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# Summit TIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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## SIKKIM GOVT VEHICLES TO BE ZERO EMISSION IN 14 YEARS?

# Sikkim Govt signs COP26 declaration, commits to switch to zero emission vehicles by 2035

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 11 NOV:**

The declaration might not be legally binding, but it is a public commitment nevertheless, one which could see the Sikkim Government replace its fleet of fuel-guzzling, smoke-spewing vehicles with zero-emission variants in as few as 14 years.

The Government of India might still be unsure about its commitment to zero-emission vehicles, but the State Government appears clear when it comes to accelerating the transition to 100% zero emis-

sion cars and vans. The Govt of Sikkim is the only signatory from India to the "COP26 declaration on accelerating the transition to 100% zero emission cars and vans."

Sikkim is now in a group of governments, automakers and others which have signed on to an agreement to transition to 100% zero-emission sales of new cars and vans by 2040 globally and by 2035 in "leading markets."

The declaration, announced at the COP26 climate conference in Glasgow, has been hailed

as a significant step towards decarbonizing the automotive industry.

As per a post on the official website of the United Kingdom Government, Sikkim is in the group of around 40 cities, states and regional governments to have signed on for the transition.

24 countries, India is not one of them, have also agreed to the pledge.

Launched by the UK COP presidency underway at Glasgow currently, the Declaration aims to rapidly accelerate the transition to zero emission vehicles to achieve

the goals of the Paris Agreement.

"Together, we will work towards all sales of new cars and vans being zero emission globally by 2040, and by no later than 2035 in leading markets," the declaration reads.

As for Sikkim's specific commitment pledged to yesterday, the declaration reads: "As cities, states, and regional governments, we will work towards converting our owned or leased car and van fleets to zero emission vehicles by 2035 at the latest, as well as put-

ting in place policies that will enable, accelerate, or otherwise incentivise the transition to zero emission vehicles as soon as possible, to the extent possible given our jurisdictional powers."

While results of policy incentives to promote zero-emission vehicles is out of the hands of the State Government, converting its own fleet to zero emission vehicles is something it can deliver.

However, there is no official confirmation of this pledge from the State Government and

senior officials were not in the know of things till the time this report was filed. It remains unclear as to who or which agency represented Sikkim at the COP26 deliberations of this declaration yesterday. The COP, or Conference of Parties summit, began in the Scottish city of Glasgow on 31 October and will go on till 12 November. India, represented by the NITI Aayog, participated in the fourth ministerial dialogue of the Zero Emission Vehicle Transition Council, media reports inform.

## CM releases Sikkim Adhoc Teacher Regularisation Policy on National Education Day



**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 11 NOV:**

Chief Minister PS Tamang today released the Sikkim Adhoc Teacher Regularisation Policy at the National Education Day celebration organised by the All Sikkim Adhoc and Temporary Employees Association here at Saramsa Garden.

Writing about the policy in a Facebook post, the CM observed: "The people of Sikkim deserve all the accolades for this policy as their trust and faith in us during the general election has led to this change in the previous system."

As per the policy,

ad hoc teachers will be eligible for regularisation upon completing eight years of continuous service as on 31 Dec, 2020 and 31 Dec of every year thereafter.

Upon completion of this 8-year tenure, and provided that they meet the minimum NCTE norms, they will qualify for regularisation which will be subject to allocation of budget by the Education Department for that year, availability of corresponding vacancies and recommendation of the Sikkim State Teachers Recruitment Board.

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## Delta remains main variant of concern in India: Genome sequencing panel

**NEW DELHI, 11 Nov [NDTV]:** The Delta variant of COVID-19 continues to be the main variant of concern (VOC), while other variants of interest (VOI) or concern are now negligible in sequencing data from India, the Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomics Consortium (INSACOG) said.

While an INSACOG bulletin said there is no change in the global scenario, it also noted that, in India, Delta (B.1.617.2 and AY.x) continues to be the main variant of concern.

"Delta, including B.1.617.2 (AY) and AY.x sublineages, continues to be the main VOC globally. As per the latest WHO update, Delta has outcompeted other variants in most countries and there is now declining prevalence of other variants among SARS-CoV-2 sequences submitted to publicly available datasets or reported to WHO," it said.

"No new VOI or VOC are noted, and other VOC and VOI other than Delta are now negligible in sequencing data from India," it said.

Delta, which was first detected in India in October last year, led to the devastating second wave of the coronavirus pandemic in the country, which was at its peak in April and May.

INSACOG, a consortium of 28 national laboratories, was set up in December 2020 to monitor the genomic variations in SARS-CoV-2, the COVID-19 causing virus. A pan-India network, it functions under the Union health ministry.

## 6/372, Sikkim daily TPR comes in low at 1.6%

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 11 NOV:**

Sikkim's daily test positivity rate for COVID-19 came in at a low 1.6% on Thursday with six new cases detected from the testing of 372 samples. All the six new cases were registered in East District. The state's tally of confirmed cases since testing began on 28 Feb last year now stands at 32,080.

In further reassuring news, no Covid deaths were reported in the last 24 hours and the toll here continues to hold at 400.

As per the Daily Report of COVID-19 in Sikkim released by the Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme of Health Department, all six cases were detected in RT-PCR

testing of 164 samples, with all four samples screened through TruNat and 204 samples put through rapid antigen testing returning negative.

In the meantime, four more COVID patients were released from home isolation yesterday after making full recoveries. With this, the number of recovered cases has inched up to 31,221. The state now boasts a recovery rate of 98.3%.

There are currently 125 active Covid cases in the State, of whom two are currently admitted in ICU.

Yesterday, only 38 people received the Covishield vaccine against COVID-19 in Sikkim, of whom four received their first jab while 34 completed their vaccination schedule with the second dose.

## Active COVID-19 cases in country lowest in 266 days

**NEW DELHI, NOV 11 (PTI):** India added 13,091 new coronavirus infections in a span of 24 hours taking the country's total tally of COVID-19 cases to 3,44,01,670, while the active cases declined to 1,38,556, the lowest in 266 days, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Thursday.

The death toll climbed to 4,62,189 with 340 fresh fatalities, according to the data updated at 8 am. The daily rise in new coronavirus infections has been below 20,000 for 34 straight days and less than 50,000 daily new cases have been reported for 137 consecutive days now.

The active cases comprise 0.40 per cent of the total infections, the lowest since March 2020, the ministry said. A decrease of 1,127 cases has been recorded in the active COVID-19 caseload in a span of 24 hours.

The daily positivity

rate was recorded at 1.10 per cent. It has been less than two per cent for last 38 days. The weekly positivity rate was also recorded at 1.18 per cent. It has been below two per cent for the last 48 days, according to the ministry. The number of people who have recuperated from the disease surged to 3,38,00,925 while the case fatality rate was recorded at 1.34 per cent.

The cumulative doses administered in the country so far under the nationwide COVID-19 vaccination drive has exceeded 110.23 crore.

India's COVID-19 tally had crossed the 20-lakh mark on August 7, 2020, 30 lakh on August 23, 40 lakh on September 5 and 50 lakh on September 16. It went past 60 lakh on September 28, 70 lakh on October 11, crossed 80 lakh on October 29, 90 lakh on November 20 and surpassed the one-crore mark on December 19.

India crossed the grim milestone of two crore on May 4 and three crore on June 23.

The 340 new fatalities include 259 from Kerala and 17 from Maharashtra. Of the 259 deaths, 48 were reported over the last few days and 211 were designated as Covid deaths after receiving appeals based on the new guidelines of the Centre and Supreme Court directions, a Kerala state government release said on Wednesday.

A total of 4,62,189 deaths have been reported so far in the country including 1,40,447 from Maharashtra, 38,131 from Karnataka, 36,247 from Tamil Nadu, 34,621 from Kerala, 25,091 from Delhi, 22,904 from Uttar Pradesh and 19,267 from West Bengal. The ministry stressed that more than 70 per cent of the deaths occurred due to comorbidities.

"Our figures are being reconciled with the Indian Council of Medical Research," the ministry said on its website, adding that state-wise distribution of figures is subject to further verification and reconciliation.

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## 38 injured as skulk of foxes attack Bengal village

**ENGLISH BAZAR (WB), Nov 11 (PTI):** At least 38 people were injured in an attack by a skulk of foxes in West Bengal's Malda district on Thursday, police said.

The incident happened in Hardam Nagar village in Harishchandrapur police station area, they said.

A skulk of 15-20 foxes attacked several houses in the village at the break of the dawn, injuring at least 40 people as most were caught by surprise, police said.

Twenty of them were critically injured and are undergoing treatment, they said.

The angry villagers then beat two foxes to death, while the rest managed to escape, police said.

"Total 38 people were injured in the attack by the foxes. All of them are being treated at Harishchandrapur Rural Hospital," Harishchandrapur 2 Block Development Officer BijoyGiri said.

"The forest department has been informed and they have already visited the area," he added.

## Supreme Court reserves decision on widening Char Dhamroads

**NEW DELHI, 11 Nov [NDTV]:** The Supreme Court has reserved its decision on widening of roads that are part of the 899-km Char Dham project in Uttarakhand. The court has asked both sides -- the Center and the petitioner non-profit -- to file their written suggestions within two days. The non-profit has asked the court to stop the widening of roads.

The Centre, citing the Chinese build-up on the other side, has appealed for widening the road, which, it said, are feeder roads for the border roads and are of great strategic importance. The Centre has also sought amendment to the top court's order of September 2020, in which the judges kept the Char Dham roads limited to 5.5 meters. The Centre has argued that the roads should be widened up to 10 meters.

During the hearing on November 9, the judges had said the issue was nuanced and the needs of defence and environment have to be balanced. "Defence concerns cannot be over-ridden especially in light of border incidents in the recent past," Justice DY Chandrachud said.

Representing the Centre, Attorney General KK Venugopal said "We do not want the troops to be caught in 1962 situation". "Wide roads are of strategic importance. Trucks carrying artillery, rocket launchers and tanks may have to pass through these roads," the Centre had said, pointing out that China is building "helipads and buildings on the other side".

The petitioner has argued that the army never sought widening of roads. "Someone high up in political power wanted highways on the Char Dhamyatra. And the army then became a reluctant participant".



## Prayers held at accident prone stretch in Rakdong

**GANGTOK, 11 Nov:** Ashaya UtthanSamiti, Middle Tintek, East Sikkim, organized an EkDiwashiyaAatma Shanti Yagnaat Rakshya, 5th mile, Rakdong, today. The purpose of this yagna was to pray for the salvation of those who died in accidents on this route and to pray for the safety of commuters on this stretch.

## Tadong MLA inaugurates Apollo Diagnostic Centre at Sichey



**SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 11 Nov:** Tadong MLA, GT Dhungel, inaugurated Apollo Diagnostic Centre at Sichey here today. The function was also

attended by Gynaecologist, Dr RN Devkota, and HOD Pathology Department, STNM Hospital, Dr Tara Sharma, a press release informs.

## Group from Kanyakumari makes Nathula Yatra



**SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 11 Nov:** Seemanta Chetna Manch,Purvottar, organised 'The Nathula Pass Yatra 2021' from 08 to 10 November, a press release informs.

The event is part of 'SeemaDarshanYatra', a project to introduce people from various parts of the country to frontier regions in border areas.

the release adds. For the Nathula visit, a group from Kanyakumari and Trivandrum were taken up to the mountain pass with Tibet.

SCMP introduces itself as a social-cultural non-political organisation working to promote safety, security and development of international border areas of the North East Region.

## South Africa's last white president of Apartheid era dies at 85

**JOHANNESBURG, 11 Nov [AFP]:** FW de Klerk, South Africa's last white president, died on Thursday aged 85, his foundation announced.

De Klerk and South Africa's first black president Nelson Mandela shared the Nobel Peace Prize in 1993 for leading the "miracle" transition from white rule in the country.

He died after a battle with cancer, his foundation said in a statement.

De Klerk had announced his diagnosis on his 85th birthday, on March 18 this year.

"It is with the deepest sadness that the FW de Klerk Foundation must announce that former president FW de Klerk died peacefully at his

home in Fresnaye earlier this morning following his struggle against mesothelioma cancer," it said.

He is survived by his wife Elita, children Jan and Susan, and grandchildren.

"The family will, in due course, make an announcement regarding funeral arrangements," it added.

He is most remembered for his famous speech delivered on February 2, 1990, announcing the lifting of a ban on the African National Congress (ANC) and other liberation movements.

In the same speech he ordered the release from prison of anti-apartheid icon Mandela after 27 years in jail.

## Team led by DC South inspects ongoing work in Sada and Phamtam

**BIKASH CHETTRI NAMCHI, 11 Nov:**

District Collector South along with his team comprising of Block Development Officer (Ravangla), District Project Officer (South), Assistant Engineer (BAC Ravangla), Assistant Engineer (SDZP), concerned Junior Engineer (BAC & SDZP) and Panchayats visited Sada and Phamtam wards under Borong Phamtam GPU today.

The tour was conducted to inspect the ongoing works under various departments, functioning of schools, ICDS centres, PHSC and to assess the damages caused by the monsoon.

The team inspected Phamtam and Sada ICDS, Phamtam Makarjung



Primary School, Sada Primary School, Kisim Khola Bridge, Langsing Dara Bhir, Community Sanitary Complex near Sada Primary School and PHSC Phamtam.

Some of the structures were found to be partially damaged due to earthquakes or heavy rains.

At the ICDS centres,

the DC checked all the log books for maintenance of records and enquired about the health of lactating mothers, children, availability of Paustik Ahaar, vaccination drives etc. Similarly, the DC checked the quality of education being imparted to students in schools and problems faced by the institutes.

## Horti Dept and Spices Board explore possibility of reviving Tingzey's large cardamom plantations



**WANGCHUK BHUTIA MANGAN, 11 Nov:**

An awareness programme on revival of large cardamom was convened by the Spices Board of India's Divisional Office at Mangan and the Horticulture Department at Tingzey ward under TibukMangshila GPU of North Sikkim today.

The programme was presided over by Panchayat PresidentMeenaLimboo as chief guest and Deputy Director, Dup TsheringKazi, as guest of honour.

Ms Limboo highlighted that large cardamom, the main cash crop of the region, has been in decline for a while now and that cardamom growers were raising nurseries-despite many difficulties and lack of quality planting materialsor technical knowhow.

She called on Spices Board and Horticulture Department and other line department to come forward with ways and means to revive plantations in Tingzey.

Spices Board Deputy Director, MSRamalingam, spoke about the schemes being implemented by Spices Board while DrTNDeka, Scientist, ICRI Tadong, dealt with disease management for large cardamom plantations and other activities

of the ICRI.

Marmit Lepcha, CEO, Organic Valley FPO,in turn delved on the working of the FPO and invited memberships.

Mr Kaziexplained the Production Incentive Schemes (PIS) provided by the State Govt for different crops and advised farmers to come forward and avail the benefits. He also highlighted the different programmes/ schemes being implemented by department.

He also floated the idea of Horticulture Dept. and Spices Board adoptingTingzey wardfor revival of large cardamom plantations.

## Supreme Court to hear plea of journalist to nix Tripura anti-terror case

**NEW DELHI, 11 Nov [NDTV]:** The Supreme Court has agreed to hear a plea by journalist Shyam Meera Singh and two others that seeks to quash a Tripura Police FIR under controversial anti-terror law UAPA for social media posts - including Mr Singh's "Tripura is burning" tweet - made during violence in the state last month.

In addition to Shyam Meera Singh, the plea was also filed by Supreme Court lawyers Ansar Indori (from the National Confederation of Human Rights Organisation) and Mukesh (from the Peoples' Union of Civil Liberties). Both lawyers visited Tripura as part of an independent fact-finding team.

The plea also seeks a court-monitored probe, a declaration that some parts of the UAPA are unconstitutional, and argues that states being allowed to use UAPA to criminalise fact-finding will lead to a "chilling effect" on freedom of speech, and "only facts convenient to the government will come out".

The fact-finding team, the plea further states, "did not question the sovereignty or territorial integrity of India" and that Mr Singh's 'Tripura is burning' tweet was "factual reporting".

A date for the hearing will be fixed shortly, Chief Justice NV Ramana said, in response to the plea by advocate Prashant Bhushan on behalf of Mr Singh and those seeking to quash the police complaint.

"Petition is filed regarding incidents in Tripura and FIRs and not-

es issued to lawyers who went on a fact-finding mission, and said "Tripura is burning"... we've challenged several issues, including wide definition of 'unlawful activities'," Mr Bhushan told the top court.

"Why didn't you file before (the Tripura) High Court?" Chief Justice Ramana asked.

To this Mr Bhushan replied: "Because we are questioning UAPA as well, and the case needs to be heard urgently as these people face imminent arrest."

"Ok. We will give a date," the Chief Justice said.

The FIR accuses Mr Singh and the others of spreading "fake news" and "distorted or objectionable" content about what the state government has dismissed as allegations of mosques being vandalised and local Muslim communities being attacked after communal violence in neighbouring Bangladesh.

The journalist and those named in the complaint, who include lawyers and activists, face charges ranging from criminal conspiracy and forgery to spreading "fake news", and have been booked under controversial anti-terror law UAPA, or the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. The vaguely worded law - the constitutional validity of which has been challenged in the top court - allows authorities to detain people, without charge, for six months.

Last month retired Supreme Court Justice RF Nariman called UAPA a "draconian act".

## CM releases Sikkim...

The 8-year tenure will be verified by a committee which has already been constituted.

Regularisation of services will also be subject to "satisfactory performance report."

No new posts of any category will be created, the policy also details.

The policy also provides that in case no vacancies are available and/ or the adhoc teacher is found ineligible for regularisation, they can be given regular appointments against vacancies in C and D posts in the Education Department.

Teachers who were within the prescribed age limit at the time of adhoc appointment may be provided age relaxation if they have crossed the age limit at the time when they qualify for regularisation, the policy also provides.

Regularisation will be strictly on the basis of seniority and SSTRB is setting up a screening committee to select suitable candidates for regularisation, the policy adds.

Meanwhile, at the function today, the CM also announced the Government's decision to rename the Sikkim State University to Kanchenjunga State University.

In his address, the CM also reiterated the State Government's commitment to make Sikkim an education hub of the country.

"We have constantly provided budget to the education department to achieve our goal of creating and providing world-class education in the state with utmost priority being given to primary education," he writes.

## KUTSE SHEGU

Kutse Shegu (49th day puja) of Namna Dorjee, who passed away on 27 Sept, 2021 falls on 14 Nov, 2021. We therefore, humbly request our relatives, friends and well-wishers to join us in offering prayers at our residence at Arithang, Gangtok on the aforementioned date, duly following the Covid-19 protocol in place.

We also take this opportunity to thank everyone who stood by us during the time of bereavement. Your support and assistance was indeed a great solace to us. It means a lot and we are truly indebted to each and every one of you.

**Chumzey Doma (Chum Maili) - wife,**  
**Karma Doma Youtso - daughter,**  
**Yangchuk Den Youtso - daughter,**  
**Chopel Lepcha - son-in-law &**  
**Jigme Norbu - son.**

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On the last day of Chhath Puja, devotees made offerings to the rising sun, as can be seen in pic above of prayers at the Durga Mandir at Tadong. With these offerings, devotees ended their 36-hour fast, after which Prasad, of which Thekuwa is the clear favourite, was shared and distributed. [from SANDEEP PRASAD]

## Human rights group questions fair elections in Libya

**CAIRO (AP):** A leading rights group questioned Thursday whether Libyan authorities can hold free and fair elections as long as the rule of law, justice and respect of human rights remain absent.

Human Rights Watch's statement came on the eve of an international conference on Libya in Paris where world leaders and Libya's neighbors are pushing for elections to be held as scheduled Dec. 24.

"The main questions leaders at the summit should ask are: can Libyan authorities ensure an environment free of coercion, discrimination, and intimidation of voters, candidates, and political parties?" the New York-based rights group said in its statement.

The group criticized what it said were Libya's restrictive laws that undermine freedom of speech and association, as well as the presence of armed groups accused of intimidating, attacking and detaining journalists and political activists.

Libya has been engulfed in chaos since a NATO-backed uprising toppled longtime dicta-

tor Moammar Gadhafi in 2011. He was captured, and two months later, killed, by an armed group.

The oil-rich country was for years split between rival governments, one based in the capital, Tripoli, and the other in the eastern part of the country. Each side is backed by different foreign powers and militias. The interim government now in charge was appointed in February after months of U.N.-backed negotiations to lead the country through elections.

HRW called on Libyan interim authorities to revoke all restrictive laws ahead of the elections and to show "a clear commitment" to holding accountable local and foreign fighters who committed crimes during the Libyan civil conflict.

"The upcoming elections are a chance for a much needed reset in Libya and international leaders should take the opportunity to ensure that when Libyans go to vote, they have the best chance to elect their new president and parliament in a free and fair way," read the statement.

## 4th fatal hospital fire of pandemic kills 2 in Romania

**BUCHAREST, ROMANIA (AP):** A fire at a COVID-19 hospital in Romania killed two people Thursday, authorities said. It was the fourth fatal fire at a Romanian COVID-19 hospital during the pandemic.

The blaze broke out in the infectious disease wing of the hospital in the city of Ploiesti as 21 patients were receiving care, authorities said. Officials identified the two victims as men in their 70s. A nurse who reportedly suffered serious burns was transferred to a hospital in Romania's capital of Bucharest.

The cause of the fire, which was quickly extinguished, was not yet known, but an investigation was underway.

Interim Prime Minister Florin Citu sent his condolences Thursday morning to the families of the fire victims and said "such tragedies must not be repeated."

"I always asked that the hospitals be prepared for wave four," Citu said during a news conference. "We are facing an overload of the medical system due to wave four, and everyone involved must ensure that

all measures are taken for the safety of patients."

In recent weeks, Romania's health care system has grappled with a record number of virus infections and deaths. Romania is the European Union's second-least vaccinated nation, with just 40% of adults fully inoculated against the coronavirus.

More than 1,800 COVID-19 patients in Romania are currently receiving intensive care, and hundreds of people with the disease have died every day for the last month.

The Ploiesti hospital fire follows a string of deadly fires that have afflicted Romania's hospitals during the pandemic. On Oct. 1, a fire tore through a COVID-19 hospital in the Romanian port city of Constanta, killing at least seven people.

Ten people died in November 2020 after a fire engulfed an intensive care unit for COVID-19 patients in the northern Romanian town of Piatra Neamt. Another blaze in January engulfed a ward at Bucharest's Matei Bals hospital, killing five people.

## Meeting discusses ICAR-CIFA funded project on diversified fish culture



**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 11 NOV:**

A review meeting was organized for discussion on the Indian Council of Agricultural Research [ICAR]-Central Institute of Freshwater Aquaculture [CIFA] funded project of "Demonstration of diversified fish culture in raceways along different altitudes of Sikkim" at Pakyong, East Sikkim, on 09 Nov, 2021. Director, Dr Saroj Swain, ICAR-CIFA, Pr Scientists, Dr PP Chakrabarty & Dr Padmanav Routray, ICAR-CIFA, Additional Director (Fisheries), CS Rai and few other officials of State Fisheries Directorate along with 15 nearby farmers covered under the project were present in the programme.

A detailed status report on the implementation of the CIFA funded project was presented to the house by Range Officer (Hq), Directorate of Fisheries, Surendra Bhandari. It was informed that under the project nine different varieties of fish seed were stocked in 150 raceways along the different altitudes.

It was also informed that as per the report received from the field the growth of Amur Carp & Grass Carp were found to be very good in all altitudes of Sikkim attaining an average weight of around 500 grams in 8-9 months. The growth of Tilapia below 1200m was very good which was cultured for the first time in the state.

Chocolate Mahseer was also introduced in 10 raceways in the state for the first time. The growth of this fish in altitudes range of below 1000m was found to be very

good. There is huge prospect in culture of fishes like Chocolate Mahseer and Tilapia in the state as their demand is very high.

Further, he stated that growth of fishes like Silver Carp, Pangasius, GI Catla, Jayanti Rohu and Pabda were found to be slow. There were also some instances of mortality due to cold climate prevalent in the area. Farmers also gave their feedback on different varieties of fish seed stocked in their raceways.

Pr Scientist, CIFA, Dr Padmanav Routray, stated that water quality parameter is very important for fish culture especially the alkalinity and dissolved oxygen. If only these two parameters can be maintained properly than mortality can be reduced by 50%.

Dr PP Chakrabarty, in his address, stated that the official formalities related to fund release and purchase of seed has to be done before March-April every year to ensure maximum survival & growth of fishes so that our farmers can get maximum profit.

Additional Director, Directorate of Fisheries, Govt. of Sikkim, CS Rai, in his address highlighted the hardship faced by the fish farmers of our state especially at the time of stocking quality fish seed as there is huge seed shortage in the state. He requested CIFA to provide necessary support for establishment of Integrated Tilapia & Carp hatchery in the state and also for the training of officials and farmers.

Director, Dr Saroj Swain, ICAR-CIFA as-

sured to provide full support for development of fisheries in the state. He agreed to provide 10 sets of water testing kits to the state Fisheries Directorate and also training to interested fish farmers and officials at CIFA. He also agreed to provide necessary guidance for establishment of Integrated Tilapia and Carp hatchery in the state duly considering the requirement of fish seed. Further, he requested the fisheries officials to propose for establishment of one Soil, Water and Disease testing laboratory under PMMSY.

Earlier, the farmers along with officers attended a sensitization and interaction program on Integrated Model of Orchid and Aquaculture at NRC for Orchids, Pakyong, East Sikkim. Director, Dr Rampal, NRCO, Pakyong, Director, Dr Saroj Swain, CIFA, Pr Scientists, CIFA, Dr PP Chakrabarty, & Dr Padmanav Routray, Additional Director (Fisheries), CS Rai, Govt of Sikkim along with other scientists of NRCO and officials from State Fisheries Directorate and surrounding fish and orchid farmers were present in the programme. Three officers from state Fisheries Directorate: Range Officer, Surendra Bhandari, Range Officer, Gouri Mukhia & Fisheries Guard, Pem Rinzing Lepcha were felicitated during the program. For the first time ICAR-CIFA and NRCO, Pakyong with Directorate of Fisheries, Govt. of Sikkim will be initiating Integrated Model of Orchid and Aquaculture in the state with the intend to increase the income of our farmers.

## Inner Wheel Club installs sanitary pad vending machine in West Point School



**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 11 NOV:**

The Inner Wheel Club of Gangtok installed

Sanitary Pad Vending Machine in West Point School Tathangchen Ward Councillor, Pema

Lamtha inaugurated the machine today in the presence of the Principal of the School.

## Russia sends nuclear-capable bombers on patrol over Belarus



**MOSCOW (AP):** Russia sent two nuclear-capable strategic bombers on a training mission Thursday over Belarus in a show of Moscow's support for its ally amid a dispute over migration at the Polish border.

The Belarusian Defense Ministry said two Russian Tu-160 strategic bombers practiced bombing runs at the Ruzhansky firing range in Belarus. As part of the joint training, Belarusian fighter jets simulated an intercept, the ministry said.

The missions marked the second time in two days that Russia sent nuclear-capable bombers into the skies over Belarus.

A pair of Russian Tu-22M3 long-range bomb-

ers flew a similar patrol Wednesday, and Belarusian air defense assets practiced intercepting them.

Russia has strongly supported Belarus amid a tense standoff this week as thousands of migrants, most of them from the Middle East, gathered on the Belarusian side of the border with Poland in the hope of crossing into Western Europe.

The European Union has accused Belarus' authoritarian President Alexander Lukashenko of encouraging illegal border crossings as a "hybrid attack" to retaliate against EU sanctions on his government for its crackdown on internal dissent after Lukashenko's disputed 2020 re-

election.

Belarus denies the allegations but has said it will no longer stop refugees and migrants from trying to enter the EU.

The Belarusian Defense Ministry accused Poland on Thursday of an "unprecedented" military buildup on the border, saying that migration control did not warrant the concentration of 15,000 troops backed by tanks, air defense assets and other weapons.

"It looks more like forming a strike group of forces," the ministry said, adding that the Polish military buildup prompted Belarus to respond with actions "both independently and within the existing agreements with our strategic ally," a reference to Russia.

## SUBSIDIARY INTELLIGENCE BUREAU

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# DESPITE THE STATE

WHY INDIA LETS ITS PEOPLE DOWN AND HOW THEY COPE

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in conversation with  
**Pema Wangchuk**  
senior editor, author

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## Lose the Jokes, Break the Spine

*Humour is necessary to a democracy*

So, now we are country where a stand-up comic is informed that his shows have been cancelled; not because not enough tickets were sold, but because his brand of sharp commentary pokes the wrong bears – the kind who have successfully godified media, a feat they pulled off because their thin skin finally got access to easily riled bhakts and pockets the size of small countries. This, at a time when a Prime Minister, who is expected to be a somber statesman, cracks the crudest of jokes and spawns fawning copycats in potty-mouthed ministers in the states. Comedians, however, whose job it is to mock and poke, need to hold their tongues out of fear of slipping a punch-line which could offend the powerful because even the comic mirror does not lie. Here, one may recall the tasteless remark that the PM made in Japan at around this time last year when he sniggered that many a marriage reception in India had been burned because of demonetization. The bhakts had laughed along at the time, even applauded. Shortly after, a comedy show censored a skit, dropped it completely in fact, when a mimicry artist aped the PM (and Rahul Gandhi as well). In the five years since, even media houses are suing fellow media houses for defamation for their satirical reviews of propaganda masquerading as news.

We, it appears, are not going to be allowed to stop shaking our heads in disbelief because we have bhakts fulminating over a sarcasm-laced public interest message which called for safer celebrations and a satrap having a melt-down because even though he breaks heads for a religion which has gods with fluid genders, gay couples being sanskari somehow compromises his faith. Our leaders were never known for their tolerance, but intolerance is now being worn on the sleeves leading to a scenario in which bigotry is sold as an essential component of patriotism. Thin-skinned, hard-nosed intolerance has always been the traditional response of those in power. The scary part is that is winning now. There used to be a time when media houses routinely stood up to such muscle flexing, but those days are in the past, now, the advertisers can influence even the HR departments of media houses. The joke, however, is on them now because many of the better journalists forced out of traditional newsrooms have established independent news platforms to which a staggering number of viewers have also migrated.

Meanwhile, intolerance of comedic comment does not manifest as one-off incidents, and form part of a steady progression of suppression of independent thought. It started with mainstream platforms and “regular” news, and after they had been cowed down or co-opted, it has turned to the jesters. This should not have surprised us because those with an inflated sense of self and/or blinkered by rigid ideologies have traditionally been quick to take offence and fast and furious with the pushback.

We make matters worse with self-censorship. Most often, satire, at least the effective ones which land proper punch-lines, ridicule policies and positions, not individuals even if they take the crutch of mimicry to tell the jokes. But who will explain these nuances to click-bait bhakts?

But all of this is about more than just getting embarrassed or scared, it's also about what we are allowing ourselves to become. Laughter, those among the readers who still remember the Reader's Digest will recollect, is the best medicine. It is the salve that helps maintain sanity when there is too much madness around. The moment people have to look around before they crack a joke or laugh to one, you know that their spine has been broken. Who wishes that in a democracy? Societies which lose their sense of humour and their ability to laugh at themselves also lose their optimism, faith and democratic instincts and few places prove this better than neighbouring Darjeeling which has allowed its funny bone to fracture and has now calcified into easy aggression and a perpetual victimhood syndrome. Come on, even monarchs realized the effectiveness of humour as a safe release for festering discontent and allowed jesters to mock and joke even in their presence. Force this out of the system and resentments will fester and harden into spite and hate to eventually explode because release valves have been too tightly shut.

### WRITE US:

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



# What the world can learn from the Buddhist concept loving-kindness

**BROOKE SCHEDNECK**  
*theconversation.com*

As the world deals with the trauma caused by COVID-19, World Kindness Day, observed on Nov. 13 annually, is a good opportunity to reflect on the healing potential of both large and small acts of kindness. Indeed, it was the kind acts of essential workers that helped save many lives.

As a scholar of Buddhist studies, I have researched the ways in which Buddhist monks talk about kindness and compassion toward all beings.

The Dalai Lama has famously been quoted as saying “My true religion is kindness.” Although there is more to Buddhism than just kindness, Buddhism's teachings and exemplary figures, I believe, have much to offer to a world experiencing intense suffering.

### LOVING-KINDNESS TEACHINGS

Some of the earliest Buddhist teachings developed in India – which are recorded in the Pali canon, the collection of scriptures in the Pali language – emphasized the idea of “metta,” or loving-kindness. One teaching from this collection of scriptures is the “Karaniya Metta Sutta,” where the Buddha exhorts the good and wise to spread loving-kindness by making these wishes toward all beings:

In gladness and in safety,

May all beings be at ease.

Whatever living beings there may be;

Whether they are weak or strong, omitting none,

The great or the mighty, medium, short or small,

The seen and the unseen,

Those living near and far away,

Those born and to-be-born —

May all beings be at ease!

In order to put these words into practice, several Buddhist teachers from North America teach meditation practices meant to develop one's own metta, or loving-kindness.

During meditation sessions, practitioners can visualize people and chant wishes of loving-kindness using variations of phrases based on the Karaniya Metta Sutta. A commonly used version is from a well-known Buddhist meditation teacher, Sharon Salzberg.

May all beings everywhere be safe and well.

May all beings everywhere be happy and content.

May all beings everywhere be healthy and strong.

May all beings everywhere be peaceful and at ease.

Practitioners spread this kindness toward themselves, people close to them, people they do not know – even distant people or enemies – and finally all beings throughout the world. After visualizing this attitude of loving-kindness, practitioners find it is easier to radiate kindness toward others in real life.

In addition to metta, Buddhists also practice compassion (karuna), sympathetic joy (mudita) and equanimity (upekkha) for a peaceful state of mind.

### CULTIVATING COMPASSION

Later forms of Buddhism in East Asia and Tibet developed the idea of compassion further through the figure of the bodhisattva.

The bodhisattva is a practitioner who has vowed to work selflessly for the enlightenment of other beings. The development of this state of mind is known as “bodhicitta.” Bodhicitta provides the motivation and commitment to this difficult path of putting others before oneself.

One practice for cultivating bodhicitta is ex-

changing self for others. In this practice, those on the bodhisattva path would regard the suffering of others as if it were their own and would offer help to others as if helping oneself.

As the Indian Buddhist monk Santideva writes in his classic eighth-century work on the path of the bodhisattva, “The Bodhicaryavatara,” one should meditate with this sentiment in mind: “all equally experience suffering and happiness. I should look after them as I do myself.”

### MANY BODHISATTVAS AND THEIR MEANINGS

The Buddhist figure most focused on kindness is the bodhisattva of compassion, known originally as Avalokiteshvara, who became popular in India by the sixth century A.D. A popular way to depict Avalokiteshvara is with 11 heads and 1,000 arms, which he uses to benefit all sentient beings. Tibetan Buddhists believe that all Dalai Lamas are manifestations of this bodhisattva.

This bodhisattva is known by various names across Asia. In Nepal, the bodhisattva is known as Karunamaya, and in Tibet as Lokesvara and Chenrezig. In China, the bodhisattva is a female figure called Guanyin and portrayed as a woman with long, flowing hair in white robes, who holds a vase tilted downward so she can drop the dew of compassion upon all beings.

Throughout East and Southeast Asia this is a popular figure. People make offerings to seek help, especially in regards to success in business and starting a family.

With practices that urge people to practice compassion toward others and with figures who can be asked to bestow it, Buddhism offers unique and diverse ways to think about and express kindness.

*[the writer is Assistant Professor of Religious Studies, Rhodes College]*

# 7 ways to get proactive about climate change instead of feeling helpless: Lessons from a leadership expert

**THOMAS S. BATEMAN**  
*theconversation.com*

Humans do not capitalize nearly enough on our most significant evolutionary advantage: a unique ability to take forward-looking actions that influence the future for the better.

Exhibit A: Climate change is here, and things are changing quickly for the worse. However, even as dangerous and costly weather events grow more frequent and severe, we still don't do what we need to do.

Ideally, everyone would ratchet up their efforts to protect the climate as smartly as possible. But how can each person help in the most valuable ways? As a professor of organizational behavior, I study leadership and proactive problem solving. Research in these fields offers some helpful advice.

### UNTAPPED HUMAN POTENTIAL

“I'd love to change the world, but I don't know what to do, so I leave it up to you.” - Alvin Lee, Ten Years After, 1971

When too many people think like those lyrics, problems don't get solved.

The only way societies will do enough to keep climate change in check is if they reject passivity, experiment with new strategies and tactics, and wisely strengthen their coping repertoire.

People avoid doing much about climate change for many reasons: 1) They worry about time and cost; 2) they believe it's difficult to change; 3) they have faulty assumptions, like feeling unable to help or that other people or new technologies will save the planet; 4) they have psychological biases, like caring more about the present than the future; and 5) they're uncertain about the best ways to participate.

Laying a foundation for higher-impact action begins with changing common mindsets. Most essential,

and a tough task, is to behave far more proactively than most people have up until now.

### HOW TO BECOME MORE PROACTIVE

Based on psychological and organizational behavior research, here are some starting points:

1) View yourself as someone who cares about the planet and the future.

Your self-identity is how you view and describe yourself, and this generates corresponding behaviors. How you self-identify can help you think about your future, choose your preferred actions and provide a motivating standard or model to strive for. Take “caring” a step further by viewing yourself as a proactive person who thinks ahead and helps to make the future better than it would be without your contributions.

2) Assess, honestly, your efforts to reduce the harmful effects of climate change.

In the same way people tend to overestimate their driving, athletic and leadership skills, they also tend to believe they are more environmentally friendly than most other people. This misleading bias can breed complacency and hinder action.

If people assess themselves accurately compared to what they could and should be doing, most will see great untapped potential to make a difference. To unleash that potential, consider applying time management strategies found in business management that can free you from countless unpleasant and unproductive tasks and allow you to devote attention and time to impactful activities that take most advantage of your skills.

3) Assume responsibility for engaging more usefully in solving the problems of climate change.

Feeling responsible motivates action. A key question is how you define responsibility.

This is different from pinning all responsibility for fixing things on

the guiltiest transgressors. In the blame game, fossil fuel companies have worked hard to shift responsibility for the world's climate change predicament to consumers and not themselves. Remember this from George Bernard Shaw: “We are made wise not by the recollection of our past, but by the responsibility for our future.” What the future holds really is up to us.

4) Resolve to actively navigate the changing future.

In general, thinking more about the future – rather than just the present and past – yields more positive life and work outcomes. Regarding climate change, it is imperative to look ahead and act accordingly so you're helping to forge the best possible outcomes rather than leaving them to chance.

Today's leading psychologists strongly advise more mental prospecting – actively envisioning likely and possible futures, exploring for opportunities like old-time gold prospectors and salespeople searching for new leads – and continually seeking the best pathways forward.

5) Learn more about humanity's biggest challenges.

Climate change affects everything, so it shouldn't be hard to find an arena that's personally interesting. Learn enough from accurate sources to discuss with others, consider how your skill sets can help and figure out where you can contribute best.

Here are a few places to start: Project Drawdown offers big-picture solutions for lowering greenhouse gas emissions. NOAA provides advice for what individuals can do and where to learn more. The BBC had a good list of 10 simple ways to take action on climate change a few years ago. Climate scientist Michael Mann's new book discusses what individuals can do politically and collectively for the highest impact.

6) Help solve problems and seek

constructive opportunities.

A common refrain in MBA and executive development programs is to turn problems into opportunities, and climate change offers many opportunities, from cleaner energy sources to better construction techniques and food production. This approach opens conversations about long-term change rather than just short-term damage control. It also uncovers diverse views, addresses underlying problems rather than just their visible symptoms and encourages more ideas – thus enhancing problem-solving.

7) Address the root causes and embrace “multisolving.”

In solving business problems, it's important to not simply treat the most visible symptoms but to identify and address root causes. “Multisolving” identifies solutions that address a root cause of multiple problems.

Climate change is one root of many current problems, from disasters and species extinctions to food and water shortages to social injustice and wars. Military officials often refer to it as a “threat multiplier.” Stopping climate change could help alleviate pressures elsewhere. Backing up further in the cause-and-effect chain, carbon emissions cause global warming and climate change.

So, personal efforts to reduce your “carbon footprint,” like using less fossil fuel, help. So does pushing politicians and businesses to reduce carbon and methane emissions by limiting fossil fuel extraction and investing in zero-carbon energy.

The best climate solutions will reduce harm and spread all kinds of benefits. Stabilizing the climate will require help from every direction. It isn't just an “all hands on deck” moment – the planet needs all heads and hands being proactive.

*[the writer is Professor Emeritus of Organizational Behavior, University of Virginia]*



# Bengali actor Srabanti Chatterjee quits BJP

**KOLKATA, Nov 11 (PTI):** Bengali actor SrabantiChatterjee, who had joined the BJP before this year's assembly elections and unsuccessfully contested against TMC heavyweight ParthaChatterjee, quit the saffron party on Thursday citing its "lack of initiative and sincerity to further the cause of West Bengal".

The 34-year-old actor had been maintaining a distance from the saffron party after it failed to unseat Mamata Banerjee's government from power in the eastern state despite a high-pitched campaign. "Severing all ties with the BJP, the party for which I fought the last state elections. Reason being their lack of initiative and sincerity to further the cause of Bengal," Chatterjee tweeted.

The West Bengal BJP, however, did not attach much importance to Chatterjee's decision and asserted that "it would



hardly impact the party". "I really don't know whether she was with the party after the elections. It won't have an impact on the party," BJP state chief SukantaMajumdar said. Echoing him, BJP leader Tathagata Roy, who has been training his guns on the party

top brass for the election debacle, called Chatterjee's quitting the party a "good riddance". Roy had criticised the BJP for inducting people with no political background, especially those from the entertainment world, and fielding them in the assembly elections while ignoring loyal and

trusted party workers. "Good riddance. I don't recall if she had any meaningful contributions in all the days," the former Meghalaya and Tripura governor said. Chatterjee, who was once close to West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and the TMC, joined the BJP in March this year.

She was fielded in the BehalaPaschim seat, where she was defeated by state minister ParthaChatterjee by over 50,000 votes.

The actor joins a long list of celebrities and leaders who have either quit the BJP or are maintaining a distance from the party after its defeat in the polls.

# No fresh COVID-19 case in Andamans

**PORT BLAIR, Nov 11 (PTI):** The COVID-19 tally of Andaman and Nicobar Islands remained unchanged at 7,665 as no fresh infection was detected on Thursday, a health bulletin said.

The Union territory's coronavirus death toll also remained unchanged at 129 as no fresh fatality was registered, it said. The archipelago now has nine active cases, while 7,527 people have been cured of the disease to date.

The administration has thus far tested over 6.11 lakh samples for COVID-19, and inoculated over 2.94 lakh people, of

whom 2.18 lakh have been fully vaccinated, it said.

Meanwhile, BJP leader Vishal Jolly has urged Chief Secretary JitendraNarain to restore the pre-COVID movement of public transport, relax inter-island travel restrictions for both locals and tourists and increase the number of boats.

The BJP National Executive Committee member, in a letter to the chief secretary, said, these days we have been witnessing that due to non-availability of an adequate number of boats to avail to and from journey for SwarajDweep, Little Andaman, Camp-

bell Bay route, Diglipur, Mayabunder, Rangat, Baratang, Long Islands etc., the local populace, as well as tourists, are facing acute hardships.

The travelling restrictions are still very much in place for inter-island movement. The incoming passengers from the mainland require two doses certificate whereas for travelling to inter islands there exist other restrictions. All those restrictions can be relaxed to the best possible way for encouraging the tourists and entrepreneurs, the former Andaman and Nicobar Islands BJP chief added.

# Saudi Arabia denies playing climate saboteur at Glasgow

**GLASGOW, SCOTLAND (AP):** The tightest of smiles on his face and the fabric of his traditional thobe swirling about him as he strides through a hallway at U.N. climate talks, Saudi Arabia's energy minister expresses shock at repeated complaints that the world's largest oil producer is working behind the scenes to sabotage negotiations.

"What you have been hearing is a false allegation, and a cheat and a lie," Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman al Saud said this week at the talks in Glasgow, Scotland. He was responding to journalists pressing for a response to claims that Saudi Arabia's negotiators have been working to block climate measures that would threaten demand for oil. "We have been working well" with the head of the U.N. climate talks and others, Prince Abdulaziz said. Negotiators from about 200 countries are coming up against a weekend deadline to find consensus on next steps to cut the world's fossil fuel emissions and otherwise combat climate change.

Saudi Arabia's participation in climate talks itself can seem incongruous — a kingdom that has become wealthy and powerful because of oil involved in negotiations where a core issue is reducing consumption of oil and other fossil fuels. While pledging to join emission-cutting efforts at home, Saudi leaders have made clear they intend to pump and sell their oil as long as demand lasts.

Saudi Arabia's team in Glasgow has introduced proposals ranging from a call to quit negotiations — they often stretch into early morning hours — at 6 p.m. every day to what climate negotiation veterans allege are complex efforts to play country factions against one another with the aim of blocking agreement on tough steps to wrench the world away from coal, gas and oil.

That is the "Saudis' proposal, by the way. They're like, let's just not work at nights and just accept that this is not go-

ing to be ambitious" when it comes to fast cuts in fossil fuel pollution that is wrecking the climate, said Jennifer Tollmann, an analyst at E3G, a European climate think tanks. And then "if other countries want to agree with Saudi, they can blame Saudi Arabia," Tollmann said.

Saudi Arabia long has been accused of playing a spoiler in the climate talks, and this year it is the main country singled out so far by negotiators, speaking privately, and observers, speaking publicly. Russia and Australia are also lumped in with Saudi Arabia at the talks as countries that see their futures as dependent on coal, natural gas or oil, and as working for a Glasgow climate deal that doesn't threaten that.

Despite efforts to diversify the economy, oil accounts for more than half of Saudi Arabia's revenue, keeping the kingdom and royal family afloat and stable. About half of Saudi employees still work for the public sector, their salary paid in large part by oil.

And there's China, whose dependence on coal makes it the world's current biggest climate polluter. It argues it can't switch to cleaner energy as fast as the West says it must, although the United States and China did jointly pledge to speed up their efforts to cut emissions. A core issue in the talks: Scientists and the United Nations say the world has less than a decade to cut its fossil fuel and agricultural emissions roughly in half if it wants to avoid more catastrophic scenarios of global warming. Not surprisingly, island nations that would disappear under the rising oceans at a higher level of warming are the bloc at Glasgow pushing hardest for the most stringent deal out of this summit.

Meanwhile, climate advocates accuse the United States and European Union of so far failing to throw their weight behind the demands of the island nations, although the U.S. and E.U. often wait until the last few days of climate talks to take hard stands on debated points.

# Five new Assam MLAs take oath



**GUWAHATI, Nov 11 (PTI):** Five new MLAs, who were elected in the recently held by-elections, on Thursday took oath as legislators of the Assam Assembly.

In a brief programme, Assam Legislative Assembly Speaker BiswajitDaimary administered the oath to BJP MLAs PhaniDharTalukdar, RupiyotiKurmi and Su-shantaBorgohain, and ruling alliance UPPL's JironBasumatary and JolenDaimary.

While the BJP legislators took the oath in Asamese, the UPPL mem-

bers read out the oath statement in Bodo.

The swearing-in-ceremony began with the playing of the National Anthem in instrumental and ended with pre-recorded singing of the state anthem 'O MorAponarDesh'.

BJP candidates Talukdar, Kurmi and Borgohain won Bhabanipur, Mariani and Thowra constituencies respectively. All the three were elected as opposition MLAs during the assembly elections held in March-April this year, but later resigned and joined the saffron party.

UPPL's Basumatary and Daimary bagged the Gossaigaon and Tamulpur seats respectively.

With these victories in the by-elections, the BJP's strength in the 126-member Assam Assembly has increased to 62 and UPPL's to seven. The other ruling ally AGP, which did not field any candidate in the by-elections, has nine MLAs.

In the opposition camp, the Congress's strength is 27, AIUDF has 15 members, BPF has three and CPI(M) has one MLA. There is also an Independent legislator.

# 'NZ is strongest cricket team across all formats right now'

**ABU DHABI, Nov 11 (PTI):** Former England skipper Mike Atherton feels New Zealand is the strongest team across all three formats of the game at the moment after the Black Caps reached their maiden T20 World Cup final.

New Zealand registered a sensational five-wicket win over favourites England here on Wednesday in the first semifinals. It would be their third final appearance at an ICC global event in as many years.

Over the past few years, the Black Caps have proved themselves to be a force in all three formats. They reached the final of the ODI World Cup in 2019, losing to England on boundary count and are the holders of the inaugural World Test Championship title.

"They are an outstanding team, in all formats of the game really," Atherton told 'Sky Sports'. "They are through to another World Cup final, they were a sliver away from winning the last World Cup in 2019, they are the World Test Championship winners.

"Across formats, you would have to say they are the strongest team at the moment so congratulations to them, a fantastic achievement with limited resources in terms of personnel and money and things that we've often talk-

ed about," he added. Chasing 167, the Black Caps were on the back foot when star opener Martin Guptill and skipper Kane Williamson were dismissed by Chris Woakes inside the first three overs of the reply.

England kept mounting pressure but opener Daryl Mitchell and Jimmy Neesham had other plans. Mitchell blazed his way to an unbeaten 47-ball 72 before Neesham hit a flurry of sixes to give New Zealand the win. "It just changed so quickly tonight. For a long time in that chase, I thought England were ahead of the game," Atherton said.

"The pitch looked two-paced and sluggish, no one really got going and suddenly Neesham comes out and changed that game with some fantastic hitting," Atherton said.

Pakistan take on Australia in the second semifinal and Atherton feels the former champions have the edge over Aaron Finch and Co.

"I'm going with Pakistan, I think they have got the best and most varied attack in this competition.

"You think of that attack: Shaheen Shah Afridi, HarisRauf, the spinners, the combinations that they have so I reckon they got the best attack and I think they will win it," he said.

# 5 fresh cases push Arunachal's COVID-19 tally to 55,202

**Itanagar, Nov 11 (PTI):** Arunachal Pradesh's COVID-19 tally rose to 55,202 on Thursday as five more people tested positive for the infection, a senior health official said.

The coronavirus death toll remained unchanged at 280 as no fresh fatality was registered, State Surveillance Officer (SSO) DrLobsangJampa said.

The northeastern state now has 47 active cases, while 54,875 people have recovered from the disease so far, including two on Wednesday. The recovery rate

among the COVID-19 patients in the state stood at 99.41 per cent.

West Kameng district has the highest number of active cases at 11, followed by Tawang (eight) and Shi-Yomi (five), he said.

The state has thus far tested over 11.90 lakh samples for COVID-19, including 717 on Wednesday, the SSO said, adding that the positivity rate stood at 0.69 per cent.

State Immunisation Officer DrDimongPadung said that a total of 13,46,219 people have been inoculated so far.

# 271 new Covid cases, 2 deaths in Odisha

**BHUBANESWAR, Nov 10 (PTI):**Odisha's COVID-19 tally rose to 10,44,699 on Thursday as 271 more people tested positive for the infection, 106 less than the previous day, a health department bulletin said.

Two more persons one each in Khurda and Bhadrak districts -- succumbed to the virus in the last 24 hours, taking the toll to 8,370. Fifty-three other patients have also died due to comorbidities so far, according to the Health Department.

Khurda district, of which the state capital Bhubaneswar is a part, reported 112 cases, followed by Cuttack with 23 infections. Sixty new

patients are in the 0-18 age group. The number of active COVID-19 cases dropped to 2,932 as 317 more patients recuperated in the last 24 hours, taking the total number of recoveries to 10,33,344, the bulletin said.

Nine districts did not register any new case, while five other districts have active cases in single digits.

The number of samples tested for COVID-19 on Wednesday was 62,010 and the positivity rate is 0.44 per cent.

As many 2.66 crore people have taken the first dose of the coronavirus vaccine, while 1.31 crore people have taken the second jab against the virus, it added.

# Former Maoist gunned down in J'khand

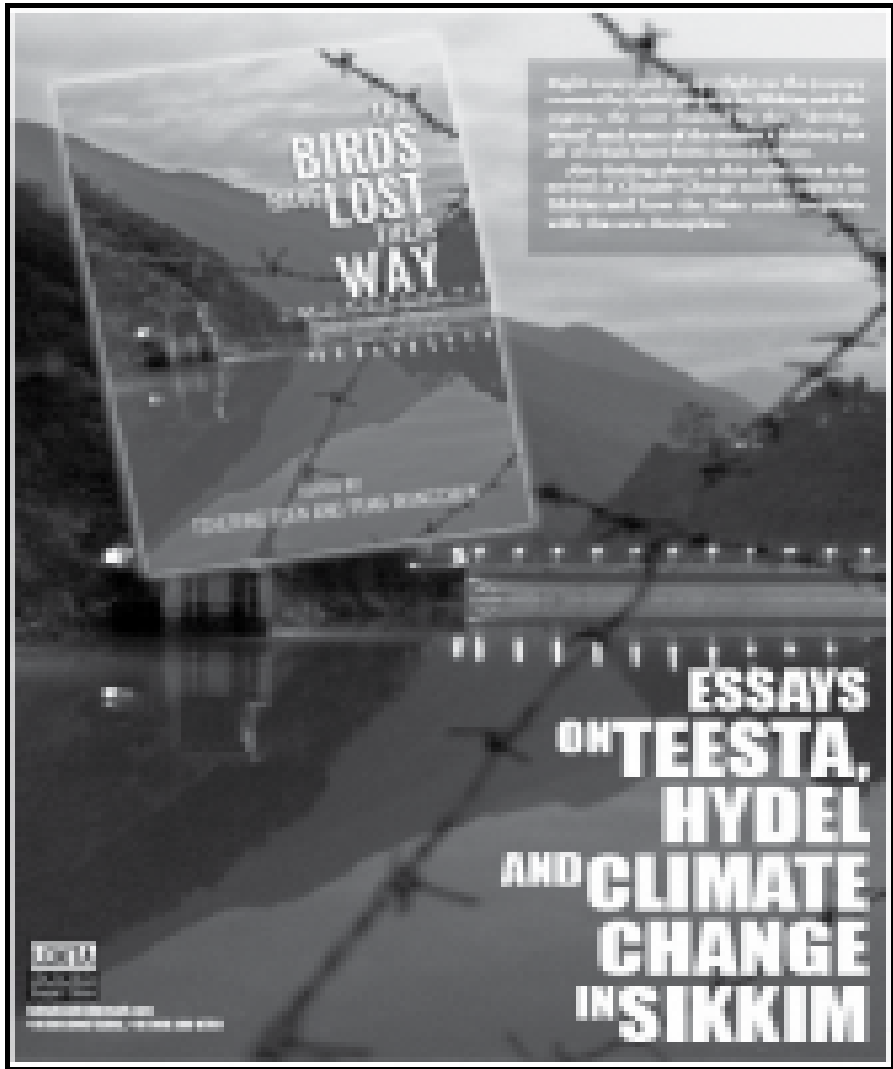
**HAZARIBAG (JHARKHAND), Nov 11 (PTI):** A former member of the CPI (Maoist) was shot dead by unidentified men at a village here on Thursday as he was on his way home from a river ghat, where he had gone to observe Chhath puja rituals, a senior police officer said.

Six men on three motorcycles gunned down Kedar Thakur at Kolgay village in Keredari police station area around 6.30 am, said Superintendent of Police ManojRatan-

Chouthie. The assailants are suspected to be active members of the banned outfit.

According to Chouthie, the victim, who was in 40s, had distanced himself from all Maoist-related operations, after having served his time in Hazaribag Central Jail for criminal activities.

A search operation has been launched in the district, the SP said, adding that Thakur's body has been sent for post-mortem.





# Full house: F1 is Brazil's biggest event since pandemic hit

**SAO PAULO, Nov 11 (AP):** Organizers at Interlagos are aiming for a triumphant return to the Formula One circuit this weekend, with all 170,000 tickets sold for the three days of action. Formula One cut Brazil from its 2020 calendar because of restrictions in place for the COVID-19 pandemic.

Race organizers and local authorities on Wednesday said the 2021 edition will be the biggest total attendance for an event in Brazil since the virus hit the nation.

The Sao Paulo Grand Prix, renamed for this year after a company tried to take the race back to Rio de Janeiro, was allowed to open for full capacity only weeks ago when the state government eased restrictions for November.

Brazil has reported more than 610,000 deaths from the coronavirus, but the rate has sharply reduced all over the country. More than 57% of its people aged 12 and over are now fully vaccinated. Those figures are at around 70% in Sao Paulo.

Ticket sales began in June, with every batch sold within minutes. Prices ranged between 650 Brazilian reals( 100



and 12,800 Brazilian reals ( 2,300). We will have a full home after a difficult year, race organizer Alan Adler told a news conference.

We didn't know whether we would have a Grand Prix, then whether we would have people attending, and today we are celebrating we will

have 100% of our attendance. Interlagos will host the 19th of the 22 races of the season.

Red Bull's Max Verstappen, the winner of the latest GP in Mexico, leads Mercedes driver and defending champion Lewis Hamilton in the championship by 19 points with four races

left. Verstappen won in Sao Paulo in 2019.

Mercedes now leads Red Bull by just one point in the constructors' championship.

Fans at Interlagos will have to wear masks when they are not eating, show vaccination certificates and bring evidence of a negative test for coro-

navirus. Many events in Brazil have shown multitudes of fans to largely ignore those protocols as soon as action begins.

We are ready to take 20% more attendance in comparison with 2019, so we added to our structures," Adler said, crediting the success in attendance to younger fans. Previously, parents dragged their children to the race here. Now it seems to be children taking their parents to Interlagos, he said.

Many analysts expected Formula One to lose some interest in Brazil due to the absence of local drivers on the grid and a move that took the series off the screen of Brazil's popular TV Globo. But organizers said that did not materialize; there are only a few VIP seats on sale for Sunday's race.

Interlagos will also have the extra ingredient of holding the season's third qualifying sprint race on Saturday. The two previous qualifying sprint races were held at Silverstone and Monza.

The grid for the Sao Paulo GP will be determined by the result of Saturday's race instead of the traditional timed lap qualifying format, which will take place on Friday instead to set the positions for the sprint race.

## Andy Murray beats top seed Sinner to reach Stockholm QF



**STOCKHOLM, Nov 11 (AP):** Andy Murray defeated top-seeded Jan-nik Sinner 7-6 (4), 6-3 to reach the quarterfinals of the Stockholm Open.

It was Murray's second victory over a top-10 opponent in the past two weeks after the three-time Grand Slam champion, who has had two hip surgeries, beat Hubert Hurkacz in Vienna.

Murray broke the 20-year-old Italian, who is ranked 10th, twice in the second set on his way to victory on Wednesday. In the opener, he took his first set point after having saved the only break point.

It's probably my best win this season, said the 34-year-old Murray, a former world No. 1. The

Briton has reached just his second ATP Tour quarterfinals in the last two years.

Obviously, if I want to move back up the rankings and have good runs in tournaments again, I need to win these matches, said Murray, who is ranked 143rd. I want to have a deep run here.

He next faces Tommy Paul, who upset doubles partner and fifth-seeded Taylor Fritz 6-4, 6-4.

Earlier, Denis Shapovalov finally got to launch the defense of his Stockholm title from 2019, beating qualifier Andrea Vavassori 7-6 (1), 6-1 to reach the quarterfinals.

The 22-year-old Canadian has had to wait two years to defend the only ATP title he has

won in his short career, with the 2020 edition canceled because of the coronavirus pandemic.

It felt amazing to be back here, the third-seeded Shapovalov said after breaking Vavassori's serve three times in the last 16.

Shapovalov, ranked No. 18, will next play Arthur Rinderknech after breaking Vavassori's serve three times in the last 16. Rinderknech had advanced to the last 16 after his first-round opponent, sixth-seeded Alexander Bublik, retired with an injury.

Fourth-seeded Dan Evans and eighth-seeded Frances Tiafoe also advanced in straight sets and will meet in the quarterfinals.

## We are devastated but proud of our performance: Morgan

**ABU DHABI, Nov 11 (PTI):** England were "devastated" to lose to New Zealand in the T20 World Cup semifinals but proud to have fought "unbelievably well", said limited overs captain Eoin Morgan, who hopes to continue as the leader of the side.

New Zealand avenged their heartbreaking loss in the 2019 ODI World Cup final against England on boundary count by beating the same opponents by five wickets in the T20 World Cup first semifinals here on Wednesday.

"Yeah, we're devastated. To be on the wrong side of a close game is not easy to take. We fought unbelievably well on a wicket that didn't necessarily suit our batting, but we managed to post in and around a par score," Morgan said at the post-match press conference.

"I'm extremely proud of the performance that we put in. When you play really well, it doesn't always guarantee that you win games. Unfortunately, we found ourselves on the wrong side of a really tight game today.

"I hope to be back, I am still offering enough, and I love playing in this changing room. Incredibly proud to be their leader," said the 35-year-old, who has led the English T20 side since 2014.

Sent in to bat, England posted 166 for 4 with Moeen Ali remaining not out on 51. The Black Caps chased down the target with one over to spare with opener Daryl Mitchell playing a pivotal role with an unbeaten 47-ball 72.

James Neesham also played an important cameo, hitting an 11-ball 27 with one four and three sixes to take New Zealand to the final.



Morgan said England were in the game till the arrival of Neesham, who completely changed the complexion of the match, playing shots not even his batters could execute on a sluggish pitch.

"We were brilliant with the ball. We were right in the game probably until Jimmy Neesham came to the wicket, if not ahead of the game. Everything worked right up until Neesham came in. It was a fantastic cameo in high-pressure circumstances.

"Throughout those innings everybody struggled to clear the ropes on both sides, that was just the nature of the pitch. You have to take your hat off to him. He played really well. We've played against Jimmy a lot. He's not struck the ball like that against us ever. It's really good batting."

He also praised Black Caps opener Mitchell for his unbeaten knock which was studded with four boundaries and as many sixes.

"I'd say, so he's played a hell of a hand today. He's played really well

against the No. 1 side in the world and taken his side right to the final."

Morgan admitted that his side was outplayed by New Zealand.

"Maybe a little bit (of dew factor). But they have still outplayed us. We know the dew is around. We were still right in the game. I don't think it was a major factor, maybe an advantage slightly but not a major factor.

"We like pitches where you can free yourselves and get after the opposition. We didn't feel as if we could do that, the pitch being a little bit slower but full credit to the Black Caps. They were very disciplined in line and length they bowled, the use of slower balls, and their spinners bowled well."

Asked if injuries to Jason Roy and Tymal Mills during the Super 12 stage, had impacted the team's performance, Morgan said, "I don't think you can put a measure on missing a player. I think the 11 guys that took the field today gave absolutely everything.

### Pakistan's Rizwan, Malik suffering from "mild flu" ahead of semifinal against Australia

**DUBAI, Nov 11 (PTI):** Pakistan batters Mohammad Rizwan and Shoaib Malik are suffering from "mild flu" and they could be doubtful starters for the T20 World Cup semifinal against Australia on Thursday.

Rizwan and Malik, who missed the team's training session on Wednesday, though tested negative for COVID-19. The team has also cleared the regular testing through the tournament.

"Both players were tested for COVID-19 and both tested negative," 'ESPNCricinfo' reported.

"As with the rest of their squad, they have cleared regular COVID-19 testing through the tournament, including one a couple of days ago. That is part of the ICC's policy to encourage teams to test as often as possible," it added.

According to the report, the two players woke up on Wednesday morning with "light flu and low fever" and were first advised to delay practice but were later allowed to give it a miss.

"Pakistan are not overly concerned at the moment about their participation in Thursday's game, and will be reviewing their status in the morning again," the report said. Both players have played key roles in the ongoing tournament and missing the services of either will be a huge blow for Pakistan .

## It's time to prove myself yet again: Geeta Phogat

**GONDA (UTTAR PRADESH), Nov 11 (PTI):** Ready to take the mat after a three-year break, wrestler GeetaPhogat is not short on inspiration and motivation but a tad nervous about how her second innings will pan out.

Set to turn 33 next month and after giving birth to her first child, a lot of people has been telling her that wrestling won't be the same again for her because not only the sport but also her body has changed in the last three years.

But she is determined to make a successful comeback. After all, there are living examples that motherhood or age are not obstacles for a woman sportsperson.

"A lot of people tell me that age is not on my side. You know how people are. They keep telling me these things," Geeta told PTI as she readies for a comeback after three years at the National Championships her.

"But look at Maria Stadnik (from Azerbaijan). She is 33-plus and a mother of two. She has four Olympic medals and is a multiple-time world medallist. If you have fitness and you are focussed, you can do it."

"I have worked hard on fitness and it's time to prove myself yet again," the wrestler, who became the first Indian woman to win a Commonwealth Games medal in 2010, said.

One of the first few Indian women wrestlers to make a mark at the



international level, Geeta says that mere thought of leaving the sport sends a chill down her spine.

"I have got a lot of success in my career but I have not yet got that feeling that it's time to quit. The sport is in my blood. I have been doing it for 20 years.

"Mann nahi-maantachhodneka. The thought of leaving the sport scares me. I have Paris Olympics in mind," the winner of a bronze medal at the 2012 World championship added.

Geeta has spent the last few weeks at an Akhara (training centre) run by his husband PawanSaroja's relatives in Delhi. She has trained only with male wrestlers, which has advantages as well drawbacks.

She talks about both.

"There are not enough strong girls in this Akhara, so I have trained with the men's wrestlers there. So strength and stamina is

not an issue. I can say that I am fitter than I was when I took the break three years back," said Geeta. "I'm not nervous about wrestling but I am coming back to the mat after a long time, so what I keep thinking about is how I am going to react to it now. I have not trained with girls, so I have no clue if I am strong or weak for my opponents. I don't know at what level my game stands today.

"When I will train with girls only then I can have a right assessment. Stamina, fitness and training have been good leading up to the Nationals. Even my family says that they see in me the same Geeta, that was at her best in 2012 but only competition will tell," she said.

Geeta acknowledged that the standard of women's wrestling has gone several notches up. They do not make just the number in India's



# Cambodia dismisses US sanctions as ‘politically motivated’

**PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA (AP):** Cambodia on Thursday dismissed as “politically motivated” sanctions imposed by the United States on two senior defense officials over allegations of graft, accompanied by a broader warning of systemic corruption in the Southeast Asian nation.

Government spokesman PhaySiphan said Cambodia had not been told in advance about the sanctions, which are related to construction financing at the Ream Naval Base — a project that has raised U.S. concerns over China’s involvement. He said Cambodia did not intend to respond to Washington.

“The sanctions imposed by the U.S. government were made unilaterally and their decision was not based on the rule of law — it is an injustice for Cambodia,” he told The Associated Press.

“These sanctions were politically motivated, and it is not the position of Cambodia to talk with the U.S. on this matter,” he said.

The U.S. Embassy in Phnom Penh would not comment on whether Cambodia had been in contact regarding the sanctions but said that the move would not have come as a surprise.

“U.S. officials have regularly raised concerns with Cambodia’s officials about systemic corruption, transnational organized crime and human rights abuses,” embassy spokesman Chad Roedemeier said.

“Regrettably there have been no meaningful changes,” he added.



The sanctions, announced by the U.S. Treasury Department on Wednesday, target ChauPhirun, the director general of the Defense Ministry’s material and technical services department, and Tea Vinh, the commander of the Royal Cambodian Navy and brother of Cambodian Defense Minister Tea Banh.

The Treasury Department alleged that in 2020 and 2021, Chau conspired with Tea and other Cambodian officials to inflate costs of the Ream Naval Base construction project and then planned to use the funds for their own benefit.

“Chau and Tea were involved in corrupt acts that undermined the rule of law and the Cambodian public’s faith

in their government institutions and public processes, including by using their political influence and official power for personal benefit,” U.S. State Department spokesman Ned Price said in a statement.

Neither the Cambodian Defense Ministry nor the Royal Cambodian Navy could immediately be reached for comment.

The sanctions render Chau, Tea and their immediate family members ineligible for entry into the U.S., and freeze any assets in the U.S. that they hold. The Treasury Department did not detail whether either individual or their immediate families had financial interests in the U.S.

In addition to the sanc-

tions, the Treasury Department, State Department and Commerce Department issued a business advisory cautioning U.S. firms “to be mindful of interactions with entities involved in corrupt business practices, criminal activities and human rights abuses.”

It identified two primary areas of risk: illegal financial activities in the financial, real estate, casino and infrastructure sectors, and entities involved in the trafficking of humans, wildlife and narcotics and “related risks in some areas of the manufacturing and timber sectors.”

American relations with the government of Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen, who has been in office for 36 years,

have long been frosty over concerns about the country’s poor record on human and political rights.

In recent months, the U.S. has expressed further worries about ties between Cambodia and China, and has urged the leaders of Cambodia, which frequently supports Beijing’s positions, to maintain an independent and balanced foreign policy.

New tensions have focused partly on China’s construction of facilities at the Ream Naval Base, and the possibility its military could seek future basing rights there. Hun Sen has strongly denied reports that Cambodia would allow China to set up a military outpost there, saying such an agreement would be forbidden by Cambodia’s constitution.

The base faces the Gulf of Thailand, which lies adjacent to the South China Sea, and holding basing rights in Cambodia would extend Beijing’s strategic military profile considerably.

In a meeting with Hun Sen in June, U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman expressed concern about China’s construction of new facilities at Ream.

She also sought clarification about the demolition of two U.S.-funded buildings at Ream without notification or explanation, and “observed that a (Chinese) military base in Cambodia would undermine its sovereignty, threaten regional security and negatively impact U.S.-Cambodia relations,” according to the State Department.

## Pakistan hosts US, Russia, China for talks on Afghanistan

**ISLAMABAD (AP):** Pakistan on Thursday hosted talks with special envoys from the United States, Russia and China on the path forward for Afghanistan, where a deepening humanitarian crisis has forced many Afghans to migrate to neighboring countries since the Taliban takeover in August.

Afghan Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi was also present in Islamabad but he did not attend the meeting, dubbed the “troika plus.”

Muttaqi will meet with his Pakistani counterpart later Thursday. According to Afghanistan’s foreign ministry spokesman Abdul Qahar Balkhi, the Afghan foreign minister will also follow up with the special envoys on Afghanistan.

The participants of the troika plus meeting are expected to issue an appeal for the world community to urgently provide humanitarian aid to the Afghan people. They also are set to urge the Taliban to respect human and women’s rights and to ensure an inclusive government.

The latest development comes weeks after Russia hosted a similar talks on Afghanistan, but Washington at the time stayed way due to logistical reasons. On Wednesday, India hosted senior security officials from Russia, Iran and five Central Asian countries to discuss the ramifications of the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan in talks that were boycotted by rival Pakistan and its ally China.

The Taliban seized power following the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Afghanistan after 20 years of war. Since the takeover in August, the world community has not recognized the Taliban regime over human rights issues and a lack of inclusivity in their Cabinet. In his remarks

at the meeting, Pakistani Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi expressed his concern that any economic collapse in Afghanistan could cause instability in the whole region and beyond.

“All of us have common concerns related to Afghanistan and also have a shared interest in the country’s peace and stability,” he said.

“We are confident that troika plus’ engagement with the new Afghan government will help consolidate peace and stability, promote sustainable economic development and help constrict space for terrorist outfits operating from and within Afghanistan,” he said.

Qureshi said Afghanistan is at the brink of an economic collapse and called for the release of Afghan funds frozen by the world community.

“With international funding dried up, it has become difficult to pay even salaries, let alone pursue development projects,” he added. “The common man is reeling under the effects of a severe drought. Any further downward slide will severely limit the new administration’s capacity to run the government” in Afghanistan.

Pakistan says the presence of Afghan representative was necessary in such talks.

In remarks after the meeting, Qureshi said he told participants that the talks would be more productive with the Taliban representative in the room. He said the next troika plus meeting will be held in Beijing, where the Taliban representative will be invited.

Qureshi said any instability in Afghanistan will directly affect Pakistan, but also Europe and other nations. He added that he will inform Muttaqi about the outcome of Thursday’s troika plus meeting.

# China, US pledge to increase cooperation at UN climate talks

**GLASGOW, SCOTLAND (AP):** The world’s top carbon polluters, China and the United States, agreed Wednesday to increase their cooperation and speed up action to rein in climate-damaging emissions, signaling a mutual effort on global warming at a time of tension over their other disputes.

In back-to-back news conferences at U.N. climate talks in Glasgow, Chinese climate envoy Xie Zhenhua and U.S. counterpart John Kerry said the two countries would work together to accelerate the emissions reductions required to meet the goals of the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change.

“It’s beneficial not only to our two countries but the world as a whole that two major powers in the world, China and the U.S., shoulder special international responsibilities and obligations,” Xie told reporters. “We need to think big and be responsible.”

“The steps we’re taking ... can answer questions people have about the pace at which China is going, and help China and us to be able to accelerate our efforts,” Kerry said.

China also agreed for the first time to crack down on methane leaks, following the lead of the Biden administration’s efforts to curb the potent greenhouse gas. Beijing and Washington agreed to share technology to reduce emissions.

Governments agreed in Paris to jointly cut greenhouse gas emissions enough to keep the global temperature rise “well below” 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) since pre-industrial times, with a more stringent target of trying to keep warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) preferred.

Both sides recognize that there is a gap between efforts taken globally to reduce climate pollution and the goals of the Paris deal, Xie said.

“So we will jointly strengthen climate action and cooperation with respect to our respective national situations,” he said.

A U.S.-China bilateral agreement in

2014 gave a huge push to the creation of the historic Paris accord the following year, but that cooperation stopped with the Trump administration, which pulled the U.S. out of the pact. The Biden administration brought the U.S. back in to that deal, but has clashed with China on other issues such as cybersecurity, human rights and Chinese territorial claims.

“While this is not a gamechanger in the way the 2014 US-China climate deal was, in many ways it’s just as much of a step forward given the geopolitical state of the relationship,” said Thom Woodroffe, an expert in U.S.-China climate talks. “It means the intense level of US-China dialogue on climate can now begin to translate into cooperation.”

The gesture of goodwill comes just days after President Joe Biden blamed Chinese President Xi Jinping’s and Russian President Vladimir Putin’s failure to attend talks in person for the lack of more progress in climate negotiations.

The U.S. and China will also revive a working group that will “meet regularly to address the climate crisis and advance the multilateral process, focusing on enhancing concrete actions in this decade,” the declaration said.

Both Washington and Beijing intend to update the world on their new national targets for 2035 in 2025 — a move that is particularly significant for China. The declaration also said China will “make best efforts to accelerate” its plans to reduce coal consumption in the second half of this decade.

The announcement came as governments from around the world were negotiating in Glasgow about how to build on the Paris Agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and protect vulnerable countries from the impacts of global warming.

U.N. Secretary General Antonio Guterres called the move “an important step in the right direction.”

Some experts noted the deal was short on commitments that would significantly reduce heat-trapping gases.

“It’s a good sign that the world’s two biggest emitters can actually work together to face the biggest crisis of humanity but there’s not a lot of meat there after the methane stuff,” said Byford Tsang a China policy analyst for the European think tank E3G.

Earlier Wednesday, a draft of a larger deal being negotiated by almost 200 countries in Glasgow called for accelerating the phasing out of coal — the single biggest source of man-made emissions — although it set no timeline.

Setting deadlines for phasing out fossil fuels is highly sensitive to countries that still depend on them for economic growth, including China and India, and to major exporters of coal such as Australia. The future of coal is also a hot-button issue in the U.S., where a spat among Democrats has held up one of President Joe Biden’s signature climate bills.

Greenpeace International director Jennifer Morgan, a long-time climate talks observer, said that the call in the draft to phase out coal would be a first in a U.N. climate deal, but the lack of a timeline would limit the pledge’s effectiveness.

“This isn’t the plan to solve the climate emergency. This won’t give the kids on the streets the confidence that they’ll need,” Morgan said.

The draft also expresses “alarm and concern” about how much Earth has already warmed and urges countries to cut carbon dioxide emissions by about half by 2030. Pledges so far from governments don’t add up to that frequently stated goal.

The draft is likely to change, but it doesn’t yet include full agreements on the three major goals that the U.N. set going into the negotiations: for rich nations to give poorer ones \$100 billion a year in climate aid, to ensure that half of that money goes to adapting to worsening global warming, and the pledge to slash global carbon emissions by 2030.

It acknowledges “with regret” that rich nations have failed to live up to the climate finance pledge. Currently they

are providing around \$80 billion a year, which poorer nations that need financial help both in developing green energy systems and adapting to the worst of climate change say isn’t enough.

Papua New Guinea Environment Minister Wera Mori said that given the lack of financial aid his country may “rethink” efforts to cut logging, coal mining and even coming to the U.N. talks.

The draft says the world should try to achieve “net-zero (emissions) around mid-century,” a target that was endorsed by leaders of the Group of 20 biggest economies in a summit just before the Glasgow talks. That means requiring countries to pump only as much greenhouse gas into the atmosphere as can be absorbed again through natural or artificial means.

In a nod to one of the big issues for poorer countries, the draft vaguely “urges” developed nations to compensate developing countries for “loss and damage,” a phrase that some rich nations don’t like. But there are no concrete financial commitments.

Britain’s Alok Sharma, who is chairing the negotiations, acknowledged that “significant issues remain unresolved.”

“My big, big ask of all of you is to please come armed with the currency of compromise,” he told negotiators. “What we agree in Glasgow will set the future for our children and grandchildren, and I know that we will not want to fail them.”

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## CORONAVIRUS

PRECAUTIONS & SAFETY TIPS

DON'T LOWER THE GUARD

LOCKDOWN HAS BEEN LIFTED, BUT UNFORTUNATELY, THE THREAT OF COVID-19 HAS NOT YET SUBSIDED.

As we adapt to the new normal, here is a reminder of the precautions you must take-

WEAR A MASK

Always wear a mask to prevent droplets from going outside

GET A FLU VACCINATION

Get your flu shot to develop an immune response before flu season begins, particularly if you have comorbidities

WASH YOUR HANDS

Wash your hands often, for about 20 seconds each with soap & carry a sanitizer

MAINTAIN SOCIAL DISTANCING

Stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms length) from other people

GET TESTED

Get tested if you have symptoms of COVID-19. Stay at home until you get the result.

COVER YOUR MOUTH & NOSE WHILE SNEEZING, OR COUGHING

Before stepping outside, make sure to carry a handkerchief or a packet of tissues.

FOLLOW PRECAUTIONS BEFORE STEPPING OUT

Carry your sanitizer, water bottle and most importantly, avoid crowded areas.

CHECK YOUR TEMPERATURE

Monitor your temperature on regular basis



# Hong Kong's M+ museum opens amid censorship controversy

**HONG KONG (AP):** Hong Kong's swanky new M+ museum — Asia's largest gallery with a billion-dollar collection — is set to open on Friday amid controversy over politics and censorship.

M+ boasts 183,000 square feet (17,000 square meters) of exhibition space, 33 galleries and over 6,400 works in its collection that range from modern and contemporary art to architecture and moving images. Designed by Swiss architects Herzog & de Meuron, M+ aims to put Asia on the global map for art and was built to rival London's Modern Tate and the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

But the museum has come under fire for censorship, after it decided not to display a piece by Chinese artist and dissident Ai Weiwei after pro-Beijing politicians said that it was "spreading hatred against China" and could violate the city's sweeping national security law. On its website, M+ replaced the digital image of the work with its logo.

The work by Ai, titled "Study of Perspective: Tian'anmen (1997)," depicts Ai raising a middle finger at Beijing's Tiananmen Square, where a bloody crackdown by the People's Liberation Army on pro-democracy protesters on June 4, 1989, killed hundreds, if not thousands.

Some of his works will be on display, but not the other images from Ai's "Study of Perspective" series featuring middle fingers aimed at the White House, the Swiss parliament and the Mona Lisa, though they're still on the museum's website.

Beijing imposed the national security law after massive anti-government protests shook Hong Kong in 2019, challenging China's rule over the semi-autonomous city that was promised Western-style freedoms after its handover from Britain in 1997.

The law outlaws secession, subversion, terrorism and foreign collusion, and has been used to arrest over 120 people and silence opposition voices in

the city. Among them, the annual vigil commemorating the Tiananmen massacre as well as the June 4 museum.

Ai has criticized M+ over its decision to censor his work.

"Under the current National Security Law, I think Hong Kong is facing a very dramatic political change," Ai said in an interview with The Associated Press from Cambridge, England. "So the freedom of speech (can) no longer be

survival, too, for M+. They need to balance what is important and what they can get away with," said John Batten, president of the International Art Critics Hong Kong.

"And because this particular photograph has been such a lightning rod of criticism ... maybe we should just put it aside for a while."

Batten said that the opening of M+ would be beneficial to the arts scene in



performed in a normal way, but rather under severe censorship.

"So I don't think the museum ... with this kind of condition can still have this ambition to become one of the world's most advanced cultural facilities."

M+ has insisted that it is only acting in accordance with the law.

"This is the first contemporary museum in Hong Kong, so therefore, I want to ensure that the message is clear so that people don't think that we are above the law," Henry Tang, chairman of West Kowloon Cultural District Authority Board, said at the museum's opening ceremony on Thursday, ahead of the public viewing.

"This is the first principle that I always emphasize, particularly in the past, (as) there were some controversies regarding whether some exhibits might be in violation of law."

Some, however, believe that the artwork's removal may be justified.

"It is self-censorship, but maybe it is

Hong Kong.

"M+ is the start of possibly a 50, a 100-year-old institution, so it should be forward looking," he said, adding that the excitement visitors will feel walking into M+ could be similar to that of the Metropolitan Museum or the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

The collection of works in M+ also includes those from local artists, like South Ho. Ho's photos "Not Every Daily VI" and "Not Every Daily V" captured the city's Occupy Central protests in 2014, and are part of the museum's collection.

"As a contemporary artist, I think it's a good that the museum provides a new channel for us to get to know the arts in Hong Kong, and from Asia and other parts of the world," said Ho.

"This is a form of investment in culture which allows people to know that apart from Hong Kong's economic achievement ... it's a good idea that we also have some cultural developments as well," he said.

## Meghan says sorry to court for forgetting book discussions

**LONDON (AP):** The Duchess of Sussex has apologized for misleading a British court about the extent of her cooperation with the authors of a sympathetic book about her and Prince Harry.

The former Meghan Markle is embroiled in legal action in London over a newspaper's publication of portions of a letter she wrote to her estranged father after her 2018 marriage to Harry, a grandson of Queen Elizabeth II.

She sued the publisher of the Mail on Sunday and the MailOnline website for breach of privacy and copyright. A High Court judge ruled in her favor in February, saying publication of the letter Meghan wrote to her father, Thomas Markle, was "manifestly excessive and hence unlawful."

Publisher Associated Newspapers is trying to overturn that decision at the Court of Appeal. The publisher argues that Meghan wrote the letter knowing it might be published and made private information public by cooperating with Omid Scobie and Carolyn Durand, authors of "Finding Freedom."

The duchess's lawyers have previously denied that she or Harry collabo-

rated with the authors. But the couple's former communications director, Jason Knauf, said in evidence to the court that he gave the writers information, and discussed it with Harry and Meghan.

In a witness statement, Knauf said the book was "discussed directly with the duchess multiple times in person and over email." Emails released as part of Knauf's statement showed he also emailed Harry to discuss the book and to say he would meet the authors.

Knauf said Harry replied: "I totally agree that we have to be able to say we didn't have anything to do with it. Equally, you giving the right context and background to them would help get some truths out there." In a witness statement made public on Wednesday, Meghan accepted "that Mr. Knauf did provide some information to the authors for the book and that he did so with my knowledge, for a meeting that he planned for with the authors in his capacity as communications secretary." She added that "the extent of the information he shared is unknown to me."

The duchess said she did not remember the discussions with Knauf

when she gave evidence earlier in the case, "and I apologize to the court for the fact that I had not remembered these exchanges at the time." "I had absolutely no wish or intention to mislead the defendant or the court," she said.

Associated Newspapers says Knauf's evidence also undermines Meghan's claim that she did not intend the letter to be seen by anyone but her father.

In his witness statement, Knauf said the duchess "asked me to review the text of the letter, saying 'obviously everything I have drafted is with the understanding that it could be leaked.'"

Knauf said Meghan asked whether she should address her father in the letter as "Daddy," adding that "in the unfortunate event that it leaked, it would pull at the heartstrings." In her own written evidence, Meghan, 40, said she had not believed that her father "would sell or leak the letter, primarily because it would not put him in a good light."

"To be clear, I did not want any of it to be published, and wanted to ensure that the risk of it being manipulated or misleadingly edited was minimized, were it to be exploited," she said.



**BLAZERS ONLY!** The model, Emily Ratajkowski steps out in NYC wearing a green and brown houndstooth jacket from Versace's Resort 2022 collection.

## AAP seeks police case against actor Kangana Ranaut for "Seditious" remark

The Aam Aadmi Party strongly condemns the derogatory statement made by actor Kangana Ranaut, claiming that India's independence of 1947 was "alms" and not real independence, a party leader said.

Mumbai: The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) submitted an application to the Mumbai Police today, demanding that a case be registered against film actor Kangana Ranaut for her reported remarks that India attained freedom in 2014 and what it got in 1947 was "alms".

The AAP's national executive member Preeti Sharma Menon termed the remarks as "seditious and inflammatory".

The AAP strongly condemns the derogatory statement made by Ms Ranaut, claiming that India's independence of 1947 was "bheek" and not real independence, Ms Menon said in a tweet.

In another tweet, Ms Menon said they have submitted an application to the Mumbai Police, requesting action against Ms Ranaut for her "seditious and inflammatory statements", under Indian Penal Code Sections 504, 505

and 124A. Earlier in the day, BJP Lok Sabha member Varun Gandhi also slammed Ms Ranaut for her remarks, and said it is an anti-national act and must be called out as such.

He also posted a short clip of the actor's remarks during a new channel programme



in which she is heard saying in Hindi, "That was not freedom but 'bheekh' (alms), and the freedom came in 2014."

Ms Ranaut, who was recently given the Padma Shri, was apparently referring to the BJP coming to power in 2014.

She has sparked controversy in the past with her right wing comments and jibes at opposition politicians.

**Aries:**  
Aries, today you're being asked to reflect upon Leo Tolstoy's golden words: "Move different if you want different. Old keys will never open new doors." It's time to acknowledge death and decay as a natural part of the birthing process. It's time to let go of all the people, relationships and situations that have lived past their expiration date. Yes, you are being tested, beautiful. By continuing to swim upstream, you will delay the evolution process.  
Tip: Pay attention to where the signs are leading you towards.  
**Taurus:**  
...and, just like that, everything fell into place beautifully! It's one of those days, Taurus. One of those days where you will find that you are surrounded by magic in every moment. So, make a wish, with all of your heart and your soul, as you surrender the outcome to the mysterious forces above and below. Something tells you are stepping into a period of change where things will begin to manifest effortlessly for you.  
Tip: From thoughts to things!

**Gemini:**  
You haven't reached a dead end, Gemini. There is a lot more that you are meant to experience on your journey to greatness. So, renegotiate the terms and conditions. Initiate a conversation with the concerned person/organisation from a place of openness. As you do, consciously turn your wounds to wisdom. Letting go of the past narrative will help you make space for what the Universe has in store for you, beautiful.  
Tip: Turn your wounds into wisdom.  
**Cancer:**  
Hard work never goes unnoticed. We repeat: hard work never goes unnoticed. So, continue to hustle hard, Cancer. Continue to give this project the best you can. As you do, surrender the outcome to the mysterious forces above and below. The Universe knows what's best for you and will deliver it to you in the most unexpected manner.  
Tip: Do your best as you surrender the outcome to the Universe.  
**Leo:**  
You are a manifesting maven and you don't even know this yet. Today, you're being asked to transmute the fears that are keeping you chained to the darkness and remember how powerful you are. The forces are working with and through you, helping you create the life you desire and deserve. If you've been calling in for support on the work front, get ready to witness a magnificent shift in this area of your life too. The cards are speaking of a team that matches your frequency and wants to co-create magic with you.

**Virgo:**  
Holy macaroni! That looks like a never-ending to-do list. You couldn't possibly achieve it all on your own even if you wanted to, and if you did, you'd be deadbeat. So how are you going to navigate this tricky situation, Virgo? Are you going to put on your cape and play superhero or allow yourself to receive the help you desire from others? What the cards want you to remember: your fellow warriors will be more than happy to lend a helping hand.  
Tip: Allow yourself to receive the support you desire.  
**Libra:**  
There are times you feel like you are swimming upstream despite your best efforts to stay afloat, but now is "not" such a time in your life. You are one with the rhythm and flow of the Universe, and are being fully supported in the dream-weaving process. Manifestation is also going to be a big theme in the coming days. You'll find that the things you have consistently been working towards are beginning to come to life. So, pause. Take a moment to thank the forces within and without that help you arrive at this point in your journey.  
Tip: You are being supported in the dream-weaving process.  
**Scorpio:**  
Scorpio, you're three seconds away from the miracle.

**Sagittarius:**  
Sagittarius, you "love" the challenge of taking on something new. You thrive on the idea of making life an adventure of sorts. But, if you took on new tasks each and everyday, what would happen to the old ones? Something to think about as you sip on your coconut latte, beautiful. This chapter of your life requires you to practice patience and persistence. You are already in a good place, and with the right amount of nurturing, you will be able to take your existing projects to the next level.  
Tip: 'Patience' and 'persistence' are your power words.  
**Capricorn:**  
Here's the thing, Capricorn: you're "not" listening. You're too hung up on your side of the story to assess how your actions, or lack thereof, could be affecting somebody. So,

Do you really want to give up now? The last stage of a project is usually the most challenging. Power through with the inner knowing that the results are going to blow your mind. For some of you, the opportunity to travel to a brand new destination or shift base may also be on the cards. The question you want to ask yourself: Will the given decision help me level up? If you answered in the affirmative, take that leap of faith pronto!  
Tip: Accept every opportunity you get to level up.  
**Pisces:**  
Pisces, the cards are talking about the power of the collective. The power of bringing like-minded individuals together in order to harness magic. Think of yourself as the catalyst. The catalyst who's being called to set big things into motion. So, instead of doubting your intuition, reach out to those you feel inspired to, and brainstorm on what you can create as a team.  
Tip: Bow is the time to tap into the power of the collective.  
**Aquarius:**  
Aquarius, the cards are talking about your familial bonds. The solid support system that is holding space for you in each moment. Instead of looking outwards for help, turn to them for resources. This could help you take your business to the next level. As such, this is a time of victories and breakthroughs. A time of moving past your limitations and showing the world what you're truly made of. Let 'carpe diem' become your mantra for these next few months.  
Tip: You're stepping into a time of victories and breakthroughs.

pause. Take a moment to shift your gaze inwards. Take a moment to dissolve the ego and look at the given situation through the eyes of love. This is the only way to work together as a team towards the common goal.  
Tip: Look at the situation through the eyes of love.  
**Taurus:**  
Taurus, the cards are talking about the power of the collective. The power of bringing like-minded individuals together in order to harness magic. Think of yourself as the catalyst. The catalyst who's being called to set big things into motion. So, instead of doubting your intuition, reach out to those you feel inspired to, and brainstorm on what you can create as a team.  
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