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SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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Bengal logs record 3,591 COVID cases, 62 deaths

KOLKATA, OCT 10 (PTI): The COVID-19 tally in West Bengal mounted to 2,91,194 on Saturday after the state reported the highest single-day spike of 3,591 fresh cases, the health department said in a bulletin.

The death toll rose to 5,563 after 62 more people succumbed to the disease.

The bulletin also said that 3,032 patients were cured of the infection in the last 24 hours and the discharge rate is now 87.86 per cent.

The state now has 29,793 active cases.

Since Friday, 42,855 samples were tested for COVID-19 in the state.

TN woman Dalit panchayat chief humiliated, two arrested

CUDDALORE (TN), OCT 10 (PTI): A woman Dalit panchayat president in the district was allegedly humiliated by the vice president, who did not allow her to sit on a chair at meetings or hoist the national flag, drawing widespread condemnation from political parties.

Police are on the lookout for the vice president Mohan Raj, while suspended panchayat secretary Sinduja and a ward member R Sugumar have been arrested, a senior police official told PTI, adding the latter has been held for offences including intimidation.

The alleged disgraceful event that led to an outrage, came to light after a photograph of S Rajeswari, president of Therku Thittavillage under Mel Buvanagiri Panchayat Union sitting on the floor at a meeting and others on chairs went viral in the social media, prompting authorities to swing into action.

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SUMMIT REPORT

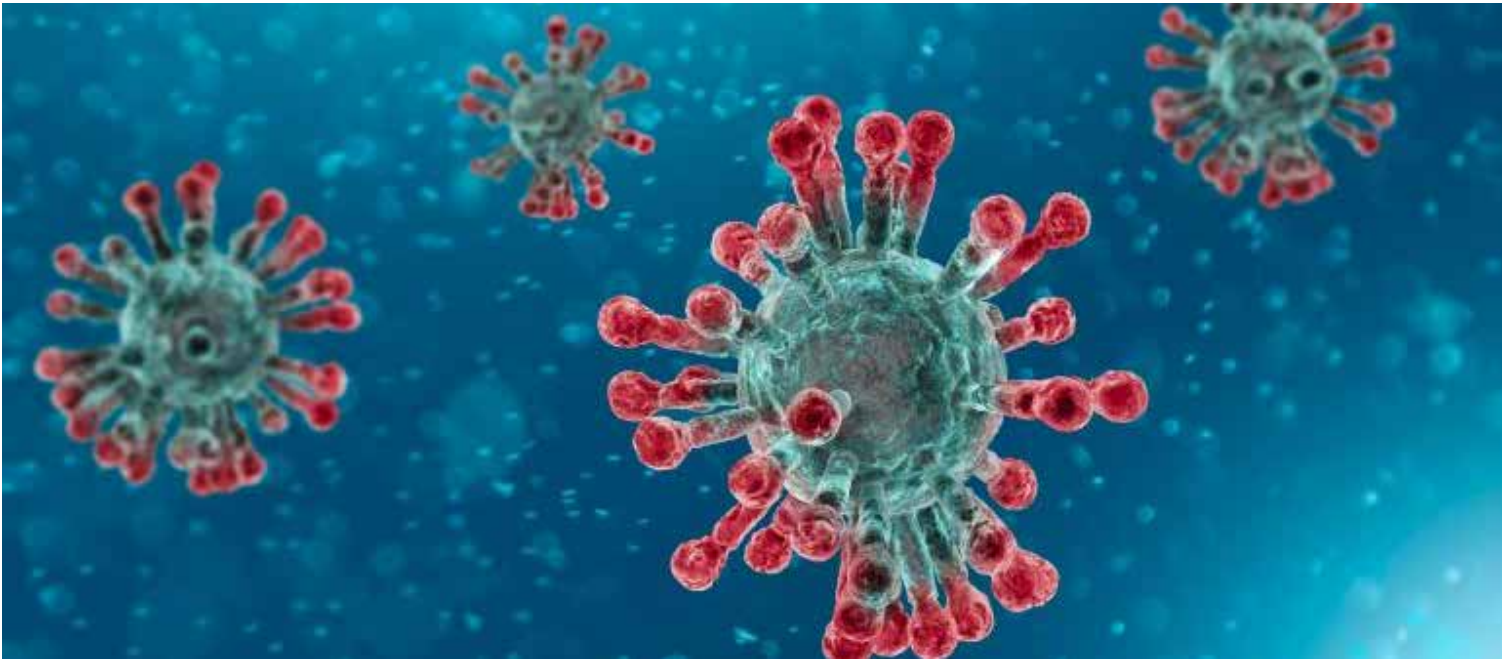
GANGTOK, 10 OCT:

A 71-year-old male from Chisopani near Singtam passed away at around 4:15 PM on Friday evening at STNM Hospital taking Sikkim's COVID death toll to 55.

In the daily health bulletin on Saturday, Health Department State IEC Officer, Sonam G Bhutia mentioned that after testing positive for COVID-19 the patient was admitted in the COVID ward of STNM hospital on 27 August and following some complications he was shifted to the ICU facility.

The patient was in the hospital for long time due to his liver problem, Mr Bhutia informed further adding that the patient died last evening due to severe pneumonitis and respiratory distress. His death is being counted as a COVID death with comorbidities.

In the meantime, the



State tally of confirmed cases of COVID-19 has increased to 3321 with 43 fresh cases of novel coronavirus reported in the last 24 hours. Meanwhile, 36 more COVID-19 patients were discharged from isolation facilities on Friday, which takes the number of discharged patients of

COVID-19 so far to 2735 in the State.

There are now 450 active cases of novel coronavirus in the State, in which six are currently in the ICU facility.

Thirty-three [33] samples of 237 returned positive for COVID-19 in RT-PCR testing at VRD Lab in STNM Hospital on

Friday, while one person was found COVID-19 positive in TrueNat testing of seven samples. Another nine samples reported positive for COVID-19 in rapid antigen testing of 55 samples.

While giving the break-up of new cases reported from in and around Gangtok, Mr Bhutia

informed that one person from Arithang, two from below Paljor Stadium in Lower Sichey, one from Tibet Road, one from GREF camp at Phengla, one from Assam Lingzey, one from Development Area, one from the containment zone in DPH below old STNM hospital, one from

Greendale School road in Tadong, one from below Hospital Dara and one from near Tadong senior secondary school, one from an quarantine facility, one from near helipad in Burtuk, two from below Police barrack near Paljor Stadium were found positive for COVID-19.

Likewise, one person from Gairi Gaon in Rhenock, one from Pacheykhani, six from Rhenock, five from Singtam Bazaar [including one Health Staff], one from Adarsh Gaon in Singtam and three from Rangpo and one from Legship in West Sikkim also tested COVID-19 positive in RT-PCR testing, he said. He mentioned that one person from the containment zone in Metro Point also reported positive for COVID-19 in TrueNat testing.

Mr Bhutia stated that samples of one person from 6th Mile Tadong, one from Namnang, one from the government quarter at Deorali and one from near Dikchu School at Dikchu-Rakdang and one from Thangsing in South Sikkim and one from Sawney in West Pendim returned positive for COVID-19 in RAT.

RBI appeals to Supreme Court to allow NPA classification

MUMBAI, 10 OCT [REUTERS]: The Reserve Bank of India has appealed to the country's top court to let banks classify loans as nonperforming, saying a ban imposed to help borrowers in the COVID-19 pandemic could greatly harm the nation's financial system.

The central bank, in a filing to the Supreme Court late on Friday, warned that failure to immediately lift an interim stay on banks classifying any loan as a non-performing asset (NPA) would also undermine the central bank's regulatory mandate.

The court granted the stay last month, responding to a plea filed by an Indian optician, later joined by a wide range of

borrowers whose income or revenue was hit by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The court is set to rule on the matter on Tuesday. The ruling could have far-reaching consequences not only for millions of borrowers, but also for banks and the country, as state-run banks dominate the sector.

To help borrowers weather pandemic-related stress, the RBI has let banks offer a moratorium on loan payments for up to six months and permitted a one-time restructuring of accounts.

The RBI's measures ensured that accounts that were standard prior to the implementation of the nationwide lockdown in late March, would not

be classified as NPAs if the borrowers made use of the moratorium, which allowed repayments to be delayed until the end of August but with the loans continuing to accrue interest.

The central bank's appeal followed a request by the court for further details from the RBI and government on their plans to help the borrowers.

The RBI responded by detailing the wide range of measures it has put in place to address stress in various sectors. It warned against any further leeway.

"Every regulatory forbearance has its trade-offs in terms of adverse incentives and unintended

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India reports 73,272 new coronavirus cases, 926 fresh fatalities

NEW DELHI, OCT 10 (PTI):

India reported 73,272 new coronavirus cases, taking the overall caseload to 69,79,423, while 59,88,822 people have recuperated so far, pushing the recovery rate to 85.81 percent, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated Saturday.

The death toll due to COVID-19 climbed to 1,07,416 with 926 people succumbing to the disease in a span of 24 hours, the data updated at 8 am showed.

For the second day in a row, the number of active COVID-19 cases re-



mained below 9 lakh.

There are 8,83,185 active cases of coronavirus infection in the country which make 12.65 per cent of the total caseload, the data stated. The COVID-19 case fatality rate was re-

corded at 1.54 per cent.

India's COVID-19 tally had crossed the 20-lakh mark on August 7, 30 lakh on August 23 and 40 lakh on September 5. It went past 50 lakh on September 16 and crossed 60 lakh on September 28.

According to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), a cumulative 8,57,98,698 samples have been tested up to October 9. As many as 11,64,018 samples were tested on Friday.

Delhi University announces first cut-off list for undergraduate courses; LSR pegs score at 100 pc for 3 courses

NEW DELHI, OCT 10 (PTI): Delhi University announced its first cut-off list for undergraduate admission on Saturday with Lady Shri Ram College pegging the score at 100 per cent for three Honours courses.

Lady Shri Ram College For Women has pegged 100 per cent score for three courses for general category aspirants -- BA (Hons) Economics, BA (Hons) Political Science and BA (Hons) Psychology. The college has the highest cut-off among Science courses as well. The college has announced a cut-off of 99.75 per cent for admission to B.Sc (Hons) Statistics for general category students, while Hindu College has pegged the score for the same course at 99.25 per cent.

Hindu College has announced a cut-off of 99.33 per cent for B.Sc (Hons) Physics.

Among the BA programme combinations, aspirants need to



have a minimum of 99.25 per cent for gaining admission for a combination of Economics and Political Science to LSR College, the highest among all the combinations.

It was in 2015 that College of Vocational Studies and Indraprastha College for Women had pegged their cut-off at 100 per cent for the computer science programme for general category students.

Last year, Hindu College had pegged the highest score of 99 per cent for Political Science Honours. LSR College came a close second with a cut-off of 98.75 per cent for BA programme and Psychology

Honours. At 98.3 per cent, Hindu College also had the highest cut-off for Physics Honours.

Nearly 70,000 undergraduate seats are up for grabs with the admission process commencing from October 12. Officials of the university had said that cut-offs would be higher this year owing to more students scoring above 90 per cent marks in board examinations.

The admission process will be completely online due to the coronavirus pandemic. The new session will commence from November 18.

Nurses suffer burn-out, psychological distress in COVID fight - association

GENEVA, 10 OCT (REUTERS): Many nurses caring for COVID-19 patients are suffering burn-out or psychological distress, and many have faced abuse or discrimination outside of work, the International Council of Nurses (ICN) said.

Supplies of personal protective equipment for nurses and other health workers in some care homes remain insufficient, it said, marking World Mental Health Day on Saturday.

"We are extremely concerned about the mental health impact on nurses," Howard Catton, a British nurse who is the ICN's chief executive, told Reuters Television at the association's headquarters in Geneva.

"Our most recent survey of national nurses' associations shows

that more than 70% of them (the associations) were saying that nurses have been subject to violence or discrimination and as a result of that they are very concerned about extreme cases of psychological distress and mental health pressure," he said.

The figure was based on responses from roughly a quarter of its national nurses' associations in more than 130 countries.

Nurses face a broad spectrum of issues that affect their mental health, including physical and verbal abuse, Catton said.

"There are nurses who have been subject to discrimination, where their landlord has not renewed their lease for their apartment, or they can't get child care for their children," he said, without

giving specifics of physical or verbal abuse. ICN has lobbied for better protection and working conditions for nurses on the front lines of the pandemic.

"We still continue to see problems with the supplies personal protective equipment. There have been improvements, particularly in hospitals," Catton said.

But some care homes and long-term care facilities in Europe, and in North and South America still lack supplies, he said, citing its members' survey.

The World Health Organization said last Monday that services for mentally ill and substance abuse patients have been disrupted worldwide during the pandemic, and COVID-19 is expected to cause further distress for many.

NBA returning to Chinese state television after 1-year ban

LAKE BUENA VISTA (US), OCT 10 (AP): The NBA is returning to Chinese state television after a one-year absence.

CCTV announced Friday that it would air Game 5 of the NBA Finals between the Los Angeles Lakers and Miami Heat the first time that the league would appear on the network since the rift that started when Houston Rockets general manager Daryl Morey tweeted support for anti-government protesters in Hong Kong.

State television made an on-air announcement that the game would be broadcast; the network's web site had a preview of the game, including a photo of the Lakers' LeBron James and Miami's Jimmy Butler.

"In the Chinese National Day and Mid-Autumn Festival that just passed, the NBA expressed holiday blessings to Chinese fans," the China Media Group, essentially the operator of CCTV, said in a statement.

"We have also noticed the goodwill continuously expressed by the NBA for some time. Especially since the beginning of this year, the NBA has made active efforts in supporting the Chinese people in fighting against the novel coronavirus epidemic."

CCTV quickly halted its relationship with the NBA after Morey's tweet, even though the post was quickly deleted.

Given the timing, it appears the suspension of NBA coverage by that network was designed to last one year; CCTV announced on Oct. 8, 2019, that it was beginning an immediate investigation into its relationship with the NBA, stemming from the network being "strongly dissatisfied" over the league's decision to not sanction Morey.

The NBA did not have an immediate comment to CCTV's decision.

NBA games have been available to Chinese fans on the streaming service Tencent, another of the league's broadcast partners. But the relationship between the league and China could be best categorized as frosty since the tweet, with only some slight hints of reconciliation.

NBA legend and Chinese Basketball Association President Yao Ming did come to the U.S. to attend the memorial service for commissioner emeritus David Stern in January, a move viewed by some as one that showed there was hope for the league and China to mend fences.

Gyalshing Municipal Council felicitates organizations and individuals



RUDRA KAUSHIK GYALSHING, 10 OCT:

Gyalshing Municipal Council (GMC) felicitated various non-governmental organizations (NGO), religious entities and individuals today at a function organized at Gyalshing bazaar premises.

The event was attended by Agriculture Minister, Loknath Sharma as the chief guest along with Secretary of UDHD department, Sarala Rai as special guest. Chairman of GMC, I.K Neupaney, councilors and representatives of various NGOs and individuals were also present at the event.

At the outset, I.K

Neupaney in his brief address shared that GMC is organizing this program in order to recognize the selfless service rendered by social organizations and individuals in their capacity for the development and upliftment of the society.

Minister, Loknath Sharma in his address appreciated the felicitation program organized by GMC stating that contributions made by individuals, social and religious organizations for the society must get recognized and encouraged.

On various issues pertaining to Gyalshing bazaar, Mr Sharma ex-

pressed that Gyalshing Municipal Council has many problems to deal with and the town needs necessary infrastructure development. He informed that in order to resolve the drinking water problem in Gyalshing bazaar, budget was allocated by the central government and the project would be initiated through the state government.

He added that tender process for the project would be initiated very soon. Mr Sharma maintained that the state government is committed to resolve the problems such as sewage system

and jhora training of Gyalshing bazaar.

Loknath Sharma also spoke at a length about the growing plastic menace in Gyalshing town and called for conscious mentality amongst the masses to avoid usage of plastic.

Speaking on the culture of trade license subletting that is rampant in Gyalshing bazaar, Mr Sharma maintained that such practices should not be encouraged and prescribed norms must be followed. However, he assured that no license would be cancelled.

He informed that Gyalshing town would

be developed as a model town in near future. He also reflected upon the various public welfare works being initiated by the state government and maintained that SKM party would live up to its call of 'Pariwartan' in the true sense.

UDHD Secretary, Sarala Rai said that Urban Local Body (ULB) election has been postponed due to some unavoidable reasons and added that the ULB election would not be based on political parties as formulated by the present SKM government.

She shared that the tenure of representatives of ULB in Sikkim will end on 16 October and administrators would run the ULB till the elected representatives fill the required posts after the election.

She also spoke about a resolution to be passed between GMC and Pema Yangtse monastery which owns half of the town for proper management of the town. Ms Rai further explained about parking plaza and community centre to be set up near the present motor stand of Gyalshing and Kishan bazaar.

Swadesi Jagran Manch felicitates 36 South Sikkim farmers



SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 10 OCT:

The Sikkim unit of Swadesi Jagran Manch organised a felicitation program for

36 farmers from South Sikkim recognising their work as corona warriors during the pandemic

The program was organised at Sumbuk

Lungchok Kamerey and was attended by Namchi Municipal Council Vice Chairperson, Diki Lhamu Bhutia as chief guest, a press release informs.

Zilla Member-Sumbuk, Jamuna Rai, Panchayat President, Devraj Rai, Lungchok Kamerey GPU and Panchayat President, Radha Sharma, were present as special guest and guests of honour for the programme which included an address by the coordinator, Sirish Khare.

"Ride for Cause" provides relief to landslide victims

SUMMIT REPORT GYALSHING, 10 OCT:

Khangchendzonga Motorcycle Club organised a "Ride for Cause" initiative to support the families affected by a landslide in West Sikkim.

A recent landslide at Tafel village had claimed two lives while two were injured when two houses were swept away in Boom Tafal ward of Samdong Sribadam GPU under Rinchenpong constituency in West Sikkim.

Khangchendzonga Motorcycle Club is an organisation of motorcycle enthusiasts from West Sikkim and is actively involved in social work. They provided essential items such as blankets,



mattress and ration & food items to the landslide affected.

The club thanked the individual and organisations who supported the initiative by sponsoring the relief items and for donating in cash and kind.

A member, Meewang Gyatso Tagchungdarp said, "Without this support the initiative "Ride

for Cause" wouldn't have been possible. With the more support and blessing of our well-wishers we would like to organise more such initiatives for the society."

The Club thanked Tulku Khyentse Serta and Sonam Palden Denzongpa from Yuksam along with other well-wishers for their continuous support.

NHIDCL sponsors skill development training for 30 youth at ITI



SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 10 OCT:

National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation [NHIDCL], Sikkim office, with support from the Skill Development Department, organised a three-month long skill development training program at ITI-Rangpo for local youth. The train-

ing programme began today in the presence of STCS chairprsn, Bishnu Kumar Khatiwada, Excise department advisor Em Prasad Dulal, and Transport Minister Sanjeet Kharel, a press release informs.

The training is being taken by 30 youth from different parts of the state.

RBI appeals...

consequences," the RBI said. "All the issues that were advanced by the petitioners have been adequately addressed."

The optician and other borrowers had demanded the waiver of what they call "interest on interest," charged by lenders to those who used the moratorium.

The government told the court last week it would waive the compound interest on loans up to 20 million rupees (\$270,000) under a separate COVID-19 support plan, in a move that will bring relief to millions of borrowers.

In a separate affidavit on Friday, the government told the court that it would not be possible to further supplement the already announced relief packages. It asked the court not to permit any further judicial review by the petitioners.

SAATHI life skills training for students from 12 schools



SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 10 OCT:

An online-training camp was organized for the 5th batch of students from various government schools of Sikkim. The training started on 08 Oct and concluded on 10 Oct, through online platform, a press release informs.

The training was attended by 70 students from 12 schools namely Dikchu Sr Sec School, Khechuperi Sr Sec School, Jorethang Sr Sec School, Kaluk Sr Sec School, Rateypani Sr Sec School, Nayabazaar Junior High School, Perbing Sr Sec School, Samdong Sr Sec School, Yangang Sr Sec School, Heeyangthang Sr Sec School, Lingee Sr Sec School and Dikling Sr Sec School.

The training covered session on coping with emotion and stress by Pragyan Deep Dewan (Counseling Psychol-

ogist). Roshni Chhetri (Counseling Psychologist) covered session on Interpersonal skills & Team Management, Himanjali Pradhan (APM, SAATHI) explained students on Effective Communication Skills & Time Management. Smita Rai (Entrepreneur, Proprietor of Namchi Designer Candles & Flavours Restaurant) interacted with students on Hobbies and interest and why it is important to have hobbies and how it affects our mental health. Santosh Gautam (Counsellor, Mukti Foundation) shared his experience with the students and Roshan Dahal (PGT, Tadong SSS) forwarded her session on Awareness and Usage of Social Media.

The training camp concluded with feedback sent through Google form and certificate has been sent through email.

ANTHYESTHI KRIYA

The Anthyesthi Kriya of late Bimal Krishna Rasaily who left for his heavenly abode on 4th October 2020 falls on 13.10.2020 (TUESDAY). The Anthyesthi Kriya will be held at his own residence at Lachungpa Building, Top Floor, Behind A.G. Quarter, Development Area, Gangtok.



We would also like to take this opportunity to thank all our well wishers, friends and family who stood by us during the time of bereavement.

Sudha Rasaily (Wife)
Yash Raj Rasaily (Son)
Purnima Rasaily (Sister-in-Law)
Shradha Gazmer (Daughter)
Naresh Gazmer (Son-in-Law)
Daksh Rasaily (Nephew)
Kamal Nidhi Sarda (niece)
Rahul Sarda (Son-in-Law)
Siddhant Rasaily (Nephew)
Nevedita Gazmer (Grand Daughter)
Sanskar Gazmer (Grandson)
Mobile No. 8918155150/6297135761

~ SummitTIMES ~ CLASSIFIEDS

LAND FOR SALE

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

LAND FOR SALE

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

LAND FOR SALE

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

FOR RENT

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

GENERAL LAND FOR SALE

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

Building for sale

A two storey building constructed on plot area 50x40 ft. Situated at Upper Phong near Phong SS, South Sikkim is on sale. Cost Rs 60 Lakhs (Negotiable). Interested may contact : 8145829309, 7864937800, 9749897695.

TN woman Dalit...

Condemning discrimination, many social media users expressed outrage and sought swift action to ensure justice.

District Collector Chandra Sekhar Sakhamuri and Police Superintendent M Sree Abhinav went to the village, located near the temple town of Chidambaram and held an enquiry on Saturday.

The Police officer said Rajeswari named the panchayat vice president and secretary in her complaint and a case has been registered against the duo under the SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act for offences, including humiliation and for obstructing her official work.

"We will take a statement from her, investigate and appropriate action will be taken," Abhinav told reporters.

To a question, he said there would be no threat to her life, adding adequate

police personnel have been deployed in the village.

"Other ward members too have realised what has gone wrong," he said.

The Collector said four meetings have been held in the panchayat office so far.

The panchayat president Rajeswari was forced to sit on the floor while some ward members claimed that she did so voluntarily, the Collector said.

"The inquiry is going on, based on her complaint.

Strict action as per law will be taken against those involved," he said, adding the photograph was clicked on July 17, 2020, according to the date displayed on that image.

A show cause notice has been issued to Mohan under the Tamil Nadu Panchayats Act's provision, governing removal of the vice president and appropriate action would be taken, he

said. Rajeswari, when asked why she had not complained earlier, said she initially tolerated the vice president's behaviour, but decided to lodge a complaint now when his ill treatment intensified.

Only the vice-president hoisted the national flag and she was not allowed to do so (during Independence Day and other events of significance), she alleged.

Fisheries Minister D Jayakumar said it was 'barbaric' and promised tough action as per law.

The AIADMK government had all along given due respect and recognition for the marginalised people, including Scheduled Castes and Tribes, he said.

MDMK general secretary Vaiko said such humiliation was outrageous, while DMK MP Kanimozhi said it was strongly condemnable and the leaders demand-

ed tough action. Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi Thol Thirumavalavan demanded the immediate arrest of those involved for obstructing the official work of the panchayat president.

Not only Theruku Thittai, the scenario was the same in several other villages, the VCK leader alleged and urged the government to review the situation and take appropriate remedial action.

Meanwhile, cadres of VCK and Left outfits gathered in front of the Buvanagiri police station in the district, demanding the arrest of the vice president and secretary.

The incident comes months after a woman Dalit panchayat president in Tiruvallur district was not allowed to unfurl the national flag on Independence Day.

She did so later following the intervention of district authorities.

State Level Role Play and Folk-Dance Competitions by SCERT

GANGTOK, 10 OCT [IPR]: Population Education Cell, SCERT organised "Theme Based State Level Folk Dance and Role Play Competitions" for winning schools of the district level on a virtual mode owing to the present pandemic situation on 9th October. The first three winners from each district participated at the State level competition.

The themes for Folk Dance and Role Play were Equal Opportunity for Boys and Girls; Female Feoticide, Respect and Care for Elders, Protection of Environment, Drug Abuse, Charms and Challenges of Adolescents, Healthy Relationship during Adolescents, Personal Safety (Physical, Mental and Sexual), Substance Abuse: Its Cause and Prevention, Safe Use of Internet, Gadgets and Media Literacy and Nutritious Food and Wellbeing.

Adolescence Education Program under National Population Education Project (NPEP), NCERT, New Delhi is an initiative that aims to empower young people with accurate, age appropriate and culturally relevant information to promote healthy attitudes and develop skills to enable them to respond to real life situations in positive and responsible ways. NCERT at the national level and SCERT



at the state level co-ordinates the program and works through both the curricular and co-curricular formats to contribute towards holistic development of the young people. Theme Based Folk Dance and Role Play Competitions are some co-curricular events that NCERT/ SCERT host every year under the scheme.

The videos of the Folk Dance and Role Play were shot by the participating schools and sent to respective co-ordinators of all districts. The videos were played live from control room of SCERT in the presence of panel of judges. Also connected were the participating school heads, nodal teachers, students and other guests through

Google meet. After the presentation by each school, as a part of the evaluation, the judges had a question answer session with the participating students.

A total of six schools for Folk Dance from East and North and six for Role Play from West and South participated in the competition.

G. P Upadhyaya, Additional Chief Secretary, Education Department, Government of Sikkim chaired the inaugural session and appreciated the effort of organising team for organising such competitions in an online mode. He also expressed his happiness over teachers and students for taking the opportunity to participate in such crisis time. Through such pro-

grams, he expected the message of adolescence education which would be conveyed to all concerned.

Harish Meena, Coordinator, NPEP, NCERT applauded PE Cell of SCERT on initiating such competitions. He also expressed that SCERT-Sikkim is the first to organise it which other states may follow. He also requested the team to share their experience and guidelines for organising the program in online mode with NCERT and SCERT's of other states. Members of SCERT from other states also witnessed the program.

In the valedictory session, Dr. Rabin Chhetri, Director, SCERT congratulated all the students of participating schools. He also declared the result of

the event and expressed his best wishes to the winning schools that will represent the state at the National Level.

Sagar Moktan and Dr. Shanti Ram Adhikari, Joint Directors, SCERT, Principals of DIETS, Faculty members of SCERT and DIETs attended the program

Lhakpa Lepcha, Program coordinator, National School of Drama-Sikkim, Ms. Banita Lohagan, Artist, Culture and Heritage Department, Government of Sikkim and Shri Phoor Tshering Lepcha, Assistant Director Youth Affairs, Sikkim State Aids Control Society judged the event at SCERT.

Chakung Sr. Sec School, New Namchi Secondary School and Rong Secondary School bagged the first, second and third place respectively for Role Play Category.

Similarly, West Point Sr. Sec School, Mangshila Sr. Sec School and Sichey Sr. Sec School bagged the first, second and third place for folk dance category. Likewise, West Point Sr. Sec School (Folk Dance) and Chakung Sr. Sec School (Role Play) will be representing the State at the National Level. The overall program at the district and the State level was organised by District Coordinators from DIETs and State Coordinators from PE Cell, SCERT.

SHAHNAZ HUSAIN INTERVIEW



"Advertisements showing that fair complexioned people are superior and successful should not be allowed"

Question: If we talk of our Indian society then it is considered that lady with fair complexion is beautiful. We generally see matrimonial advertisements in which fair boy/girl is preferred. What is psyche behind this?

SHAHNAZ HUSAIN: In India, the desire for a fair complexion existed much before fairness creams. You may ask, "Why do Indians put such a premium on a fair complexion?" The question does not have a simple answer. I think it has a lot to do with the Indian ideals of beauty. Different countries have different ideals of beauty. In India, "fair" is considered beautiful. India is known for diversity. We find complexions from very fair to dark. So, perhaps, Indians feel that it is possible to be Indian and still be fair. If all Indians were dark in colour, the mindset may have been different. Who knows? For an answer to this question as to why Indians want to be fair, we probably need to look at history and sociology to find out how beauty ideals develop. Commercial advertisements, which always show fair men and women, may have a part to play, by drawing the parallel that fair means beautiful. Some people think that centuries of British dominance in our country has given us an inferiority complex in general.

Question: Why we should fix the parameters of beauty with fairness only? Is it not time to change the parameters /perspective of beauty in Indian society?

SHAHNAZ HUSAIN: I have always

said that the beauty of the skin lies in its good health and not its colour, but the desire for a fair complexion continues to exist. In fact, I have written about make-up and + for darker complexions. If one has a healthy, glowing skin, colour ceases to matter. In fact, a dark-skinned woman can look as beautiful as a fair skinned woman. In fact, the colour of her skin can be an asset. With suitable colours and make-up, her colour ceases to matter. Yes, it is definitely high time that the parameters of beauty changed in Indian society and Indian mindset. Advertisements showing that fair complexioned people are superior and successful should not be allowed.

QUESTION: Given societal stereotypes, people with dark skin can get an inferiority complex and even suffer low self esteem. How can such feelings be addressed?

SHAHNAZ HUSAIN: The mindset in the society and the family must change. Importance should not be given to a fair complexion and comparisons should not be made between a fair and dark person. Talents of children should be given more importance and should be developed. A person who has a talent for singing, playing instruments, painting, or writing, imparts self-confidence in the person. Self-confidence helps one to go forward, and the colour of complexion ceases to matter so much. Changes in mindset are so important. Parents should also stop trying to improve their children's complexion. Mothers keep writing to me asking how they can make their daughter fair. If the mother thinks this way, the daughter will easily get an inferiority complex.

Training for lawyers on eCourts Services



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 10 OCT: Training Programme for lawyers on eCourts Services, was conducted through webinar today under the directions of Executive Chairperson, Sikkim SLSA, Justice Meenakshi Madan Rai.

A press release informs that the training programme was conducted in compliance with the instructions received from Chairperson, eCommittee, Supreme Court of India, in order to ensure that access to Information and Communication Technology (ICT) enabled services is available to the Ld. Advocates at all levels.

The e-Courts project was conceptualized

and implemented during 2007, on the basis of the National Policy and Action Plan for Implementation of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the Indian Judiciary submitted by e-Committee (Supreme Court of India), with a vision to transform the Indian Judiciary by ICT enablement of Ld. Courts. This was carried out in order to provide ICT enablement of the Ld. Courts to make justice delivery system affordable, easily and all time available and also cost-effective.

Suraj Chettri, District & Sessions Judge (Special Division-I) at Gangtok and Judge, Family Court (East) at Gangtok, was

the Resource Person for today's programme. The training programme, through the webinar was attended by the Panel Lawyers and Advocates from all the four Districts of Sikkim.

During the training, brief introduction with regard to eCourts Project, was disseminated amongst the participants by Suraj Chettri. Facilities available for the Advocates in eCourts Services was also deliberated upon, along with the procedure for eFiling of cases and the mode of payment of Court Fees through eFiling process. The detail of any case in any Ld. Court can be accessed from the site - ecourts.gov.in. In case of non-availability of internet connectivity, to know the status of any case, one can avail sms service facility by typing in message ECOURTS<space>your Case Number Reference number> to 9766899899.

Document-verification for Krishi Loans begins in West Pendam



SUMMIT REPORT

DUGA, 10 OCT: Following up on directions received from Chief Minister PS Tamang [Golay], document submission and verifications for Krishi Loans began at Duga under West Pendam constituency today, a press release from Sikkim Krantikari Morcha informs.

Pradeep Bhandari, Bank Consultant, Agriculture/ Horticulture/ AHVS Dept, explained the scheme and informed that around Rs 1.5 crore is projected to be released in the constituency under the scheme.

Today, 100 loan applications were distrib-

uted for the constituency.

Bedan Kumar Chettri was present as chief guest for the program chaired by BDO-Duga, IB Chettri, and attended by SKM CLC president, Hari Dungal, CLC secretary, Roshan Pradhan, PS to MLA-Rhenock, Pawan Khatiwara, SKM's farmer's wing executive committee member, Prem Kiran Pradhan, women's wing coordinator, Mona Dungal, HDO Horticulture, JN Sharma, ADO Agriculture, Sangeeta Bassett, Veterinary Officers, Dr Theering Deeki Bhutia, Dr Aswini Pradhan and many other officials from the department, the release adds.

OFFICE OF THE MISSION DIRECTOR
NATIONAL HEALTH MISSION
H & FW DEPARTMENT
HEAD-QUARTER
GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM

Memo No: 112/H & FW/NHM/20-21 Dated: 09/10/2020

NOTICE

The walk-in interview for various position (for Covid-19 Package only) under NHM which was scheduled to be held on 23rd to 28th September and postponed due to lockdown during that period is hereby rescheduled and will be held as under

- 12th October 2020-Staff Nurse
- 13th October 2020-Staff Nurse
- 14th October 2020-ANM
- 15th October 2020-Clinical Psychiatric Social Worker And Medical Officer

Dr Madan Kumar Deka, MD
Joint Director -HR & NHM
Department of Health and Family Welfare
Government of Sikkim
Gangtok, Sikkim

R.O No. 102/IPR/PUB/Classi/2020-21, dated 9.10.20

URBAN DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM

No. T(1686)UDD/TP/E/2020/27 Date: 08.10.2020

NOTICE

The Urban Development Department (UDD), Government of Sikkim is pleased to inform that the Sikkim Real Estate (Regulation and Development) Rules, 2020, has been framed and published in the Official Gazette vide No. 107 dated Wednesday 27th May, 2020.

The copy of the said Rules has been uploaded in the official website: www.udhsikkim.org.

Sd/-
Additional Chief Town Planner
Urban Development Department
Government of Sikkim
Gangtok - 737101
East Sikkim

R.O No. 98/IPR/PUB/Classi/2020-21 dated 8.10.20

Specialized Dental Clinic of Siliguri
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What is Novel Coronavirus - nCoV?

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

Symptoms of nCoV

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

Precautions to Prevent nCoV

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

Treatment

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

If you seek help, you may call :

- Toll free no. 104
- District surveillance Officer
- EAST : 7029372100
- WEST : 9593297809
- NORTH : 9641957468
- SOUTH : 7407691463
- New STNM
- AMS : 9434711402

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE
GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM

Quality Education on the Agenda

Study and evaluate, then replicate best practices

For quite a while now, politicians, bureaucrats, teacher associations and even student groups have been speaking about the need for government schools in Sikkim to impart quality education. It is another matter that education itself has not been imparted this year because of the lockdown [and please, don't peddle the fiction that education is happening online because it is not]. And now, despite nothing having improved as far as the pandemic or our handling of it is concerned, the schools are being prepped for reopening. It was a hasty decision to shut down schools, but that can be excused to the unprecedented nature of the pandemic. It is about time that children were allowed back into schools, but one hopes that the preparedness is much better than what the government has been able to deliver on all other aspects of facing the COVID challenge. Leaving the decision on the DMs and parents is nothing but a shirking of responsibility because neither really the DMs nor the parents are adequately informed about either the state capacity or the state's aptitude to handle potential challenges. That said, the realisation that schools are an essential service is welcome. The logistics will hopefully be worked out intelligently and while education comes into focus, so should the understanding of quality in it.

A big festival break is coming up and could return with the full force of classes in session. Since quality education deliberations tend to get mothballed at around this time, here goes another attempt to reiterate how quality could be achieved in education here. To qualify the following comments, it is also recognized that experiments and efforts are currently underway in an organized manner to inject improved learning at schools and what follows should be seen as something complementing that effort.

While 'quality' is welcome in any field and because there is always room to improve quality in everything, Quality Education will be welcome. To have such a thing, however, will require more than rhetoric; it will not deliver by itself just because it is a felt-need or because it is demanded. 'Quality' will have to be defined first and then ways and means devised to meet that definition. Not enough has been done in any earnest thus far. If the policy-makers in Sikkim believe that the quality of education in schools here is inadequate, then, the first thing they will have to do is identify the gap that spans between schools in Sikkim and schools that deliver quality education here or elsewhere. Since China seems to be devising ways to deliver results on issues that India continues to only aspire for and pay lip-service to, perhaps even in this case, Sikkim should take a leaf out from how its northern neighbour achieved this end. China, with a human resource base rivaled only by India, realised that knowledge was the strongest weapon in the new millennium. Many other countries, including India, have realised this but only China appears to have addressed the issue with any intelligence and long-term commitment. One might add here that the Chinese experiment was with regard to higher education in universities. That said, the model could be adapted for school-level education as well. Recognising that the quality of its universities could use some 'quality' enhancement, the first thing that China did was carry out an honest and earnest 'Academic Ranking of World Universities' in the year 2003. The universities were graded according to the quality/qualification of its faculty, the range of research undertaken by its students, the academic output of its staff [research papers, dissertations etc], number of awards tagged against the names of faculty and amount of future involvement of its students in path-breaking research. Then the Chinese studied the world leaders among the universities and tried to replicate their management and academic models at home. Higher education in China is already improving at a fast nip.

Sikkim needs to do something similar. It has to commission its own ranking of schools that deliver quality education and then send its officials from the EDUCATION Department to these schools to learn how they deliver quality. While Sikkim learns what quality education is and how it can be delivered, it could also free the sector from all unproductive influence. Politics, for instance, should only influence the policy directions, not the actual human resource management and bureaucrats should be facilitators, not directors of the effort. Appointments and transfer of teachers should be freed from influence of any kind. A basic problem with government schools in Sikkim is their retention failure - their inadequacy to retain students [reflected in high drop-out rates] or even the teachers [manifested in high absenteeism, some schools without enough teachers and others with over-staffed faculty rolls]. This problem might get redressed if students had classes taught by qualified teachers to go to and if teachers had schools with at least the basic infrastructure to impart education in. If this is achieved, education would have become uniformly accessible in Sikkim and then can begin the process of improving the quality.

Nobel peace prize: hunger is a weapon of war but the World Food Programme can't build peace on its own

SUSANNE JASPARS
theconversation.com

By awarding the 2020 Nobel peace prize to the UN's World Food Programme (WFP), the Nobel committee said that it wanted to "turn the eyes of the world to the millions of people who suffer from or face the threat of hunger". Among its reasons for awarding the prize were WFP's "efforts to prevent the use of hunger as a weapon of war and conflict".

These issues don't apply just to people living in areas of acute conflict, but also to the many people around the world who have experienced high levels of malnutrition for decades - usually in countries affected by multiple and long-term political crises such as Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Yemen.

The focus that the Nobel committee has brought to hunger and conflict is welcome and very much needed. It must be addressed as a matter of urgency - but not by WFP alone.

HUNGER AS A WEAPON

Hunger has been used as a weapon of war for many years, but the issue has recently risen to prominence because of the increased risk of mass starvation in today's conflicts.

The political acts which cause hunger and starvation can be divided into acts of commission, omission and provision. Acts of commission are attacks on food production, markets and the restriction of people's movement. Omission is the failure to act, such as when food relief is blocked, while provision is the selective provision of aid to one side of a conflict.

Similar tactics are used in protracted crises but with more subtle manipulation of markets, trade and aid than direct attacks. The war on terror, a rise in authoritarian governments, and geopoliti-

cal manoeuvring have magnified these issues and increased the risk of starvation.

The link between war and hunger was recognised explicitly with the passing of a UN security council resolution in 2018 which prohibited the use of hunger as a weapon of war. Since then, WFP has been working more actively to understand the link between food security and conflict and how it can contribute to building peace.

THE POWER OF FOOD AID

Since its establishment in 1961, WFP has set up an expansive food logistics system and a wealth of tools to assess needs and vulnerability. In the past decade, it has also become involved in cash transfers.

It is now one of the world's largest humanitarian organisations, but also a business which dominates all aspects of general food distribution and humanitarian assistance. It involves a whole range of people, institutions and practices which can have political and economic consequences well beyond meeting the needs of hungry people.

One of most intractable issues is the manipulation of food aid during conflict and its incorporation into the political economy of famine and war. Food aid has been stolen or taxed by warring parties or local authorities, providing not only a source of finance but boosting their political status.

In Somalia, food aid has been big business and its contractors key political actors. Elsewhere, governments increasingly deny access for food distribution in opposition-held areas, with Syria, and Sudan under its previous regime, being a case in point.

The denial of food aid can also benefit traders as it increases food prices and it benefits business because as people become displaced they are potential sources of cheap labour. The vulnerable are

frequently excluded or marginalised, because they are the politically weaker members of society.

SPOTLIGHT ON POLITICAL INACTION

As part of its role in improving conditions for peace, WFP can analyse these wider political and economic effects, and include them in the way it makes decisions. However, WFP cannot address the political causes of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition with food aid - or in fact with any technical intervention.

Conflicts need political solutions and crimes of mass starvation need to be prosecuted. Even one of WFP's most successful operations, the massive food distribution in Darfur in 2005 which effectively reduced malnutrition and mortality, required diplomatic efforts to negotiate the necessary access.

There is a danger that WFP becomes a substitute for political action to address the causes of conflict or for prosecuting crimes of mass starvation. This would actually perpetuate the problem, as structural causes of hunger and malnutrition remain unaddressed.

In turn, this keeps vulnerable people in a state of protracted crisis or precarity and persistent malnutrition. An over-reliance on WFP can also absolve politicians of the blame for creating famine or, alternatively, the international community's responsibility to protect.

With the spotlight of the Nobel peace prize, WFP can do much by making the political causes of hunger in conflict visible, helping to identify famine crimes, promoting effective assistance that is specific to particular contexts, and using its power to bring about political action.

[The writer is Research Associate, LSE's Conflict and Civil Society Research Unit, and Food Studies Centre, SOAS, University of London]



Muscle dysmorphia: why are so many young men suffering this serious mental health condition?

IEUAN CRANSWICK
theconversation.com

Body image concerns among men are increasingly common and can have a serious impact on mental health. And for an estimated one in ten young men who go the gym in the UK, these body image concerns can result in a mental health condition known as muscle dysmorphia.

Though researchers are only just beginning to understand the complexities of the condition, it appears young men are currently being affected by it at a higher rate compared to other populations. It's believed there are many reasons driving this, but researchers have found that media and social media pressure, alongside changing ideas of masculinity may both be major causes.

Sometimes referred to as "bigorexia" or "reverse anorexia", people with muscle dysmorphia believe their body is too small, skinny, or insufficiently muscular - even though the opposite may be true. This distorted view causes a preoccupation with becoming overly muscular and lean, often leading to the development of dangerous habits, such as excessive weight training, restrictive dieting and the use of substances such as anabolic steroids. It can also lead to anxiety, depression and may affect their daily life.

But currently diagnosing muscle dysmorphia is still difficult. Though several self-report surveys exist to help physicians diagnose patients, these surveys only assess related symptoms (such as a desire for bigger muscle, or body image issues) rather than offering a robust diagnosis.

Diagnosis also relies on patients meeting a specific set of criteria, such as having a preoccupation with being lean and muscular, weight lifting excessively and dieting. But since so many different methods are used to diagnose muscle dysmorphia, this can make fully understanding the condition difficult.

However, in general, most experts agree people with muscle dysmorphia tend to engage in steroid use, have symptoms of eating disorders (such as compulsive exercise and eating habits) and higher body dissatisfaction, usually with their general appearance, weight and muscularity.

People with muscle dysmorphia also tend to have lower self-esteem, higher anxiety levels when their physique is exposed, higher rates of depression, and obsessive compulsive behaviours towards exercise and diet. For example, people may prioritise training over work or social activities or strictly eat every three hours to ensure muscle gain. And if these behaviours are disrupted, it causes anxiety and emotional disturbance.

Muscle dysmorphia tends to affect men in their mid-20s to mid-30s, though average age of onset is 19 years old. Research suggests it's most common in weightlifting and bodybuilding communities.

However, research also shows almost 6% of US students have it. Another study found 4.2% of women and 12.7% of men in the US military have muscle dysmorphia. So while it appears to predominantly affect young men, there's limited research on its prevalence in other populations.

THE 'IDEAL' BODY

There are many reasons a person may develop muscle dysmorphia, and it's unique to each person. However, research suggests that the media (and social media), as well as pressure from family and friends, are likely causes.

For example, media portrayals of men over time have become more muscular. Specifically, over several decades male models in magazines have become significantly larger and leaner. Even male action figures have changed over time, becoming unrealistically muscular.

Muscle dysmorphia is linked to the belief that a muscular physique is ideal. So being exposed to these images and ideals in the media may cause concern and a distorted view of one's body. Studies also show social media use is directly linked to the idolisation of muscularity in young boys. Viewing images of fit people on social media also predicts a fixation with becoming more muscular.

The view that being muscular is valuable is typically learned from friends and family, and pressure to be muscular may come in the form of comparisons or comments about appearance from loved ones. Research shows some men even seek a muscular physique to cope with bullying and emasculation from family members and romantic partners.

Some researchers also believe believe a so-called "masculine crisis" may be contributing to increased cases of muscle dysmorphia. This reflects the perceived belief there are less opportunities for men to assert their masculinity through manual and industrial labour. This may leave

some men feeling threatened and emasculated.

As a result, men have learned to use a muscular physique to visually show their masculinity. Increasingly, masculinity in modern culture represents not what you do, but how you look. So, the value that society has placed on being muscular may explain why muscle dysmorphia is more common in men.

Given muscle dysmorphia is potentially under-reported, we cannot accurately know how common it is. Instead, we can only speculate based on the limited evidence we have. The uncertainty is partly because of inconsistent diagnostic tools, and the notion it's taboo for men to be concerned with appearance or sharing their feelings.

Little research has explored the treatment options for muscle dysmorphia, but one review suggests that cognitive behavioural therapy, thought restructuring (a technique that helps people understand and challenge their thoughts, feelings, and beliefs), and family therapy could all be beneficial.

Given that internal experiences are hard to change, people suffer with the condition long-term. But seeing as the condition is similar to body dysmorphic disorder, which causes people to obsess over perceived flaws in their appearance more generally, researchers may already have promising potential solutions to help manage emotions and symptoms associated with muscle dysmorphia.

[The writer is Senior Lecturer in Sport and Exercise Therapy, Leeds Beckett University]

Police ask Kolkata Durga Puja organisers to follow all COVID-19 regulations

KOLKATA, OCT 9 (PTI): Kolkata Police on Friday asked Durga Puja organisers in the city to rigorously follow all COVID-19 regulations and ensure that revellers mandatorily wear masks while entering the marquees during the five-day festival which will begin on October 23.

City Commissioner of Police Anuj Sharma also said that puja committees should ensure that revellers adhere to the physical distancing norms inside pandals and are given masks by puja committees if they do not have them.

He asked organisers to mark spaces for revellers near the pandals in keeping with the physical distancing norms and make separate entry and exit points in them.

"Please don't compromise on COVID safety guidelines already stipulated by the government. Keep the pandal free on all three sides and make sure everyone wears masks. Keep a stock of masks to distribute among the pandal hop-



pers if they are not found wearing them," Sharma said. The CP said that people can visit puja pandals a whole week more this time to avoid overcrowding anywhere. They can start visiting the pandals four days before the puja begins till October 29, three days after the Vijaya Dashami day.

The immersion processions, which traditionally see large gather-

ings every year, should not take circuitous routes to the Ganga or the nearest water body from the pandal and instead have the minimum number of people accompanying them for the purpose, he said.

Cultural programmes which draw huge crowds cannot be held in or near the puja pandals.

"We are working on all the guidelines given

by the government. We offered all cooperation to the CP today," said Somen Dutta, an office-bearer of the Forum for Durgotsab and the general secretary of Kashi Bose Lane Puja Committee, which organises one of the most popular pujas in the city.

The state government had earlier issued a notification asking Durga Puja committees to follow

COVID-19 safety protocols and set up open pandals where visitors cannot enter without masks.

The notification came up days after Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee listed the safety guidelines for the puja committees.

Around 2,509 community Durga Pujas are organised under the jurisdiction of Kolkata Police, Banerjee had said.

152 new cases push Nagaland's COVID-19 tally to 6,888

KOHIMA, OCT 9 (PTI): At least 152 more people, including 24 security personnel, tested positive for COVID-19 in Nagaland on Friday, taking the state's tally to 6,888, Health Minister S Pangnyu Phom said.

Of the fresh cases, 133 were reported from Dimapur, 15 from Kohima and one each from Peren, Mon, Longleng and Mokokchung districts, he said.

Ninety-two patients -73 from Dimapur, 10 from Kohima and nine from Tuensang- were cured of the disease during the day, Health Department Additional Director Dr Denis Hangsing. The recovery rate among coronavirus patients in the state is currently at 81.32 per cent, he said.

Mizoram now has 1,209 active cases, while 5,602 people have recovered from the disease, he said, adding that 23 COVID-19 patients died. Altogether 54 coro-

navirus patients have migrated to other states, Hangsing said.

Dimapur has the highest number of active cases at 799, followed by Kohima at 279 and Mon at 82.

Of the total coronavirus patients in the state, 3,178 are armed forces personnel and 1,545 returnees, he said.

A total of 84,777 samples have been sent for COVID-19 test in the state so far, the official added.

NSF & ENSF to go ahead with indefinite agitation from Oct 12



KOHIMA, OCT 09 [NAGALANDPAGE]: The Naga Students' Federation (NSF) and Eastern Nagaland Students' Federation (ENSF) have decided to go ahead with the phase-wise indefinite agitation from October 12 following a Chief Secretary-level meeting remaining inconclusive today.

A Chief Secretary-level joint meeting of the Nagaland Government with NSF and ENSF over the issue of streamlining of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) teachers of 2010 and 2013 batches into State's School Education cadre was held at State Civil Secretariat here.

During the meeting,

the Government reiterated that every measure is being taken up, including the financial impact on the State while streamlining the SSA and RMSA of 2010 and 2013 batches into the State cadre, informed NSF general secretary Liremo R Kikon.

"The two Federations remained firm on our demand that the Government should give a written assurance to streamline the teachers in a time bound manner," he said.

Friday's meeting remained inconclusive, and the two Federations have decided to go ahead with proposed phased wise indefinite agitation starting from October 12 in the form of restricting

movement of all Government vehicles throughout the State as first phase, he said.

The meeting convened by the Government was held under the chairmanship of Chief Secretary in-charge J Alam between the allied Departments involved in streamlining the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) of 2010 and 2013 batches such as School Education, Finance and Personnel and Administrative Reforms.

Altogether 9 officials ~ 5 from NSF and 4 from ENSF ~ attended the meeting held in the State Civil Secretariat, Kikon informed.

Strictly enforce NLTP Act or legalize liquor sale: DNSU

DIMAPUR, OCT 09 [NAGALANDPAGE]: The Dimapur Naga Students' Union (DNSU) has called upon the Government of Nagaland and all its stakeholders to thoroughly study the "boon and bane" of the Nagaland Liquor Total Prohibition Act (NLTP Act), 1989, and either bring some strict regulations in legalizing the sale of liquor or to amend and vitalize the NLTP Act.

"DNSU reaffirms that change is inevitable and one must compromise for the greater good of the society and the future or else impotent laws will only invite more evil than good, more death than lives, more criminals than law abiding citizens," it said in a press release.

Highlighting that many illegal liquor outlets are fearlessly doing brisk business in every nook and corner day and night in the city, the union said a responsible body, it had on a couple of occasions "acted as a law enforcing agency" and busted some illicit entrepreneurs, and on several occasions forced the law enforcement au-

thorities to do the same. However, it lamented that "these promising illicit entrepreneurs" shows no sign of fright towards the toothless law "which seldom bites and even if it did, it hardly left any scratches on their resilient toughened skins."

"Despite the Act, the flow of liquor in our state is at such pace and abundance, one can supposedly presume that every river and streams in Nagaland may dry up one day but liquor in Nagaland will continue to flow," it said.

Lauding the 5 Assam Rifles for its swift action and efforts in busting a liquor bottling plant at 7th Mile on September 2 and seizing huge quantities of liquor from 5th mile on September 29, the union said the prompt action has helped in cracking down illegal activities operating in plenty, which is a serious threat to the society if allowed to continue uncurbed.

Stating that the main accused in the former case is still absconding and these poses huge threat for the public if

the culprit is not nabbed at the earliest, it urged the concerned authority to take note of the same. The union also demanded that the arrested persons be booked and penalized under relevant sections of the law and in the most befitting manner.

The DNSU also commented that the AR busting the liquor bottling plant and seizure of IMFL has exposed the "incompetency and lax" of the Excise Department, which is the nodal enforcement department of the Nagaland Liquor Total Prohibition Act, 1989.

"It points towards the negligence on the part of the department in performing their duties by allowing such activities to continue unnoticed. Even with the NLTP Act in full enforcement, it has failed to be implemented in essence," it said.

The union further warned all illegal liquor sellers in the city that it will not remain silent or compromise with the illegal activities being carried out, and urged the concerned authority to work with more diligence and seriousness.

North Korea celebrates party anniversary amid economic woes

SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA (AP): North Korean leader Kim Jong Un took center stage at a massive military parade and public rally in Pyongyang early Saturday marking the 75th anniversary of the country's ruling party. Outside observers were expecting the North to possibly unveil the latest weapons in its growing nuclear arsenal that threatens U.S. allies in Asia and the American mainland.

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said early in the day that there were signs that the North had mobilized "large crowds and equipment" for a military parade at Pyongyang's Kim Il Sung Square during the early morning hours. In the evening, North Korean state television began airing a taped broadcast of the event, which began late Friday.

Goose-stepping troops were seen marching in the streets in front of the brightly illuminated square, as a military band performed while moving in formation, shaping the numbers "10.10," "1945," and "2020," as well as a hammer and sickle — symbols of the ruling Workers' Party. The performers and tens of thousands of spectators roared as Kim, dressed in a gray suit and tie, appeared from a building as the clock struck midnight. Kim, flanked with senior officials and smiling widely, waved to the crowd and kissed children who presented him with flowers before taking his spot on the podium.

It's unusual for the North to hold a military parade during dark pre-dawn hours, although such conditions may

provide benefits in protecting sensitive information about crucial weapons that were rolled out or creating spectacles through the use of lights. Earlier Saturday, masked citizens lined up to lay flowers at the statues of Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il, the father of the current ruler, at Pyongyang's Mansu Hill. A huge street poster highlighted the ruling Workers' Party's symbol — a hammer, brush and sickle — with letters that read "Best glory to our great party."

The North's official Korean Central News Agency said residents in Kaesong and other regions who had lost their homes to recent natural disasters marked the party anniversary by moving into newly built houses and that they praised Kim Jong Un for looking after them as "their father." KCNA also reported that Chinese President Xi Jinping sent a letter to Kim saying that Beijing would continue to "defend, consolidate and develop" bilateral relations with Pyongyang.

This year's anniversary comes amid deadlocked nuclear negotiations with the Trump administration and deepening economic woes that analysts say are shaping up as one of the biggest tests of Kim's leadership since he took power in 2011. South Korean officials and analysts have said North Korea could showcase a new intercontinental ballistic missile or other nuclear-capable weapons during a parade, which would highlight how the country has continued to expand its military capabilities amid stalled nuclear talks.

110 kg poppy husk seized, 7 arrested in Jharkhand



MEDININAGAR (JHARKHAND), OCT 10 (PTI): Seven persons have been arrested and 110 kg poppy husk seized from their possession in Jharkhand's Palamu district, police said on Saturday.

Acting on a tip-off, a police team intercepted a Bihar-bound jeep and seized the poppy husk worth over Rs 10 lakh and arrested the occu-

pants of the vehicle, including a woman, near Sevti village in Tarhasi police station area on Friday night, Superintendent of Police Sanjeev Kumar said.

Opium is made from poppy husk, he said.

One of the arrested persons is from Uttar Pradesh, while the remaining are residents of Palamu district, the officer said.

Ladakh records 85 new COVID-19 cases; 346 patients cured

LEH, OCT 10 (PTI): The Union Territory of Ladakh reported 85 new coronavirus cases in the last 24 hours, taking the virus caseload to 4,987, an official bulletin said on Saturday.

With 346 more patients cured of the infection, the number of active cases in the region dropped to 1,038 -- 772 in Leh district and 266 in Kargil district, the bulletin released by the directorate of health

services said.

It said 69 people tested positive for COVID-19 in Leh and another 16 in Kargil district during the last 24 hours.

Ladakh had reported 63 COVID-related deaths, while 3,886 patients have recovered till Friday evening.

The bulletin said 312 COVID patients were discharged in Leh and 34 others in Kargil on Friday after their successful treatment.

Tripura reports 171 new COVID-19 cases, 2 fatalities

AGARTALA, OCT 10 (PTI): At least 171 more people tested positive for COVID-19 in Tripura on Saturday, pushing the tally in the state to 28,153 a health department official said.

The COVID-19 death toll rose to 310 with two more people succumbing to the infection, he said.

West Tripura district, of which state capital Agartala is a part, has accounted for 168 of the 310 COVID-19 deaths,

the official said

Tripura currently has 4,042 active coronavirus cases, while 23,778 people have recovered from the disease and 23 patients have migrated to other states, the official said.

At least 327 patients were discharged from G B Pant hospital, the main referral hospital for the COVID19 patients, on Friday as they had recovered from the disease, he said.

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Nadal and Djokovic see off spirited challenges to reach French Open final



KEVIN MITCHELL
PARIS, 10 OCT [THEGUARDIAN]: If Rafa Nadal were to win the French Open for the 13th time in 15 years on Sunday by defeating Novak Djokovic in his 100th win at Roland Garros, the Coupe des Mousquetaires surely should be awarded to the Spaniard in perpetuity.

It is not a notion Nadal would embrace, but beating the world No 1 in the autumn of their rivalry to equal Roger Federer's all-time record of 20 majors – three ahead of Djokovic – would test even Nadal's entrenched humility.

"I live my reality," he told Spanish journalists. "When we finish, we talk about [Federer's record]. For me, what matters at the moment is that I will play the final of the most important tournament of the year for me."

Nadal knows victory

is far from a given, even though he has lost only twice at the tournament in 99 matches since his winning debut in 2005 (once to Djokovic) and has yet to drop a set this fortnight. That said, the odds are marginally with a player whose claim to be the greatest clay-courtier of them all is not worth even a limply raised hand of dissent.

He survived his toughest test of the tournament in the first semi-final on Friday by holding off the late charge of the 12th seed Diego Schwartzman to win 6-3, 6-3, 7-6 (0) in just over three hours. Djokovic then took his undefeated run in completed matches in 2020 to 37 by quelling the vigorous challenge of Stefanos Tsitsipas 6-3, 6-2, 5-7, 4-6, 6-1 under the roof and lights of Court Philippe Chatrier in just

under four hours.

Djokovic, who complained that a neck problem had flared in his quarter-final against Pablo Carreno Busta two days previously, moved well enough but looked tired towards the end of this more exacting five-setter, his longest and most difficult match of the tournament, before bursting into life when it mattered.

"Of course I will bring a lot of passion and try to win on Sunday," he said courtside, "but he has won so many times here, but he might still have the memory from 2015 when I beat him in the quarter-final. So I have some hope." "This was a nice one to win. We were both a bit tired after nearly four hours on court. Stefanos is a great guy, a great player. I have to give him a lot of credit for his effort in this match. I think he will

go in a positive direction in his career."

Nadal said after a semi-final that began as a workout and finished in a dogfight: "You can't be in the final of Roland Garros without suffering. I made a couple of mistakes tactically and technically. But, in general terms, I am super happy about the match. To win against Diego, you have to work a lot and you have to play well for such a long time. But I found a way.

"Against Novak, I need to play my best. He is one of the toughest opponents possible. But I like to play in this scenario." If he did not relish the fight, he would probably have lost the third set against Schwartzman, who came from 2-4 down to force the tie-break. But, as the man said, he found a way. He invariably does. In 13 French semi-finals, he has dropped only three

sets, a staggering statistic that reflects his growing determination towards the end of the tournament.

Tsitsipas, the world No 6, frightened the life out of Djokovic with a high-grade, focused revival after going two sets down. Like Nadal, Djokovic found an extra gear under pressure. A 93mph forehand down the line in the fourth game of the third set will live in the memory of all who saw it; it is not certain Tsitsipas, idling at the net, did.

However, just as Nadal tightened up near the line, Djokovic butchered match point, handed Tsitsipas the break and could only watch as his young opponent's withering backhand skimmed the line to take the set. They're good – but they're human.

It took all Djokovic's inner strength to stop Tsitsipas's run of five games in a row but, after a quiet and artful fightback, he allowed him to level at two sets apiece with a truly limp drop shot.

Djokovic was in genuine trouble – and then, from nowhere, he burst into life to go 5-1 up in the fifth, as a flat-footed and non-plussed Tsitsipas could not respond to a winning mix of power and subtlety at the net. It seemed inconceivable even half an hour earlier that Djokovic would rush through the deciding set so convincingly that his last shot was an almost casual forehand winner down the line.

Scotland one win away from Euro 2020 but still the doubters remain



EWAN MURRAY
LONDON, 10 OCT [THEGUARDIAN]: Years have passed since Darren Fletcher, in the midst of yet another botched qualifying campaign, used post-match media duties to voice a firm belief that too many people in Scotland didn't want the international side to succeed. The written press included. Fletcher was swiftly dissuaded of his notion – why would journalists not want to follow their country in a major tournament? – but insight from the captain was telling.

Neither Steve Clarke nor Andy Robertson have voiced anything approaching Fletcher's disquiet but a similar inference has been there. When speaking around a number of matches, Scotland's manager and captain have called for a united front while taking the odd swipe at perceived negativity. In Robertson's case, this is amusing; the Liverpool player has enjoyed nothing but gushing praise in his homeland for years.

In truth, a rump of Scottish football fans have become disillusioned or disinterested with the national team after decades in the doldrums. Only extremists actually wish them ill. Those of cynical disposition have justification, given the tales of woe that have transpired since Scotland competed in the France World Cup of 1998.

The hard fact is Scotland are one game away from a first finals appearance since Morocco embarrassed them in Saint-Étienne. As criticism – and waves of it – flowed forward in the aftermath of a penalty shootout win over Israel, Clarke stood on the verge of history. It was almost forgivable that the Scottish FA's perennially embattled directors breached all social

distancing guidelines as Kenny McLean slotted home the winning spot-kick. The governing body, fiscally harmed by a tournament drought long before coronavirus took hold, has been afforded a potential lifeline.

After tankings at the hands of Belgium and Russia, Scotland under Clarke are unbeaten in six games. Some will apply asterisks to that run – San Marino are among the opposition – but Scotland lost any right to win long ago. The latest clash with Israel was the definition of tedium for 120 minutes and yet, when it mattered, Clarke's players were composed. Nobody will remember or care how victory was achieved if the Scots defeat Serbia to seal a Euro 2020 berth. Scotland should have learned to settle for positive outcomes rather than re-enactments of 1970 Brazil.

That Scotland lacked ambition and attacking fluency against Israel is undeniable. Yet theories relating to how comfortable Clarke's men should be against mediocre opposition are weighted in irrelevant history. Robertson might be a star player but he can influence matches only to a limited extent from left-back. John McGinn, whose dynamism is a sight to behold, was part of an Aston Villa team which scraped away from relegation last season. McLean was relegated with Norwich, the goalkeeper David Marshall remains in the Championship with Derby and Lyndon Dykes, the supposed bright new hope at centre-forward, is a Queens Park Rangers player. Scotland had two Motherwell men in their defensive line.

The scale of Scottish onfield celebrations show Clarke has created admirable team spirit, whether through a siege mentality or otherwise. Of the outfield players who featured against Israel, nobody is older than 29. Not only are Clarke's squad pretty inexperienced at international level, the circumstances they have encountered have generally been unsatisfactory. Thursday evening, in front of an empty Hampden, was ugly but perhaps that isn't altogether relevant. Scotland needs a reminder of how meaningful finals appearances can be; this group is one glorious tie away from serving one. For that, they are due credit.

Odisha FC sign South Africa international Cole Alexander



BHUBANESWAR, OCT 10 (PTI): Odisha FC on Saturday announced that the club has reached a two-year agreement with South African mid-fielder Cole Alexander ahead of the seventh edition of the Hero Indian Super League.

Born in Cape Town, Alexander played youth football at Hellenic FC and Ajax Cape Town before making his senior professional debut for the latter.

Alexander, a high-energy mid-fielder, had also represented various other South African clubs such as Vasco Da Gama, Chippa United, Polokwane City and SuperSport United.

The 31-year-old South African national team member was one of the outstanding performers for Bidvest Wits

in the South African Premier League last season.

After having Alexander on board, OFC head coach Stuart Baxter said, "We are delighted to secure Cole to our squad. I have worked with Cole with Bafana and he brings a combination of high energy, character and quality.

"His personality will enrich our squad environment and I am sure he will be popular among our fans."

Alexander said, "I have heard a lot about the special fans that the club has and though they will not be in the stadiums with us this year, we will carry them in our hearts and try and make them proud.

"I hope we can achieve something special at Odisha FC in the upcoming seasons.

MLB players extend streak of no COVID positives to 33 days

NEW YORK, OCT 10 (AP): Major League Baseball players extended their streak of consecutive days with no new COVID-19 tests to 33.

Players did not have positive tests in 41 of the previous 42 days, the commissioner's office said Friday.

There were two positive tests among 15,024 samples collected in the

week, or 0.01%. Both involved Tier 2 staff from the same club, with Tier 2 defined as essential personnel who have access to fields, dugouts and clubhouses because of a need to be in close proximity to players and on-field staff.

MLB has collected 156,021 samples overall, of which 91 have been positive, or 0.06%.

Fifty-seven of 91 positives have been players, and 21 of the 30 teams have had a person covered by the monitoring test positive.

The eight teams that entered the Division Series in the past week are in bubble environments and playing at neutral sites in the hope of minimizing exposure to the novel coronavirus.

Marcus Rashford given MBE in birthday honours for school meals campaign



CAROLINE DAVIES

LONDON, 10 OCT [THEGUARDIAN]: The footballer Marcus Rashford has urged the government to extend its provision of free school meals as he accepted an MBE in the Queen's birthday honours list.

The Manchester United and England forward has been honoured for his efforts to ensure no child went hungry during the summer holidays, which forced the government into a U-turn over meal vouchers, and on Friday he called on Boris Johnson to extend the scheme over the half-term break.

He said: "As a young black man from Wythenshawe, never did I think I would be accepting an MBE, never mind an MBE at the age of 22." It was a "very special moment" for himself and his family.

But he added: "The fight to protect our most vulnerable children is far from over. I would be doing my community, and the families I have met and spoken with, an injustice if I didn't use

this opportunity to respectfully urge the prime minister, who recommended me for this honour, to support our children during the October half-term with an extension of the voucher scheme, as the furlough scheme comes to an end and we face increased unemployment."

Postponed from June to include people on the frontline of the fight against coronavirus, the honours list reflects a nation's thanks to Covid-19 heroes for countless selfless good deeds during the pandemic.

Johnson said: "This year's honours recipients are a testament to the sort of country we are – caring, compassionate and resolute in the face of a global pandemic. The hard work and dedication of these local, often unsung heroes has helped carry us through. I congratulate them all."

The majority of the honours go to ordinary people for their extraordinary efforts, with 414 of the 1,495 total going to those on the frontline.

We thought it was an under-par score but wicket behaved differently: Iyer

SHARJAH, OCT 10 (PTI): Delhi Capitals captain Shreyas Iyer said he thought his team had put up a below-par total against Rajasthan Royals but it was stopping on the wicket and the bowlers executed their plans really well," said Iyer at the post-match presentation.

"We were also going to bowl first with the dew factor, but thankfully it went in our favour." Delhi are sitting pretty at the top of the points table with five wins in six games.

Talking about the campaign so far, Iyer

fer a 46-run loss.

"I'm really happy with the way we came out in the second innings. We thought it was an under par score but it was stopping on the wicket and the bowlers executed their plans really well," said Iyer at the post-match presentation.

"The boys have shared their thoughts pre-tour and their strengths and weaknesses. I am happy with how we are progressing and hoping to maintain the momentum.

said: "I am enjoying captaincy because the players make it really easy, especially the bowlers. Even the way the support staff is managing the team meetings is commendable.

"I think the mixture in our team is really good and we have worked really hard on this.

"The boys have shared their thoughts pre-tour and their strengths and weaknesses. I am happy with how we are progressing and hoping to maintain the momentum.

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Lesson not learned: Europe unprepared as 2nd virus wave hits

ROME (AP): Europe's second wave of coronavirus infections has struck well before flu season even started, with intensive care wards filling up again and bars shutting down. Making matters worse, authorities say, is a widespread case of "COVID-fatigue."

Record high daily infections in several eastern European countries and sharp rebounds in the hard-hit west have made clear that Europe never really crushed the COVID-19 curve as hoped, after springtime lockdowns.

Spain this week declared a state of emergency for Madrid amid increasing tensions between local and national authorities over virus containment measures. Germany offered up soldiers to help with contact tracing in newly flaring hotspots. Italy mandated masks outdoors and warned that for the first time since the country became the European epicenter of the pandemic, the health system was facing "significant critical issues" as hospitals fill up.

The Czech Republic's "Farewell Covid" party in June, when thousands of Prague residents dined outdoors at a 500-meter (yard) long table across the Charles Bridge to celebrate their victory over the virus, seems painfully naive now that the country has the highest per-capita infection rate on the continent, at 398 per 100,000 residents.

"I have to say clearly that the situation is not good," the Czech interior minister, Jan Hamacek, acknowledged this week.

Epidemiologists and residents alike are pointing the finger at governments for having failed to seize on the summertime lull in cases to prepare adequately for the expected autumn onslaught, with testing and ICU staffing still critically short. In Rome this week, people waited in line for 8-10 hours to get tested, while front-line medics from Kiev to Paris found themselves once again pulling long, short-staffed shifts in overcrowded wards.

"When the state of alarm was abandoned, it was time to invest in prevention, but that hasn't been done," lamented Margarita del Val, viral immunology expert with the Severo Ochoa Molecular Biology Center, part of Spain's top research body, CSIC.

"We are in the fall wave without having resolved the summer wave," she told an online forum this week. Tensions are rising in cities where new restrictions have been re-imposed, with hundreds of Romanian hospitality workers protesting this week after Bucharest once again shut down the capital's indoor restaurants, theaters and dance venues.

"We were closed for six months, the restaurants didn't work and yet the number of cases still rose," said Moaghin Marius Ciprian, owner of the popular Grivita Pub n Grill who took part in the protest.

Delta adds insult to injury in hurricane-ravaged Louisiana

LAFAYETTE, LA. (AP): Ripping tarps from damaged roofs and scattering massive piles of storm debris in the wind and water, Hurricane Delta inflicted a new round of destruction in Louisiana communities still reeling along a path Hurricane Laura carved just six weeks earlier.

Delta hit as a Category 2 hurricane, with top winds of 100 mph (155 kph) before rapidly weakening over land. By Saturday morning, it dwindled to a tropical storm with 45 mph (75 kph) winds, but storm surge and flash floods continued to pose dangers across much of southwestern Louisiana and parts of neighboring Texas. Mississippi also got its fair share of rain overnight.

Delta made landfall Friday evening near the coastal town of Creole — only 15 miles (24 kilometers) or so from where Laura struck land in August, killing 27 people in Louisiana. It then moved directly over Lake Charles, a waterfront city about 30 miles (50 kilometers) inland where the earlier hurricane damaged nearly every home and building, and where moldy mattresses, sawed-up trees and other debris still lined the streets.

Lake Charles Mayor Nic Hunter spoke with The Associated Press as he rode out Delta's arrival downtown. He said tarps were flying off homes across the city, and piles of wreckage were being blown around, some of it floating in the surge of ocean water.

"I'm in a building right



now with a tarp on it and just the sound of the tarp flapping on the building sounds like someone pounding with a sledgehammer on top of the building," Hunter said. "It's pretty intense."

Water leaked through the ceiling of Ernest Jack's bedroom in Lake Charles as he tried to sleep through the storm. Jack said a tarp covering roof damage caused by Laura hadn't blown off. His windows were covered to protect against flying debris.

"It's raining real hard; it's flooding; the wind is strong," Jack said Friday night. "I'm OK. I'm not worried about nothing, just praying that everything goes well."

In Lake Arthur, Delta's winds peeled shingles off the roof of L'Banca Albergo, an eight-room boutique hotel in what used to be a bank.

"I probably don't have a shingle left on the top of this hotel," owner Roberta Palermo said as the winds gusted outside.

The electricity was out and Palermo said she could see pieces of metal coming off the roof of a 100-year-old building across the street. Unsecured trash cans were flying around the streets.

"There is a lot of power lines down all over the place, there's ... really deep water in certain spots," said hotel guest Johnny Weaver. He had been out in the weather with his friends earlier and one friend's car was stranded in the water.

Tropical storm force winds reached 160 miles (260 kilometers) outward from the storm's center early Saturday. A 68 mph (110 kph) gust was reported at LSU's Tiger Stadium

overnight, and a 55 mph (68 kph) gust was reported at Adams County airport in Natchez, Mississippi.

In Galveston, Texas, about 100 miles (160 kilometers) from where the center made landfall, winds toppled trees, street signs and two homes under construction, and with dunes flattened by earlier storms, the surge reached beneath raised houses. Large swells and rip currents prompted beach closures as far west as the mouth of the Rio Grande.

Delta also downed trees across Mississippi, including one that landed on a Jackson-based WLBT-TV vehicle with a news crew inside. No one was injured.

Forecasters said the storm would move into the Tennessee Valley Saturday and into Sunday as a tropical depression.

sion.

In Delta's wake, about 740,000 homes and businesses were without power in Louisiana, Texas and Mississippi early Saturday, according to the tracking website PowerOutage.us.

Delta, the 25th named storm of an unprecedented Atlantic hurricane season, made the record books when it struck the Gulf Coast. It was the first Greek-alphabet-named hurricane to hit the continental U.S. And it became the 10th named storm to hit the mainland U.S. this year, breaking a century-old record set in 1916, according to Colorado State University researcher Phil Klotzbach.

Delta was the fourth named storm to strike Louisiana in 2020. Tropical Storm Marco fizzled as it hit the southeast Louisiana tip

just three days before Laura struck. And Tropical Storm Cristobal caused damage in southeast Louisiana in June.

Some who rode out Laura hunkered down again with Delta. In Lafayette, about 75 miles (120 kilometers) east of Lake Charles, Jeanne-Marie Gove could hear debris hitting her door as her patio gate banged open and shut. She said the roof from a trailer at the mobile home park behind her apartment was torn off and tossed down the sidewalk.

"The wind is much worse than what Hurricane Laura brought," Gove said in a message on Twitter.

"The wind gusts are making the glass from our windows bow inward," she added. "It's pretty scary."

Hunter said he thought more people evacuated for Delta than Laura, reducing emergency calls during the worst of the storm. Across the disaster area, people could only wait for the waters to recede before getting a full view of the damage.

"I believe that Delta could actually be more of a flooding issue than Laura was from what I'm seeing and what I'm hearing right now in the thick of it," the mayor said Friday night.

"We really just need people not to forget about us," Hunter said. "We are going to be in the recovery mode for months and probably years from these two hurricanes. It's just unprecedented and historic what has happened to us."

China classical music festival to feature Wuhan musicians

BEIJING (AP): China is holding its first classical music festival since the start of the coronavirus pandemic, featuring musicians from the outbreak's initial epicenter in an attempt to aid in the psychological and emotional healing process.

Zou Ye, a composer from Wuhan, the central Chinese city where the virus was first detected late last year, said that Saturday night's concert is part of an effort to work through frustration and helplessness on the way toward love and tolerance and, hopefully, some meaning to what he calls "nature's tremendous revenge."

Musicians from the Wuhan Philharmonic Orchestra will present a choral symphony "To 2020" dedicated to the victims of COVID-19, co-written by Zou and two partners.

More than 11 million people in Wuhan and its



surrounding area underwent a draconian 76-day lockdown at the start of the pandemic. The city accounts for 3,869 of China's 4,634 deaths from the virus and the bulk of its more than 85,000 cases.

The end of the lockdown on April 8 was seen as a key turning point in China's battle against the virus, which has now been contained, with no cases of local transmission reported in more than two months.

The emotional trauma still lingers for many survivors, victims' families and front-line health

workers, and music can offer another medium for exploring such feelings, Zou said.

"All we want to do is to tell the story of this historic event that we experienced and that has changed the world, and how we should face the reality and reflect on ourselves," Zou told The Associated Press. "There is a lot of information in the work — there is frustration, helplessness, eulogization and hope."

Zou said the festival also seeks to offer a ray of hope to musicians who have suffered economi-

cally from the pandemic through a lack of performing opportunities.

"When the musicians of the world are losing jobs, we can start working with orchestras," he said. "This is not easy (and) we are grateful for this."

Amid government efforts to promote its successes in fighting the virus, Zou said the festival's organizers were not "doing this for official propaganda."

"The work was not even asked for by the authorities," he said. "It was totally out of our own intention."

Israel to 'immediately' bring over 2,000 Ethiopian Jews

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA (AP): Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has told his Ethiopian counterpart that his country has the intention to "immediately" bring over some 2,000 Ethiopian Jews. The announcement came Friday after a phone call with Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed.

Netanyahu's office said the decision comes "out of his commitment to the continued aliyah of Jews to Israel."

Some 13,000 Ethiopian Jews are in the capital, Ad-

dis Ababa, and in Gondar, most of them waiting to be taken to Israel, which they call home. Most live in dire conditions and have threatened to stage a hunger strike if they're not allowed to travel to their "homeland." Many say they have family members who have settled in Israel.

"Some 250 people have left for Israel within the past year until COVID-19 came. Now the travel has stopped, but Israeli officials are conducting interviews online," Nigussie Alemu Eyasu, program

director for the Ethiopian Jews Community, told The Associated Press. Activists say Israel's government in 2015 pledged to bring the remaining Ethiopian Jews to Israel. In 1991 while Ethiopia was in the midst of civil war, Israel carried out the dramatic Operation Solomon, airlifting out some 14,500 Ethiopian Jews in less than two days.

Ethiopian Jews are often referred to in Ethiopia as "Falashas," a derogatory word which translates into "strangers" or "migrants."

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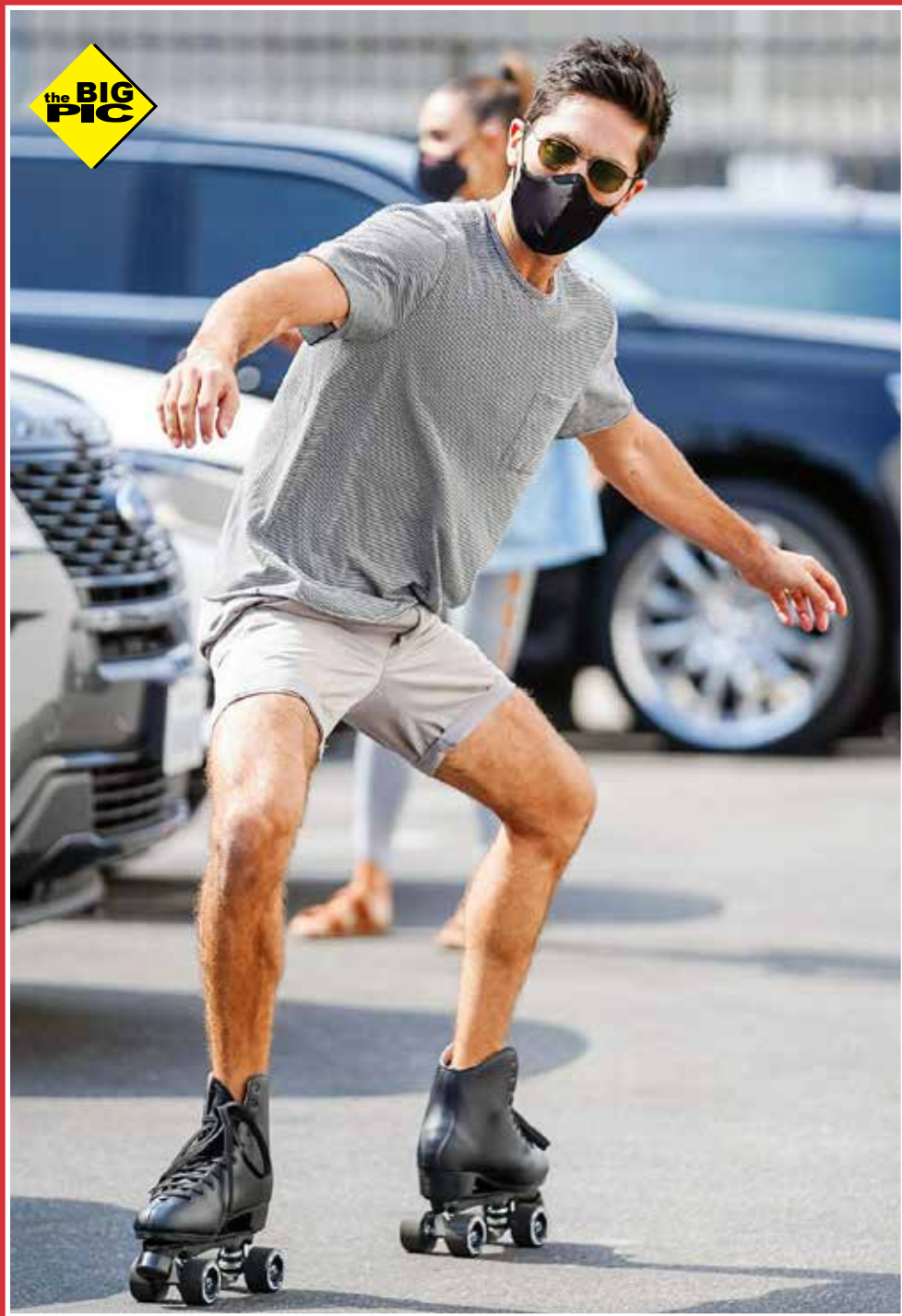
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Mindy Kaling Reveals Heartfelt New Details About Her Pregnancy and Baby Boy Spencer

"It's been so fun having him in the house, I almost forget I'm outnumbered now," Mindy Kaling gushed in a new update about her newborn son Spencer. Get more deets on her surprise baby news below!

Mindy Kaling is in baby bliss.

After announcing the birth of son Spencer Kaling on The Late Show With Stephen Colbert last night, the A-list star took to Instagram to express her gratitude for all the well wishes from her fans and famous pals. The 41-year-old actress also offered new insight into her covert pregnancy and how daughter Katherine "Kit" Kaling is adjusting to big sisterhood.

"Thanks everyone for your kind words about the new addition to my family," Mindy gushed on Friday, Oct. 9. "Being pregnant during the pandemic was a little scary, but it made me appreciate all the doctors, nurses and medical professionals who continue to work tirelessly giving treatment to those who need it, putting their own lives at risk."

As for baby Spencer, The Office star said he's "happy and healthy," adding, "his sister is obsessed with him (well, his toys)."

She concluded, "It's been so fun having him in the house, I almost forget I'm outnumbered now. Love and grateful hugs. Xoxo MK."

Mindy's celeb colleagues were all in agreement: We really, really needed this great

news. "Mindy, this is the best news and happiest possible way to close out the week—congratulations!" Jennifer Garner commented, while Angela Kinsey, who starred opposite Mindy on The Office, wrote, "So happy for you Mindy!! Sending you all my love."

Octavia Spencer also paid tribute to the new mama, writing on Instagram, "Congratulations @mindykaling on the arrival of your son! May we make this a better world for him and all children!!!"

So how exactly did Mindy pull off all those at-home photo shoots without spoiling her pregnancy news? According to one source, it's all about the angles.

"Mindy actually hasn't been editing herself or her belly in any of her photos," the insider shared with E! News exclusively. "She carried out instead of wide, and she was careful to shoot from specific angles, so you couldn't tell she was pregnant from the pictures of her on social. If you looked at her straight on, you couldn't tell she was pregnant."

The source said Mindy originally planned to announce her pregnancy at the Met Gala in May, but plans changed after the coronavirus pandemic forced its cancellation.

All's well that ends well for Mindy, Kit and Spencer, but here's hoping we see the adorable trio hit the iconic red carpet at next year's gala instead.



Paris Hilton protest calls for closure of Utah school

PROVO, UTAH (AP): Paris Hilton has been speaking out about abuse she said she suffered at a boarding school in Utah, and on Friday she took her push nearly to the school's front doors.

Hilton organized a protest in a park near Provo Canyon School, along with several hundreds of others who share stories of abuse they say they suffered there or at similar schools for troubled youth. She is calling for the closure of the school.

Hilton, a socialite who became a reality TV star, and many others wore black T-shirts with red letters on the back that said, "survivor" and on the front read, "breaking code silence," a reference to Hilton's new campaign to compel others to shed light on what she believes is a corrupt industry that manipulates parents and traumatizes youth. It was Hilton's first time back to the area since she was there as a teen, when she says she was verbally, emotionally and physically abused in what she described as "torture."

Since a documentary titled "This is Paris" was released on YouTube last month, other celebrities have also spoken out about their experiences at that school or others like it, including Michael Jackson's daughter Paris Jackson and tattoo artist Kat Von D.

"It's something so traumatic that you don't even want to think it's real," Hilton said in a speech to the crowd. "It's something I blocked from my memory for forever."

The institution is now under new ownership and the administration has said it can't comment on anything that came before, including Hilton's time

there. Owners of the school declined comment Friday, pointing to a statement on the school website that said the previous owners sold the school in 2000. The school aims to help youth who have struggled in typical home and school environments, some of whom are dealing with drug addiction or acting out violently, according to the website. "We

would beat her, force her to take unknown pills, watch her shower and send her to solitary confinement without clothes as punishment.

The 39-year-old says the treatment was so "traumatizing" that she suffered nightmares and insomnia for years.

After she went home, she was determined to protect herself and even-



are committed to providing high-quality care to youth with special, and often complex, emotional, behavioral and psychiatric needs," the statement read.

In the documentary, Hilton says she got into the nightlife scene in New York as a teenager and would sneak out and go to clubs while her family lived at the Waldorf Astoria hotel. Her exasperated parents sent her away to various programs to straighten out. When she was 17, Hilton was finally sent to what she describes as "the worst of the worst": Provo Canyon School in Utah.

She stayed at Provo for 11 months and says while there, she was abused mentally and physically, claiming staff

tually constructed the persona that she embodied when she became famous on the reality show "The Simple Life" in the early 2000s, the documentary revealed.

Hilton and others at the protest vowed to push forward until all schools that mistreat youth are shut down. After she and others spoke at the park, she led the group in a protest walk until they arrived at the front gates of the school, where she stopped to pose in front of a school sign holding her own poster that said, "Shut down Provo."

"There is thousands of these schools all around. Provo Canyon is just the first one that I want to go down," Hilton said. "From there, it will be a domino effect."

Mariah Carey's Fans Are Certain She's Dropping a Christmas Collab With Ariana Grande and Jennifer Hudson

Fans think that the "AG" and "JH" on these chairs mean that Mariah Carey is teaming up with Ariana Grande and Jennifer Hudson for a Christmas song.

We don't want a lot for Christmas, but we do need a holiday collaboration from Mariah Carey, Jennifer Hudson, and Ariana Grande!

On Twitter Oct. 9, Mariah caused a buzz amongst fans when she shared a photo of three chairs. One was labeled "AG," the other "MC" and the third "JH." Mariah also included a Christmas tree emoji, suggesting that whatever she had cooking would involve the holidays in some way.

Naturally, fans freaked out, thinking that the queen of Christmas was releasing a new song to rival the chart-topping hit "All I Want for Christmas Is You."

This collaboration would be a big deal, not only because it would unite three vocal legends, but because it would finally squash any rumors of beef between Mariah and Ariana. Early in her career, Ariana's look and vocals were compared to Mariah's, a comparison that Mariah's former husband Nick Cannon claimed bothered the "We Belong Together" singer.

"It was like, 'the next' or 'the new' Mariah Carey," Nick explained to Vlad TV in 2018. "[And Mariah's like] 'The f**k does that mean?' I'm the Mariah



Carey, why do you need another one? Why do you need the next one?"

Fortunately, all seemed totally friendly between the superstars in March of 2019, when Ariana wished Mariah a happy birthday, and the star responded with a warm "thank you" on her Instagram story.

Jennifer is a longtime fan of Mariah's, so it makes sense that the two would possibly collaborate. In 2019, the Oscar winner presented Mimi with the Icon Award at the Billboard Music Awards.

If this Christmas collab does happen, it will be iconic times three!

Emily Ratajowski is working on book of essays, 'My Body'

NEW YORK (AP): Model and activist Emily Ratajowski has a book deal. "EmRata," as her millions of online followers know her, is working on an essay collection called "My Body." Metropolitan Books will published it in 2022.

According to Metropolitan, an imprint of Henry Holt and Company, Ratajowski will explore "what it means to be a woman and a commodity," how men treat women and why women permit it.

"Emily Ratajowski reveals herself to be devastatingly honest, nuanced, and strong — I'm not surprised that she thinks of herself first as a writer," Metropolitan editor Sara Bershtel said in a statement Friday. "I also admire how outspoken she is, how political, and how unafraid — what force she'll be!"

Ratajowski first rose to international attention through her starring role in the "Blurred Lines" music video, in which she appeared alongside singer Robin Thicke. She is an entrepreneur and activist who has supported Bernie Sanders' two presidential campaigns and designed dresses for which part of the proceeds are given to Planned Parenthood.

ARIES:

Aries, you're the gold standard! You're a sorceress, a magician, an embodiment of the divine feminine. This phase of your life is about reconnecting with your true nature and learning to be unapologetic about who you are. You've spent too much time hiding your magic. Remember, the Universe will test your resolve once you commit to being your most authentic self. Face your challenges head on as you vow to not doubt yourself even for a millisecond.

Tip: You're learning to be who you are unapologetically.

TAURUS:

Sometimes, things are a lot more complicated in our heads than they are in our physical reality. Could you be giving your negative thoughts the power to rule your life? Inner awareness is the need of the hour, Taurus, and with it, the recognition that you have the power to bring forth peace and harmony. But first, you must embody your truth—and you must do so unapologetically.

Tip: It's time to embody your truth.

GEMINI:

The Universe is in the mood to fulfil your wildest dreams. Some would call what's taking place right now a stroke of luck. But, your higher self knows it's your patience and persistence that has brought you to this point in your journey. If you've been thinking about sending out a prayer of gratitude, now is the time. What's more, peace and tranquility will also be yours to keep in the coming days. The self-work is beginning to show, Gemini, and it's creating a cataclysmic shift in your outer reality.

Tip: The Universe has got your back.

CANCER:

Now is not the time to doubt yourself, Cancer. It's a time to trust

the gifts that are inherent to you and to embody that warrior spirit. Remember, the Universe can only point you towards an opening. It is up to you to tap into the power of free will and make the most of the given opportunities. Your ability to act in time will make space for the greatest transformation of your life.

Tip: Timing is everything.

LEO:

It's an 'all's well that ends well' kind of vibe in the Leo sanctuary. Things are coming together unexpectedly, putting both your heart and your mind at ease. Overheard at the cosmic conference: a prayer of gratitude will give your blessings the power to grow manifold. Spending time with your family is also going to take centre stage in the coming days. When was the last time you had a heart-to-heart with your sibling(s) or spent the day exchanging stories? This weekend is providing you with the perfect opportunity to have that tête-à-tête you've been yearning for.

Tip: Spend quality time with your tribe.

VIRGO:

The trouble is, you're trying to do everything on your own, and no, it isn't helping your cause. Let 'delegation' become your power word Virgo, an action that sometimes requires you to hire and fire the right people. You know exactly what needs to be done here. Don't delay the decision making process. On the upside, the opportunity for short distance travel is on the cards too. Some of you could be preparing for a personal voyage, while others could be thinking about work-work-work. PS: There's no reason you cannot combine the both.

Tip: Delegate.

LIBRA:

The weekend finds you re-adjusting your crown, reclaiming your

power, and redirecting your energy towards self-growth. Self-care is a big mood around here and you're realising it's so much more than that weekly face mask. It's about prioritising yourself and your own needs—saying 'yes' to yourself, minus the guilt that weighed you down previously. Not everybody is going to understand the journey you have undertaken, Libra, and that's okay. You do you as you actively free yourself from the need for validation.

Tip: Say 'yes' to yourself.

SCORPIO:

The truth is, we as humans have a PhD in creating our own problems. Problems that probably never existed in the first place. How is this pattern playing out in your life and what are the ways in which you are giving into the antics of your monkey mind? Scorpio, the cards are urging you to step away from the scene of crime and practice the art of detachment. It is by looking within that you will gain perspective on your circumstances.

Tip: Practice the art of detachment.

SAGITTARIUS:

What if we said nothing is written in stone and that you have the power to create the future as you go along? It's time to exercise those manifesting muscles, Sagittarius. The intentions you set now will have a significant impact on the next chapter of your life. Don't be in a rush to move forward, though. Experience this in-between phase fully. Revel in what it is revealing to you. It's not everyday that one gets the opportunity to simply 'be' and dream a brand new world into being.

Tip: Set an intention for positive change.

CAPRICORN:

A word you want to let go of this weekend: struggle. The cards

are pointing towards a tug of war between your personal and professional life. There's a chance your work appointments could be interfering with your personal commitments. The more you focus on the S-word, the more you will attract it into your experience. Tapping into your inner hustler, on the other hand, will help you work smart (rather than hard) and show up for those you love in time. Capricorn, it's all about perfecting the fine art of balance!

Tip: 'Balance' is the operative word.

AQUARIUS:

This is a blessed time in the Aquarius HQ. A time of exercising your manifestation muscles and watching your wildest dreams come true. No matter how small the miracle, it deserves a prayer of gratitude. Water bearers who have been struggling with disharmony on the personal front will find that things are getting resolved seamlessly. Remember, you don't have to fix everybody and everything. The simple act of allowing yourself to receive love and support will set in motion positive change.

Tip: Watch your wildest dreams come true.

PISCES:

Sometimes, everything is perfect in our outer reality, yet we experience a sense of unrest within. Today, the cards are urging you to recognise what isn't in alignment with your truth, and let it go with loving awareness. Society's standards be damned! Some of you may find that your material pursuits are deeply unsatisfying. Set off on that adventure you feel inspired to, Pisces, and know that occult and spirituality help you access portals that lead to the unseen realms.

Tip: You're in the mood for mystery and magic.