown into a condition in which he can think of nothing but relieving his own distress. Under such conditions an army disintegrates and a mob ceases to be; it becomes a blind stampede to get away from the source of torture.”

Another major concern with chemical weapons dispersed as gases and sprays is they are indiscriminate. The nature of the weapon means it is difficult to target and the effects can be widespread and uncontrolled.

In wartime, tear gas and other agents can result in an escalation in the use of chemical weapons. In the fog of war, a military might believe they are under attack from lethal chemical weapons, and retaliate in kind. It can also be very difficult in wartime to collect evidence of what chemicals were used.

IF THEY ARE BANNED IN WAR, HOW CAN THEY BE USED BY POLICE?

The Chemical Weapons Convention only restricts the use of riot control agents as a method of warfare. The convention includes an express exception for law enforcement, including domestic riot control purposes.

This exception reflects the history and development of the convention.

It was unclear whether riot control agents were prohibited under an earlier chemical and biological weapons treaty, the Geneva Protocol of 1925. The vast majority of nations were of the opinion the Geneva Protocol applied to all toxic weapons.

However, the US was loud in its opposition to this interpretation, stating the law did not apply to chemical weapons with a temporary effect – in other words, riot control agents.

In the 1960s and 70s, the US used riot

control agents (among other chemical weapons) in the Vietnam War, and also used riot control agents against Americans protesting the war at home. A small number of other nations, including Australia and the UK, then changed their opinion on riot control agents, conforming to the US position.

By this time, riot control agents had become a standard part of the law enforcement arsenal across the globe.

As a result, when the Chemical Weapons Convention was being negotiated, a compromise was made: riot control agents would be banned during warfare, but exceptions would be carved out for law enforcement use.

Riot control agents have been promoted as a less-lethal alternative to firearms when police are responding to riots and violent protests.

However, opponents argue they are instead being used as a substitute for non-violent crowd-control methods.

ARE THERE ANY RESTRICTIONS ON THE USE BY POLICE?

This is not to say there are no restrictions on the use of riot control agents in law enforcement under international law.

Any use of force by the police must be legal, necessary and proportionate under the UN’s Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials and its Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials. Police must also offer immediate medical and psychological treatment for any injuries caused by riot control agents.

The International Criminal Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia famously asserted in the 1990s that it is contrary to the basic principles of humanity and commonsense to prohibit weapons in international conflict but not in civil wars. What is inhumane in one, the tribunal said, must be inhumane in the other.

The question, then, is how we can continue to draw a distinction for the use of riot control agents by police, especially when these weapons are being used not to stop violent criminals, but against people exercising their fundamental human right to protest.

[the writer is Lecturer, Macquarie Law School, Macquarie University]

World War II-era mortar shells disposed of in Manipur



IMPHAL, JUN 14 (PTI): Two World War II-era mortar shells were disposed of in Manipur's Churachandpur district on Sunday, around three months after they were found, police said.

Residents of Monglenphai-Tollen village had found one of the 50 mm mortar shells while digging a grave and the other while cleaning a nearby riverbank, they said.

"The discoveries were made around three

months back but the villagers had failed to inform about those to the authorities concerned due to ignorance.

"They had kept the mortar shells in the compound of the residence of a local person. However, when a social activist came to know about it, he informed the police on Sunday," an officer said.

The area was cordoned off and a bomb disposal unit detonated the mortar shells in a

nearby secluded area in a 'controlled explosion', he said.

Several World War II-era explosives have been found in Manipur in the past. The state was witness to intense fighting between Allied troops and the Japanese Army aided by the Indian National Army (INA) in 1944. The Japanese had retreated from Manipur after suffering heavy losses during four months of fighting in the state.

3 more persons recover from COVID-19 in Meghalaya



SHILLONG, JUN 14 (PTI): Three more coronavirus-infected persons have been cured of the disease in Meghalaya, taking the total number of people recovered from the infection to 26 in the state, Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma said on Sunday.

No fresh COVID-19 case has been detected in the state since June 10,

he said.

"3 more persons from South West Garo Hills have recovered after testing negative twice. Total active cases 17.

Total recovered 26," Conrad said in a tweet.

With this, the recovery rate in the state has gone up to nearly 60 per cent, which is more than the national average, a health

department official told PTI.

The state has reported 44 COVID-19 cases so far, out of which one person affected by the contagion has died.

Of the 11 districts in Meghalaya, no COVID-19 case was reported from East Garo Hills, East Jaintia Hills and South West Khasi Hills, the official said.

5 fresh COVID-19 cases in Mizoram; count rises to 112

AIZAWL, JUN 14 (PTI): Five more persons have tested positive for COVID-19 in Mizoram, taking the state's tally to 112 on Sunday, officials said.

Of the new patients, three are from Aizawl district while two are from Siaha. All of them had recently returned to the state from Delhi, they said.

Three of them were housed in quarantine centres while one was placed under home isolation and one was admitted to the state-run Zoram Medical College before testing positive for COVID-19, the state Information and Public Relations Department said.

Of the 112 cases, 111 are active while one

person has recovered, it said, adding 57 patients are males and the rest females.

The highest number of cases has been reported in Lunglei district (45), followed by Aizawl (28), Kolasib (11), Mamit (9), Champhai (5), four each in Siaha and Lawngtlai, three in Saitual, two in Khawzawl and one in Serchhip.

28 people died of drugs abuse in Mizoram this year

AIZAWL, JUN 14 (PTI): At least 28 people, including three females have died of drug abuse in Mizoram this year till June 10, according to the state Excise and Narcotics Department's record.

A total of 1,607 people, including 190 females have died due to substance abuse since 1984 when the first drug-related death due to heroin was reported in Mizoram, as per the record.

The department's record accessed by PTI said that 55 people, including 13 females died due to heroin and other drugs in 2019.

In the department's record, Spasmo-proxyvon or Parvon spas was the main killer drug claiming at least 1,161 lives over the past 36 years while heroin killed 206 people and the rest

240 died due to misuse of multiple drugs.

However, heroin has overtaken Spasmo-proxyvon as the main killer drug since 2015.

There was no report of death due to Spasmo-proxyvon or Parvon spas from 2017, the record said.

Mizoram is sandwiched between Myanmar and Bangladesh, with which it shares about 722 km long international border.

Excise and Narcotics department assistant commissioner Peter Zohmingthanga told PTI that most of the drugs, especially heroin were smuggled from Myanmar.

However, drug supply also comes from Assam, he said.

The official said that the coronavirus induced lockdown has considerably reduced drug supply from outside

the state.

The Excise and Narcotics department has launched massive raids against drugs and alcohol since March this year.

At least 336 people were arrested in drugs and alcohol related cases between March 22 and May 31, according to Zohmingthanga.

Majority of the offenders were released on bond to decongest jail due to the outbreak of novel coronavirus, he said.

He said that different types of drugs and alcohols, including 385.8 grams of heroin, 1.9 kg of ganja (cannabis), 236 tablets of Alprazolam, 19 phials of cough syrup, 5827.8 litres of local made liquor (Rakzu), 447 pots used for brewing liquor, worth lakhs of rupees have been seized so far since the beginning of the lockdown.

Endangered Hog Badger spotted in Tripura for first time

AGARTALA, JUN 14 (PTI):

Three wild Hog Badgers, a rare and endangered wild animal, have been spotted for the first time in Tripura by Forest personnel, officials said on Sunday.

The Hog Badgers were spotted on Saturday and rescued by the forest officials from Salema village in Tripuras North district, about 90 km from here, the officials said.

The animals were treated and kept in Sipahijala sanctuary, about 20 km from here.

"The animals looked stressed and are being treated to overcome any shock. After their full recovery, they might be released in the forest from where they were found," said Chief Wildlife Warden DK Sharma.

"The animal is classified as 'endangered' in IUCN list and was never before spotted in



Tripura. They were recorded in Assam, few other states of NE India and parts of South East Asian countries like Thailand and Cambodia. They were for the first time found in Tripura", Sharma told reporters.

Hog Badgers (Arctonyx collaris) are listed as 'vulnerable' in the IUCN Red List of threatened species as

the species is dwindling fast due to poaching.

"We have never spotted this animal earlier in Tripura," Sarma said.

The three hog badger cubs were rescued from the house of one Vivek Debbarma in Salema village in Kamalpur sub-division, officials said.

"The animals were

first mistaken for pigs for their resemblance, but local residents soon called the Forest personnel. Since they don't come into contact with humans very often, the badgers make easy targets for poachers," officials said.

Hog badgers (Arctonyx collaris) are the largest living

badgers in the world, and are named after their pig-like snouts, which are particularly useful for rooting around.

Found in forested areas throughout Southeast Asia. Being omnivores, they eat anything from insects and tubers to earthworms and even the occasional small animals, officials said.

5 new COVID-19 cases in Nagaland, total rises to 168

KOHEMA, JUN 14 (PTI):

Five more persons tested positive for COVID-19 in Nagaland on Sunday, taking the total number of infections in the state to 168, Health and Family Welfare Minister S Pangnyu said.

Twelve more persons recovered from COVID-19 in the state on Sunday, taking the total number of coronavirus recovered patients to 88.

"5 new cases of COVID-19 +ve have been reported out of 232 samples tested. 3 from Mon QC & 2 from Peren QC," tweeted the Health and Family Welfare minister.

Of the total 168 COVID-19 cases in Nagaland, 80 are active as 88 people have recovered, Health



department officials said.

All the COVID-19 active patients are admitted at different COVID-19 hospitals while the recovered

patients are kept at COVID-19 Care Centres for further observation and monitoring, officials said.

The current recovery rate of COVID-19

patients in Nagaland stands at 52.38 per cent, they said.

Of the total COVID-19 cases in the state, 105 are male and 63 are female.

Dimapur district has reported the highest number of COVID-19 cases with 121 patients, followed by Kohima (29), Mon (9), Tuensang (5) and Peren (4).

Meghalaya extends night curfew till June 22

SHILLONG, JUN 14 (PTI): The Meghalaya government has extended the night curfew till June 22 to contain the coronavirus outbreak, officials said on Sunday.

Restrictions on inter-state movement of people will also continue, exempting only those having permission for medical purposes, they said.

"In view of the prevailing situation regarding COVID-19 in the state, district authorities have promulgated night curfew with effect from June 15 up to June 22 between 9 pm and 5 am each day," a senior government official told PTI.

The night curfew was first imposed along with

the lockdown in March, and is renewed after regular intervals.

The official said the curfew has been imposed as a preventive and mitigation measure in the wake of the coronavirus outbreak.

The order, however, will not apply to security forces and those on essential services duty, the official said.

Those exempted have been asked to strictly comply with all protocols, procedures and other advisories of the government, including social distancing and limiting of field staff to the barest minimum.

The state has recorded 44 COVID-19 cases. While one person died, 26 persons have recovered from the infection, they said.

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Ban on saliva may upset balance between bat and ball in Test cricket, warns Taylor



MELBOURNE, JUN 14 (PTI): Former Australia captain Mark Taylor on Sunday warned that ban on the usage of saliva, to combat the COVID-19 threat, runs the risk of upsetting balance between bat and ball in Test cricket.

The International Cricket Council (ICC) has banned the use of saliva on ball as an interim health safety measure in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic -- a move that has raised concerns about the game becoming even more batsmen friendly.

"I think it is a bit of a concern because I like, particularly in Test matches, to see the ball slightly dominate the bat, it is much better game when Test cricket is played that way," Taylor told 'Channel 9'.

The 55-year-old former opener is concerned about the

fact that no saliva means a delivery would become predictable for a batsman.

"My concern will be that if the players can't shine the ball and the ball does get very straight and very predictable we are going to see more and more runs, more and more high scores in Test match cricket," Taylor said.

"And that is not the best Test match cricket. Test cricket is much better when the score is around 300," he added.

The ICC has also introduced the system of issuing two warnings per innings to players found violating the saliva ban. Any further violation will result in a five-run penalty.

"They have said try and be lenient which I'm sure they will be but eventually one umpire is going to stick his neck out and say 'that's a five run penalty'," Taylor said.

Better planning needed for ICC events: Pathan



MUMBAI, JUN 14 (PTI): India have all the resources but need to plan better going into the big-ticket ICC events, says former all-rounder Irfan Pathan who blamed an unsettled middle order for country's exit from last year's World Cup.

India last won an ICC tournament in 2013, when they lifted the Champions Trophy under the leadership of iconic Mahendra Singh Dhoni.

Since then India have not clinched any ICC Trophy, making a semifinal exit from ODI World Cup, last year.

"We need to make sure that we have better planning going into the ICC trophies, going into the World Cup. If we have better planning, we have all the resources to be a

champion," Pathan, a member of the 2007 T20 World Cup winning Indian team, said on Star Sports show 'Cricket Connected'.

Pathan said India struggled to get a proper playing XI before the ODI World Cup last year as the team made a semifinal exit, losing to New Zealand.

"The only thing lacking is that we did not have a number four batsman just before the World Cup as well. We were struggling with having a proper eleven," Pathan said.

"If you look at the recent 2019 tournament, it was bad planning. We have resources, we have players, we have fitness, we have everything to be a world champion," added Pathan, who played 120 ODIs and 29 Tests.

DAVID HYTNER

LONDON, 14 JUN [THEGUARDIAN]: Most people can pinpoint the moment when it became real, the hot flush of panic when it dawned that coronavirus was not some far-off threat but rather one heading to our doorsteps, quickly, inexorably, hellbent on destruction.

For English football, it came during the week that began with Leicester's 4-0 Premier League drubbing of Aston Villa on Monday 9 March and moved through Liverpool's Champions League elimination at the hands of Atlético Madrid on the Wednesday. What an uncomfortable night that was at Anfield, thousands of diehards wanting to be there but, in their hearts, wondering why they had been allowed. Was it really safe?

In Madrid, parents had been prevented from sending their children to school and elsewhere in Europe, notably Italy, people screamed for England to go inside and turn the key. Still, around 3,000 Madrileños made the trip to Liverpool, many via London. It would be a last, foolhardy act of defiance.

When the Arsenal manager, Mikel Arteta, tested positive the following night, the speed of the unravelling was extraordinary, the mounting anxiety suddenly prompting the inevitable. There would be no football for some time.

In the fear and claustrophobia of lockdown, the simplest pleasures have brought heightened sensations. A walk in the park, a ray of sunshine. Everybody has craved release and football fans have missed their teams. You don't know what you've got till it's gone. The adage touches with precision. So how good will it be to welcome back the Premier League when Aston Villa host Sheffield United on Wednesday at 6pm – the start of a feast of action?

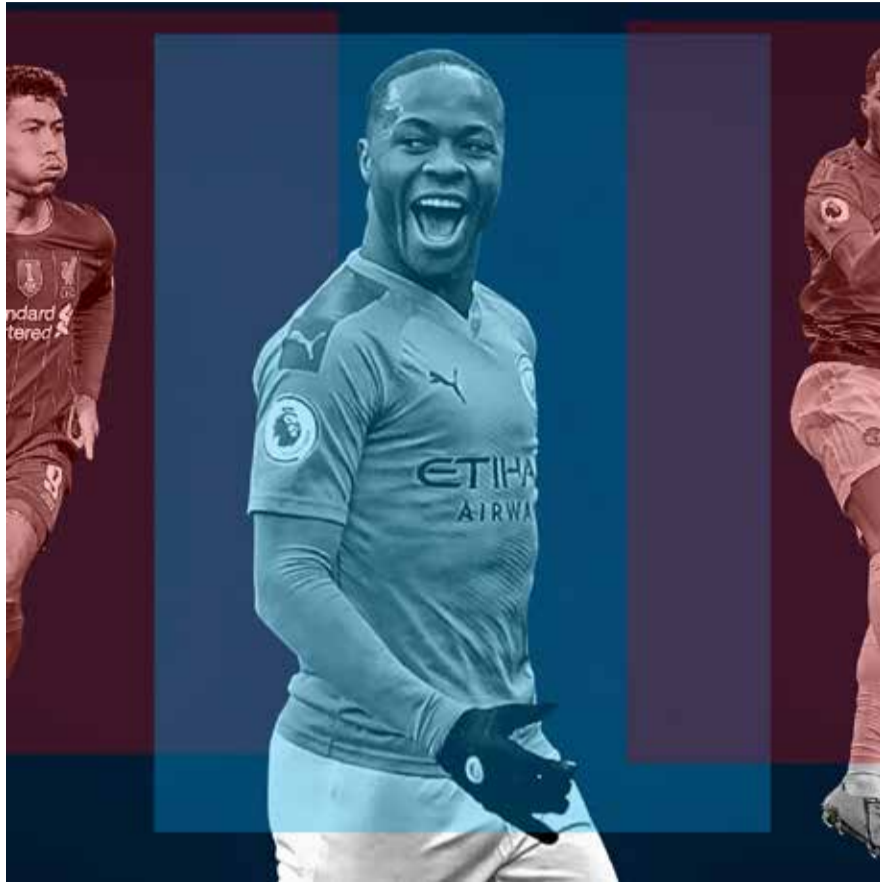
'If I lose fans, that's OK': Baker Mayfield 'absolutely' will kneel during anthem

CLEVELAND, 14 JUN [AP]: Cleveland Browns quarterback Baker Mayfield plans to kneel during the national anthem this upcoming season to support protests of social injustice, police brutality and racism.

In answering a post from a fan on his Instagram account Saturday that pleaded with him not to kneel, Mayfield responded: "Pull your head out. I absolutely am."

Mayfield has been outspoken about the need for more understanding and justice in the nation following the killing of George Floyd, a black man, while in police custody in Minneapolis.

"It's a pivotal time for change," Mayfield said Thursday. "What's being addressed now obviously has been going on for a long time. So now everybody's finally



The Bundesliga has been fun, a little like the group stage of a World Cup. You watch it because it is on and it is nice to discover new players, but has it stirred the passions? There is a difference between following a game as a neutral, however high-quality and entertaining, and watching your team. Only the true fan can feel it. And those people are about to feel it again.

To say the Premier League is coming back with a bang is an understatement. After the longest postponement of competition since the second world war, there will be matches virtually every day, at various time slots, until the end of next month.

It will all be televised with, happily, 33 of the 92 games on free-to-view platforms. If the title is a foregone conclusion, with Liverpool set to win for the first time since 1990, there is much to play for elsewhere. The race for Champions League qualification could include the clubs down to Burnley and Crystal Palace in 10th and 11th – if Manchester City's looming suspension from the competition is upheld next month – while the

bottom six fight to avoid relegation.

In a changed world, it will be a changed game and it is impossible to dress up the lack of fans inside stadiums as anything other than wholly unsatisfactory. The atmosphere at matches is better in other European countries, most notably Turkey and Greece, but, as Arsène Wenger notes, there is no place like England for the way that supporters "respond to what's happening on the pitch".

All players have played behind closed doors or in front of sparse crowds. It happens in pre-season or sometimes at clubs during international breaks. Last season, there was a training ground game between England's seniors and the under-21s at St George's Park. It will also take players back to their days in the reserves.

But there is a difference between those occasions and the high stakes of a Premier League showdown. Although the motivation must come primarily from within, players do feed off the energy of a crowd. "The adrenaline is from the fans," says Mark Noble, the West Ham captain.

No home support equals no home advantage. That is the theory and it has been interesting to see the high number of away wins in the Bundesliga. Home comforts do have to be considered: factors such as familiarity with the facilities, the dimensions of the pitch, the surface, the sight lines. Travel time is also cut down. But the biggest thing is the noise from the crowd, how they can lift the home players and intimidate the visitors, not to mention putting pressure on the referee.

There is an argument that the absence of fans brings a purity to the technical contest, getting us closer to the idea that the better team will win, although that is to neglect mentality – one of the game's key and most fascinating areas.

The spectacle will take some getting used to and it will certainly be a weird moment when Jordan Henderson hoists aloft the championship trophy to a backdrop of empty plastic seats. It must be added that nothing ought to detract from Liverpool's achievement this season. They have been thrilling and remorseless.

But in testing times

it often comes down to the least-bad solutions, of best mitigating the risks and what has been decided is better than no solution at all, to the industry remaining in cold storage and possibly going under as nothing comes in and costs continue to go out. As it is, the damage to clubs has been severe, particularly to those further down the pyramid.

Make no mistake, money has driven the Premier League restart. The sums are stark. Complete the season and lose at least £330m in rebates to broadcasters unhappy at the altered delivery of the product; do not complete it and lose £762m to them.

Then, there has been the fear that clubs who felt wronged by curtailment – most likely the relegated ones or those denied promotion from the Championship – would seek recourse via the courts and this, again, comes back to money.

Preserving the integrity of the competition by finishing it is a wholesome thought. Preserving the integrity of various bank accounts is more compelling. It is easy to get upset by the naked capitalism but the main thing for the league to show has been that it would not affect the public's health and safety – in other words, it would not deny tests and resources to the NHS and other frontline workers. It has managed to do this. Its twice-weekly testing programme is independent.

It has been a journey, taking in numerous conference calls and differences of opinion. There was the back-and-forth over player wage-cuts or deferrals, which was clumsily pressed by the league and compounded by "the thing with the politician". Matt Hancock, the health secretary, thought "the first thing Premier League footballers can do is make a contribution, take a pay cut and play their part".

The Reel Dhoni: Cricket was a theme in Sushant's life

NEW DELHI, JUN 14 (PTI): There was a part of Mahendra Singh Dhoni in Sushant Singh Rajput. It made the World Cup-winning former Indian captain's 'Untold Story' a guilty indulgence for masses and the actor, who played the titular role, a household name in his short and eventful career.

He gave everyone a sneak peek into Dhoni's life. He got that gait, the mannerism and the helicopter shot so perfectly, that he became Dhoni. He was believable.

"Dhoni after watching me play had said that Sushant can easily play Ranji Trophy," Sushant had said with a wide grin during promotion of his last released film 'Chhichhore', where cricket was a part of the climax.

In fact, Digvijay Deshmukh, who played the role of young Ali in Abhishek Kapoor's 'Kai Po Che' is still not able to fathom that the actor is no more.

"I don't know what to say," Digvijay said in a choked voice from his Pune residence.

"Sushant bhaiya was the nicest of human

or romancing his wife Sakshi, Sushant was the gateway to the Dhoni no one knew before or never knew after.

He gave everyone a sneak peek into Dhoni's life.

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"Sushant bhaiya was the nicest of human

It went down badly with the players – why always them? – but at least the government would later show there were no hard feelings when it urged them to return to the field for national morale.

The self-interest of the clubs has been an inevitable feature, whether over the blocking of police proposals for neutral venues or the perception that some wanted various concessions and others different ones in direct correlation to their league position. Hence the restarters versus the null-and-voiders; the supporters of the status quo versus the scrappers of relegation.

The players have needed to be reassured over their safety and they have been won over. The back-to-play protocols have been robust and José Mourinho said he and his Tottenham squad could not "ask for more than the authorities are giving us, which is maximum security". One executive at a major club told his players there were 71 Covid-19 deaths in March and April for men aged 15-34 and 81% of those had underlying health conditions. So, at the peak of the pandemic, according to his statistics, there were 13 deaths among men of equivalent age and health to a footballer.

Agaggle of covidiot in the game have attracted negative attention for lockdown breaches but the charitable efforts of the vast majority of managers and players have been really something, showing humility and generosity, and helping to remind people these superstars are simply normal lads.

Barriers have been broken down, the distance between player and fan does seem shorter and the thought, on the eve of the big return, is that respect can endure and the extremes of tribalism can soften.

The Premier League has not always been easy to love. Right now, it represents optimism.

beings. Six eventful months of my life was shooting for Kai Po Che where he played the role of my coach (Ishaan). Trust me he was a good cricketer.

"We played so much cricket off camera. I was a kid and he would keep me entertained," Digvijay, who is now a professional cricketer and will play in IPL for Mumbai Indians, remembered.

Digvijay remembers his last conversation good eight years back after the shoot got over.

"Sushant bhaiyya asked me what would I like to become when I grow up. I told him just like in film, I would become a cricketer.

"Maine kahaan tha jab cricket mein kuch karoonga uske baad hi aake aapse miloonga. Since MI picked me at IPL auctions, I thought once IPL starts and I am in Mumbai, I will go and meet him. That won't happen anymore," Digvijay wasn't able to gather his thoughts beyond this.

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S Korea urges North to uphold deals amid rising animosities

SEOUL, JUN 14 (AP): South Korea on Sunday convened an emergency security meeting and urged North Korea to uphold reconciliation agreements, hours after the North threatened to demolish a liaison office and take military action against its rival.

North Korea has recently abruptly resumed a fiery rhetoric against its southern neighbor, accusing it of failing to prevent activists from launching propaganda leaflets across their border.

Some experts say North Korea is expressing its deep frustration over Seoul's failure to revive lucrative joint economic projects and over a lack of progress in nuclear diplomacy with Washington.

South Korea's national security director, Chung Eui-yong, held an emergency video conference with ministers in charge of security and military generals on Sunday morning to discuss the latest situation on the Korean Peninsula and the government's possible steps, the presidential Blue House said in a



statement.

The Unification Ministry, which handles relations with North Korea, later issued a statement saying that both Koreas must strive to abide by all agreements they have reached. It said the South Korean government views the current situation as grave.

On Saturday night, Kim Yo Jong, the influential sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, warned that Seoul will soon witness a tragic scene of the useless North-South liaison office (in North Korea) being completely collapsed.

She also said she would leave to North Korea's military the right to take the next step of retaliation against South Korea.

North Korea earlier suspended communication lines with South Korea and threatened to nullify 2018 agreements that led the Koreas to halt firing exercises, remove some land mines and tear down guard posts in front-line areas.

Some observers say the end of the 2018 deals could allow North Korea to send ships across the disputed sea boundary, float down mines on a border river or take other provocative steps at the border area.

But it's still unclear if the North would go ahead with its threat to destroy the liaison office, which was built at a North Korean border town following a 2018 summit between Kim Jong Un and South Korean President Moon

Jae-in.

Such a move could deepen anti-Pyongyang sentiments make it difficult for the North to restore ties with South Korea when needed.

North Korea may be deliberately building up tensions to bolster its internal unity and pressure the United States to do something to resume the nuclear talks that have largely been stalled for more than a year, some experts say.

They say North Korea desperately needs sanctions relief as its economy had likely worsened in the face of harsh U.S.-led sanctions and the coronavirus pandemic that forced it to close its border with China, its biggest trading partner.

On the two-year anniversary of the first summit between Kim Jong Un and President Donald Trump, North Korean Foreign Minister Ri Son Gwon said Friday that the North would never again gift Trump with high-profile meetings he could boast as foreign policy achievements unless it gets something substantial in return.

French trader who bet the house on oil shock and won

French trader and specialist oil hedge fund manager Pierre Andurand saw it coming from early February.

His call -- and a lucrative one at that -- was that there would be a massive slump in oil prices, to the point of unprecedented negative prices for 'black gold'.

"There is no limit to the drop in prices ... negative prices are possible," the founder of Andurand Capital posted to Twitter on April 20.

Hours later the price of a WTI barrel slid into negative territory for the first time, having stood at \$60 in New York a few short weeks earlier, dragging Brent crude down in its wake.

Simultaneously, the Andurand Capital fund was reaping returns of more than 150 percent for having correctly second-guessed the market as early as February -- before the coronavirus-induced global panic saw air traffic grind to a virtual halt along with much economic activity.

It was a spectacular coup for the former Goldman Sachs trader Andurand, after he made a market bet diametrically opposed to the one most traders had at the start of the year, when conventional

wisdom said the oil price would take off.

- Detailed analysis -

Bloomberg recently named his firm as one of the top dozen to emerge strongest from the coronavirus crisis, in a study that found three quarters of 1,500 funds assessed had lost money on markets hit by the pandemic.

"When I feel there is a big change in terms of supply and demand I analyse it in detail and I try to quantify its impact on prices," Andurand, a 20-year finance veteran, told AFP.

"Very soon" he became convinced COVID-19 would prove "hard to stop" and that there was "a strong probability of confinement measures the world over".

The 43-year-old anticipated the chain reaction that broke over the oil market as demand collapsed, leading to giant stock surpluses -- catastrophic for producers reduced to paying buyers to take supplies off their hands.

Andurand then bet on prices going back up slightly after output cutbacks.

Andurand Capital manages around \$800 million across varying risk levels.

And this year was not the first time that the Frenchman had beaten the house on oil.

He did the same back in the 2008 financial crisis as his newly launched fund pulled off a 209.5-percent gain, followed by another 55 percent the following year.

He also made strong gains in 2014 when oil prices halved.

- 'Competitive sport' - It wasn't all plain sailing.

In 2012, months before he would close his first fund, things went sour -- as they would again in 2018 and 2019. In those years, Andurand booked losses of between 15 and 20 percent.

The son of civil servants, Andurand, from the southern town of Aix, spent part of his childhood on Reunion Island before returning to mainland France where he swam for his country's junior squad.

He would later take on two former Olympic swimmers -- compatriot Clement Lefert and South Africa's Cameron van der Burgh -- as traders.

Armed with qualifications in applied mathematics and then finance from the HEC international business school in Paris, Andurand

Republican congressman who officiated gay wedding loses primary

LYNCHBURG (US), JUN 14 (AP): A freshman Virginia Republican congressman who angered social conservatives in his district when he officiated a gay wedding lost his party's nomination.

US Representative Denver Riggleman lost a GOP convention Saturday that was done via drive-thru because of the coronavirus pandemic. He was defeated by Bob Good, a former official in the athletics department at Liberty University.

While the convention

ended at 7 p.m., the vote tally was not announced until after 1 a.m. Sunday. Good said he won 58% of the vote, news outlets reported, and 5th District Republican Committee Chair Melvin Adams said 2,537 of the more than 3,500 registered delegates voted.

Riggleman, a member of the conservative House Freedom Caucus, upset many Republicans in his district last summer when he officiated the wedding of two male campaign aides.

The convention was held at a Lynchburg-area church near Good's home and was the only place delegates could cast a ballot in a district that stretches from northern Virginia to the North Carolina border.

Riggleman has said a small coterie of Republican insiders were trying to rig the contest against him forcing the nomination process to be decided with a convention instead of a primary. Conventions favor more conservative candidates and have been

used for years by Virginia Republicans to block moderate Republicans from winning office.

Voting irregularities and ballot stuffing has been reported in multiple counties in the #VA05. Voter fraud has been a hallmark of this nomination process and I will not stand for it, Riggleman tweeted a little over an hour before results were announced. @VA_GOP needs to reevaluate their priorities. We are evaluating all our options at this time.

Atlanta police chief resigns after officer kills black man

The police chief in the US city of Atlanta resigned after an officer fatally shot a black man during an arrest, the mayor said Saturday, with the new killing injecting fresh anger into protests against racism and police brutality.

Images on local media showed hundreds of protesters in the streets on Saturday and flames engulfing a Wendy's restaurant where 27-year-old Rayshard Brooks was killed.

The officer who shot Brooks was dismissed Saturday and identified by Atlanta police as Garrett Rolfe. The second officer was placed on administrative duty, according to ABC News.

In televised comments made earlier in the day, Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms said that Shields, with more than two decades of experience in the force, "has offered to immediately step aside as police chief."

Demonstrators were out on the streets before night fell Saturday, with one group blocking a highway near the

Wendy's restaurant and facing off with police.

Dozens of protesters were arrested, CNN quoted the Atlanta police as saying.

The unrest comes as the US faces a historic reckoning on systemic racism, with mass civil unrest ignited by the May 25 killing of another African-American man, George Floyd, while in police custody.

Floyd died after a white Minneapolis police officer knelt on his neck for nearly nine minutes.

Protests which spread first around the country then the globe, have forced a conversation on the legacies of slavery, colonialism and white violence against people of color, as well as the militarization of police in America.

Georgia has been hit hard by these protests. A black man, Ahmaud Arbery, was killed in the state's southwest by one of three white men who chased him down in pickup trucks while he was out jogging in February.

- 'Why kill him?' -

Wendy's employees called police on Friday night to complain that Brooks was asleep in his car and blocking other customers on the premises, an official report said.

He failed a sobriety test and resisted when police tried to arrest him, the Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI) said.

Surveillance video showed "that during a physical struggle with officers, Brooks obtained one of the officer's Tasers and began to flee from the scene," the report continued.

Officers pursued Brooks on foot and during the chase, Brooks turned and pointed the Taser at the officer. The officer fired his weapon, striking Brooks," it said.

Brooks was taken to hospital but died after surgery, it said, adding that one officer was injured.

An attorney acting for the dead man's family said disproportionate force was used in the confrontation.

"In Georgia a Taser is not a deadly weapon

-- that's the law," L. Chris Stewart told reporters.

"Support came, in I think two minutes. He would have been boxed in and trapped. Why did you have to kill him?"

"(The officer) had other options than shooting a man in the back."

Brooks has four children, Stewart added, and had celebrated the birthday of his eight-year-old girl earlier on Friday.

His death is the 48th shooting involving an officer that the GBI has been asked to investigate this year, according to local newspaper the Atlanta Journal-Constitution. Fifteen of those incidents were fatal.

"I watched this on the internet, from the whole George Floyd situation to coming together like we're doing," said Brooks' cousin, Decatur Redd, clearly shaken.

"The most hurtful thing for me is to watch the video, wake up and watch the video," he added. "And I got two little boys, they see the same video."

Doge's Palace reopens as tourists flock back to Venice

After three months of empty squares and alleys and gondoliers stranded on dry land, Venice sprang back to life on Saturday as tourists flocked back to the city for the reopening of the Doge's Palace.

Hundreds of Italians and foreigners lined up for more than 300 metres (yards) in Saint Mark's Square, in front of the Ducal Palace.

A local news agency said a thousand internet bookings had been recorded for the reopening day.

"There were people queuing at 8:00 am this morning and, to be honest, it's just what we were hoping for," Maria Cristina Gribaudo,

president of the Venice Civic Museums Foundation, told AFP.

"It's a very strong emotion, like the first day of school," she explained.

Inside the palace, masks are compulsory, numerous signs encourage people to "keep their distance" and all the rooms are controlled to avoid overcrowding.

After months without tourists Saturday marked a clear change, with Venice bustling much as it would do on any ordinary spring weekend.

Souvenir shops have reappeared in Saint Mark's Square and almost all of the

shops and restaurants -- including the historic Cafe Florian -- have reopened.

Around the Rialto Canal, visitors pushed their way through the tight alleys, and the famous gondolas and vaporetti, the city's water buses, were again loaded with passengers and going about their business on the canals.

"If the most spoken language is Italian, there are many Germans and, surprisingly, French," Ansa reported.

"We hope to have slow tourism in the future," said Gabriella Belli, director of the Foundation for the civic museums of Venice.

"This does not mean less tourism, it means better organised tourism."

The COVID-19 epidemic has killed more than 34,000 in Italy but as the number of new cases steadily falls so the country continues the process of deconfinement which began last month.

The country's many monuments, famous buildings, museums and emblematic places have almost all reopened, including St Peter's Basilica in Rome, the site of Pompeii, the leaning Tower of Pisa, and the cathedrals of Florence and Milan.

In a bid to retrieve the summer tourist season, Italy reopened its borders on June 3.

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SummitTIMES

Popular Bollywood Actor Sushant Singh Rajput, 34, Found Dead

Police and Indian media reports say popular Bollywood actor Sushant Singh Rajput has been found dead at his Mumbai residence.

Mumbai (AP) — Popular Bollywood actor Sushant Singh Rajput was found dead at his Mumbai residence on Sunday, police and Indian media reports said.

Initial reports citing police said the 34-year-old actor was found hanging in his apartment in suburban Bandra.

Mumbai police spokesperson Pranaya Ashok confirmed the death and said details were being investigated.

Rajput, who started as a TV actor, made his Bollywood debut in 2013 with director Abhishek Kapoor in “Kai Po Che,” based on the book by Chetan Bhagat.

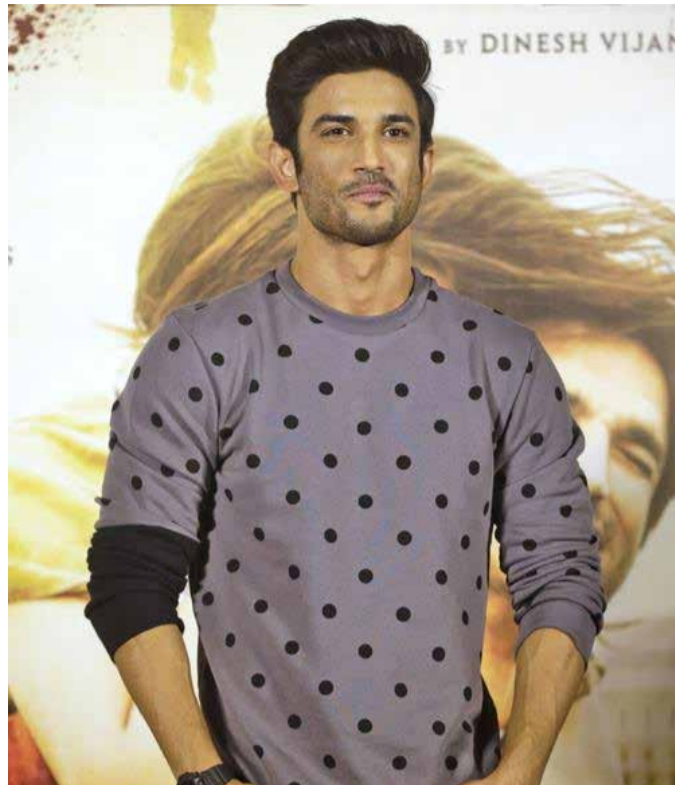
Social media was flooded with condolences for the actor, with many reacting to the news with disbelief.

“Sushant Singh Rajput...a bright young actor gone too soon,” Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted. “He excelled on TV and in films. His rise in the world of entertainment inspired many and he leaves behind several memorable performances. Shocked by his passing away. My thoughts are with his family and fans. Om Shanti.”

Bollywood star Akshay Kumar wrote on Twitter, “Honestly this news has left me shocked and speechless.”

“I can’t believe this at all... it’s shocking... a beautiful actor and a good friend... it’s disheartening,” actor Nawazuddin Siddiqui tweeted.

Rajput played former Indian cricket team captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni in the 2016 film “M.S. Dhoni: The Untold Story.” Among his other movies are “Kedarnath, Sonchiriyaa” (Golden Bird) and “Raabta” (Connection).



He was last seen in the 2019 Netflix film “Drive.”

Mumbai, India’s financial hub and home to Bollywood, has been grappling with the coronavirus pandemic, which has brought the business of entertainment to a complete halt in the country.

Amitabh Bachchan remembers Rishi Kapoor: No one could lip-sync like him

MUMBAI, JUN 14 (PTI): Megastar Amitabh Bachchan on Sunday remembered late actor Rishi Kapoor’s passion for cinema, saying nobody could match the genuineness his friend had while lip-syncing to a song.

Kapoor passed away on April 30 aged 67 after a two year long battle with leukemia.

“No one but no one could lip-sync a song as perfectly as Rishi Kapoor.. just look at the passion in his expression. Incredible, even at this age and at an event the genuineness is simply unforgettable, Bachchan wrote on Twitter alongside a photograph of Kapoor singing and dancing with filmmaker Karan Johar and actor Abhishek Bachchan.

The 77-year-old actor and Kapoor have worked in several films together, including “Kabhie Kabhie”, “Amar Akbar Anthony”, “Naseeb”, “Coolie”, “Ajooba” and 102 Not Out .

‘Da 5 Bloods’ coming out at the right time: Spike Lee

LOS ANGELES, JUN 14 (PTI): Filmmaker Spike Lee believes his new feature “Da 5 Bloods” is a timely piece of art as the whole world has started to address the racial issues in the wake of George Floyd’s death.

The film, which is scheduled to premiere on Netflix on Friday, follows four Black veterans as they return to Vietnam to recover the body of their fallen leader (Chadwick Boseman) and the gold they discovered and buried decades ago.

Along the way, the heroes battle forces of humanity and nature while confronted by the lasting ravages of the immorality of the Vietnam War.

The movie makes its debut at a time when the US is witnessing widespread protests since the death of George Floyd, a 46-year-old black man who died after a white Minneapolis police officer pressed his knee into his neck for several minutes.

“I cannot take any credit for this. The film was shot when it was shot; it was ready to come out when it was ready to come out. And then the world changed for everybody,” Lee told Variety in an interview.

“When something is repeated all the time it becomes a cliché but that doesn’t mean it’s not the truth. And the truth I’m talking about is timing is everything.



This film’s coming out at the right time for the world we live in,” he added.

Lee, who won an Oscar for his last directorial “BlackKkklansman”, said the younger generation knows nothing about the Vietnam War as the older people didn’t bother to tell them about it.

“I come from a long line of educators. And as an educator, I can’t be one of these people saying that the young generation is ignorant because they will know something. If the younger generation doesn’t know something, it’s because the older generation did not teach them and when I say younger generation, I mean Black, white, brown,

everybody,” Lee said.

“But I’m guessing they never heard of Crispus Attucks (so) I’m going to show you two paintings of what he looks like and also a painting of where he was killed. Crispus Attucks was the first person to die for the United States of America at the Boston Massacre during the American Revolutionary War. I wasn’t taught that; I know they’re not being taught that,” he added.

“Da 5 Bloods” also features Delroy Lindo, Jonathan Majors, Clarke Peters, Norm Lewis, Isiah Whitlock Jr, Melanie Thierry, Paul Walter Hauser, Jasper Paakkonen and Jean Reno.



INKED UP! Singer, Machine Gun Kelly showed off his many tattoos while going for a shirtless motorcycle ride in Beverly Hills.

It’s high time to take the brave step: Ali Abbas on his action film with Katrina

MUMBAI, JUN 14 (PTI): Filmmaker Ali Abbas Zafar, who is gearing up to start work on his “stylised” action film with Bollywood star Katrina Kaif in the lead, believes a female-led actioner was long overdue in the Hindi film industry.

The director said it was high time somebody in Bollywood took the brave step to invest in an action movie fronted by a female actor.

“I had a story and I was excited about it. When the script came out I felt this should be made. I shared it with Katrina and she liked it. She is a part of the film.

It is high time we have a film that is mounted with a woman with international scale of action and storytelling. Somebody had to take the brave step. It is designed like a franchise, but let’s see (how it goes),” Ali told PTI.

Katrina and the filmmaker have previously collaborated on his directorial debut Mere Brother Ki Dulhan and blockbusters Tiger Zinda Hai and Bharat .

Ali said the film is currently in the pre-production stage and the team plans to roll once the situation is safe for everyone to return to the sets amid the coronavirus pandemic.

“We will have to wait and watch. We will take precautions and go back to work but only when everything is fine. We will have to work out a proper schedule.

The director revealed the team is already in talks with the authorities of a couple of countries to schedule the international shoot.

“The film is set in India. There is a foreign location in the film. We will get some clarity when international flights start functioning again,” he added.

Ali said the project will be officially announced after its title and complete cast is locked.

ARIES:

Repeat after me, Aries: I am not a pushover. You may feel like your beliefs are being challenged. But you don’t have to do anything you don’t resonate with or succumb to somebody else’s unrealistic demands. Call your power back to you and stand up for what you believe in. Trust that those who truly care for you will never weigh you down with unrealistic expectations.

TAURUS:

You’ve never thought of yourself as the outdoorsy kind. I mean, why would you climb a hill in dirty trainers when you can lounge in the comfort of your home dressed in Insta-appropriate attire? But your time indoors has made you value Mother Nature’s bounty so much more. This weekend, you’re in the mood to stop and smell the rose (literally), walk barefoot on the grass, and feel the wind against your skin. The cards are encouraging you to embrace the tree-hugging even if your neighbours think you’re completely crazy.

GEMINI:

Logic is cool, but have you ever listened to your intuition? “And above all, watch with glittering eyes the whole world around you because the

greatest secrets are always hidden in the most unlikely places. Those who don’t believe in magic will never find it.” Casually dropping Roald Dahl’s most celebrated quote as a reminder of the magic that surrounds you at this moment. Allow yourself to receive the loving guidance that’s coming through from your angels and guides. The words of encouragement they’re whispering will help reinstate your belief in yourself and the chosen path.

CANCER:

There are times when we grab life by the horns and then there are times when we step into the role of the observer and put some distance between ourselves and our creations. Think of this as a review period. Actively disengage from the things you’ve been worrying about and trust that the answers you seek will come to you when you find stillness. The new moon in your sign (June 21, or the day of the summer solstice, to be precise) will prove to be a major reset for you on a deep level. So allow yourself to release what no longer serves you.

LEO:

Sometimes, we become so obsessed with what we’re trying to manifest, we believe there is only one way out

of the maze. Could your tunnel vision be the reason you’re feeling limited? Something to think about, Leo. It may seem like things are falling apart, but the truth is, there’s a lot being realigned for you behind the scenes. So embrace the qualities of trust and surrender. A beautiful affirmation by Louise Hay to get you through this period of uncertainty, “I feel safe in the rhythm and flow of ever-changing life.”

VIRGO:

While clairvoyance (the metaphysical ability to ‘see’) and clairaudience (the metaphysical ability to ‘hear’) get written and spoken about, clairsentience is often ignored. Have you ever walked into a room where everything is seemingly perfect and just felt the energy of discord hanging around or listened to a person say, “I’m fine, thanks” and known something is terribly wrong? That niggling feeling you feel in the pit of your stomach is exactly what we’re talking about. T

LIBRA:

Today you’re being asked to tap into the power of empathy and hold space for your tribe in this time of uncertainty. Maybe you’ll just hear them without any judgements or biases. Maybe you’ll offer your two

cents. Maybe you’ll share an anecdote from your own life when you were struggling with the same challenges.

SCORPIO:

Love is not the same as longing, Scorpio. Instead of playing victim to your circumstances, take the power back in your hands. This is your script, after all! Coupled Plutonians could be going through a period of emotional turmoil. Release the need to be understood, and with it, the unrealistic expectations that have been weighing you down.

SAGITTARIUS:

What do you want to be remembered for, Sagittarius? What is the legacy you want to leave behind? Now is not the time to play it safe or small. Reflect upon what it is that sets your soul on fire, and start working towards the given goal. It’s easy to give into the illusion that following the path of passion won’t put money in your bank.

CAPRICORN:

It’s a time for a quick body scan, Capricorn. Close your eyes and examine your physical vessel with the help of your internal gaze. Do you notice the presence of any blocks or is the energy flowing freely? What about the emotional landscape? Could the presence of anger, hate, resentment,

insecurity or jealousy be preventing the movement of good chi? It’s time to breathe it all out. It’s time to transmute the heavy energies.

AQUARIUS:

What if our ideas are not random, Aquarius? What if we are being guided by a force larger than ourselves? Listen to the voice in your head that’s telling you take a risk. Everything you need to know about ‘the plan’ will reveal itself once you commit to the path. Writing and communication may also be big themes for some of you. Forget about the rulebook as you allow yourself to express what’s coming through. You’re here to be a messenger of new and unique ideas, not pander to the expectations others have of you.

PISCES:

Why are we so obsessed with to-do lists? Life is not a productivity test. Get off the treadmill and listen to what your body is telling you. Slowing down has been the collective message for some time now. Given that we are in retrograde season, you may find that you’re feeling rather sensitive to the energies around you. Be mindful of who you are giving your energy to and what you are letting into your space. Self-care is more important than ever before.