



**CHRISTOPHER NOLAN'S  
'TENET' DELAYED AGAIN**  
*pg 08*

**CRIME IS NEVER PETTY**  
**SOCIAL BANKRUPTCY FEEDS ANTISOCIAL TENDENCIES**  
*pg 04*

**KAREENA KAPOOR KHAN, SAIF  
ALI KHAN AND TAIMUR ALI KHAN  
ARE MOVING INTO A NEW HOME**  
*pg 08*



# SummitTIMES

Vol 05 | Issue 192 | Gangtok | Wednesday | 22 July 2020

ON TOP OF THE NEWS

RNI No. SIKENG/2016/69420

Pages 8 | ₹ 5

## Complete lockdown in West Bengal on July 23, 25 and 29

**KOLKATA, JUL 21 (PTI):** There will be a complete lockdown in West Bengal on July 23, 25 and 29 to fight the spread of COVID-19, a government official said on Tuesday. During the lockdown, all government and private offices, commercial establishments, public and private transport as well as activities except emergency services will be barred, he said.

The movement of individuals will be strictly prohibited between 10 pm to 5 am on the three days except for essential and emergency activities, a government order said.

The West Bengal government had on Monday said community transmission of novel coronavirus has been recorded in a few areas of the state and had announced there will be a complete lockdown for two days every week till August 31 to stem the spread of the contagion.

This week, the total lockdown will be in force on Thursday (July 23) and Saturday (July 25), the official said.

Next week, the lockdown will be in force on Wednesday i.e. July 29, he added.

The second-day of the complete lockdown next week will be decided after a review meeting slated to be held on Monday, the official added.

## 25 new cases and 16 full recoveries, bring Sikkim's active COVID count to 235

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 21 JUL:**

Sikkim reported 25 new cases, all, save one, being detected in East Sikkim. The twenty-fifth case is reported from Namchi in South Sikkim. These figures are as of 8AM Tuesday. Even as these numbers were added to Sikkim's COVID load, 16 patients made full recoveries and were discharged from hospital yesterday as a result of which the State now has 235 active cases. Thus far, nearly 320 people have tested positive for COVID-19 in Sikkim.

There is a slight mismatch in the data released in the COVID-chart

of the Department which the Health Secretary, Dr Pempa T Bhutia, had explained yesterday to the 13 COVID-positive people lodged at the Chujachen quarantine centre who were not reflected in the chart.

In his daily health bulletin on Tuesday, Dr Bhutia added that five patients have been shifted to the Intensive Care Unit at STNM Hospital. There was no cause for immediate worry about their health, he said, while adding that all of them have been improving. They are all receiving supplemental oxygen and although one patient had

come close to being put on ventilator, that was not required after his condition started improving.

Providing the break-up of the 25 new cases, Dr Bhutia informed that one came out during screening of 39 samples by TrueNat testing, while three were detected from 214 samples put through the RT-PCR test.

The remaining 21 cases were detected during Rapid Antigen Testing of contacts of COVID-positive patients at different places.

He mentioned that five persons were detected at Rongli during testing of 100 samples, four at Rhenock

out of 159 samples tested there and the remaining 12 from Rangpo during RAT of 101 samples. These include 39 samples of returnees and 62 of contacts.

Results of RAT of 22 samples at Singtam came out negative.

On the three new positive cases detected in RT-PCR, Dr Bhutia informed that one returnee, who was part of a group of four, was lodged at a paid quarantine facility in East Sikkim. His three companions have been shifted to isolation at a quarantine facility in Ranipool.

He mentioned that another positive patient is

from Namchi in South Sikkim from a family of eight from which three have already tested positive.

He added that a third patient came out positive in RT-PCR from Arithang and was working at a vegetable wholesale shop in Bojoghari. He had reported at the flu clinic with symptoms and went on to test-positive.

It is suspected that he contracted the virus from truck drivers coming in from Siliguri. Following the same, two buildings at Bojoghari and the house the patient was staying at in Arithang have been contained.

## ASDSO demands that UGC withdraw decision on examinations

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 21 JUL:**

ASDSO has demanded that UGC withdraw its decision to hold examinations for final year degree or PG students and suggests that a scientific evaluation process be developed for them which was "uniform, non-discriminatory and also ensuring quality education."

An ASDSO press release issued today points out that UGC has announced plans to hold these examinations through online and/ or offline modes by September.

"This very decision of conducting

online examination for few and offline exam for the rest is an irrational and undemocratic in this situation of global pandemic," the release states.

ASDSO highlights that a majority of the students do not have access to internet, electronic gadgets or even electricity, and imposing this examination on them was anti-poor and condemnable.

The online method of examination does not fulfill even the goal of maintaining academic sanctity. Moreover, most of the students are stuck in a very adverse condition due to sudden and ill-conceived lockdown, the release adds.

## Lockdown begins strong in West Sikkim

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GYALSHING, 21 JUL:**

Day-One of the week-long lockdown was complete in Gyalshing and others parts of West Sikkim today. Apart from a few people who ventured, most town-folk here stayed indoors and did not venture out throughout the day.

Eateries remained shut today except some which had special permissions for exclusively takeaway services. Shops selling essential commodities were but saw decreased number of customers.

"I kept my shop open

for the whole day today but no customers turned up. I feel that it is a waste of time to open the shop during lockdown," a businessman in town said.

The movement of people in groups in the town was restricted and the prohibitory norms and social distancing were strictly imposed. Police patrol teams kept constant vigil against the persons breaking the rules. Taxis and private vehicles did not ply apart from some vehicles carrying essential commodities, on medical emergency and others on special permit issued



by the district authority. Banks, vegetable shops and meat shops in the town were also open with limited numbers of customers those were in need.

Similarly, other urban dwellings of west district remained shut. Due to Corona positive cases reported from nearby Timburbung, Soreng Bazar is already under ba-

zar committee's imposed lockdown.

Similarly, bazars of Dentam, Legship, Bermiok, Sombaria and Daramdin also remained closed today.

## COVID-19 patient gives birth to boy in Arunachal Pradesh

**ITANAGAR, JUL 21 (PTI):** A team of doctors at a state-run hospital in Arunachal on Tuesday successfully conducted a caesarean section on a pregnant woman who is infected with coronavirus, a senior official said.

The woman delivered a boy at around 7.20 PM at Tomo Riba Institute of Health and Medical Sciences (TRIHMS), the hospital's Deputy Chief Medical Superintendent Dr Taw Kaki said.

She is the first coronavirus infected woman to give birth to a baby in the Northeastern state.

"Both the mother and the baby are doing fine. They are now together. As she is a COVID-19 patient, we will have to take a decision on whether or not the newborn will remain with the mother," Kaki said.

The woman, who was initially admitted at the Rama Krishna Mission Hospital here, was referred to TRIHMS on Tuesday after she tested positive for COVID-19.

"The woman will be treated like other Covid-19 patients and will be kept in the hospital till she recovers from the infection," TRIHMS Director Dr Moji Jini told reporters.

"She is in the terminal stage of pregnancy. The team of doctors decided to conduct a caesarean section as per the standard operating procedure. This is her third pregnancy," Kaki said.

TRIHMS is the lone medical college in the state.

The RKM Hospital authorities suspended all the services till July 23 after detection of the COVID positive case.

Hospital secretary Swami Vishweshananda said that the OPD, emergency section, labour room and operation theatre will remain closed for three days for sanitisation and screening of health staff for contact tracing.

Jini said that coronavirus cases are rising in the state but the morbidity rate is quite low with only three fatalities which is a good sign and most of the cases are asymptomatic.

Of the total 790 COVID-19 cases in the state, 502 are now active.

Jini said that the government and the health authorities are doing their best to trace the primary and secondary contacts of the positive persons to contain the spread of the virus.

He said that though TRIHMS was converted to a dedicated COVID hospital earlier, arrangements has to be changed in view of the need of other patients.

"Now a block of it has been dedicated to treat coronavirus patients," Jini said.

Dr Jini added that keeping in view the surge in COVID-19 cases in the Capital Complex, the TRIHMS authorities had requested the state government to identify a suitable place to establish another dedicated hospital.

"Accordingly, the state government has earmarked the newly constructed MLA apartment at Chimpu, near here, which will be converted to a hospital. There will be 20 ICU beds and 30-40 normal beds to keep COVID-19 patients. It will start functioning within a few days," he added.

**NEW DELHI, JUL 21 (PTI)**

India recorded 37,148 COVID-19 cases in the last 24 hours, pushing its tally to 11,55,191, while the total number of recoveries increased to 7,24,577, according to Union health ministry data on Tuesday.

The death toll due to the disease rose to 28,084 with 587 fatalities reported in a day, the data updated at 8 am showed.

There are 4,02,529 active cases of the coronavirus infection currently in the country, while 7,24,577 people have recovered till now. Thus, 62.72 per cent people have recovered so far, it said.

The total number of confirmed cases includes foreigners.

This is the sixth consecutive day when COVID-19 cases increased by more than 30,000.

Of the 587 deaths reported in the last 24 hours, 176 are from Maharashtra, 72 from Karnataka, 70 from Tamil Nadu, 54 from Andhra Pradesh, 46 from Uttar Pradesh, 35 each from West Bengal and Delhi, 20 from Gujarat, 17 from Madhya Pradesh and 10

from Jammu and Kashmir.

Nine fatalities have been reported from Rajasthan, followed by eight in Punjab, seven in Telangana, six each in Haryana and Odisha, four in Jharkhand, three in Uttarakhand, two each in Tripura and Meghalaya, and one each in Assam, Goa, Chhattisgarh, Kerala and Puducherry.

According to Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), a cumulative total of 1,43,81,303 samples have been tested up to July 20 with 3,33,395 samples being tested on Monday.

Of the total 28,084 deaths reported so far, Maharashtra accounted for the highest 12,030 fatalities followed by Delhi with 3,663 deaths, Tamil Nadu 2,551, Gujarat 2,162, Karnataka 1,403, Uttar Pradesh 1,192, West Bengal 1,147, Madhya Pradesh 738 and Andhra Pradesh 696.

So far, 568 people have died of COVID-19 in Rajasthan, 422 in Telangana, 355 in Haryana, 262 in Punjab, 254 in Jammu and Kashmir, 217 in Bihar, 97 in Odisha, 58 in Assam, 55 in Uttarakhand, 53 in Jharkhand



and 43 in Kerala.

Puducherry has registered 29 deaths, Chhattisgarh 25, Goa 23, Chandigarh 12, Himachal Pradesh 11, Tripura seven, Meghalaya four, Arunachal Pradesh three, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu and Ladakh have reported two fatalities each.

The health ministry stressed that more than 70 per cent of the deaths occurred due to co-morbidities.

Maharashtra has reported the highest number of cases at 3,18,695 followed by Tamil Nadu at 1,75,678, Delhi at 1,23,747, Karnataka at 67,420, Andhra Pradesh at 53,724, Uttar Pradesh

at 51,160, Gujarat at 49,353 and Telangana at 46,274.

The number of COVID-19 cases has gone up to 44,769 in West Bengal, 30,390 in Rajasthan, 27,646 in Bihar, 26,858 in Haryana, 25,382 in Assam and 23,310 in Madhya Pradesh.

Odisha has reported 18,110 infections, Jammu and Kashmir 14,650, Kerala 13,274, while Punjab has 10,510 cases.

A total of 5,756 people have been infected by the virus in Jharkhand, 5,561 in Chhattisgarh, 4,642 in Uttarakhand, 3,853 in Goa, 3,079 in Tripura, 2,092 in Puducherry, 1,925 in Manipur, 1,631

in Himachal Pradesh and 1,195 in Ladakh.

Nagaland has recorded 1,021 COVID-19 cases, Arunachal Pradesh 790 Chandigarh 737 and Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu together have reported 684 cases. Meghalaya has reported 466 cases and Sikkim 305 cases.

Mizoram has registered 297 infections so far, while Andaman and Nicobar Islands has recorded 207 cases.

"Our figures are being reconciled with the ICMR," the ministry said, adding the state-wise distribution is subject to further verification and reconciliation.

**Mail us at [advertise@summittimes.com](mailto:advertise@summittimes.com)  
or call us at :03592-208698**



# What the Neeraj Zimba interview conveys about the 'leader'

**RINZING ONGMU SHERPA**

I hail from Sikkim, but I grew up in close proximity of my maternal grandparents in Darjeeling. The narratives of 1986 andolan, in which my grandfather was actively involved as an advisor to Subash Ghishing, comprised of my everyday stories that he narrated so vividly. But those were not stories painted rosy and fairy for a child to take under their imagination. It was of atrocities such as bloodshed, murder, rape, raids, kidnapping, and uncertainties that circled every house in the hills of Darjeeling.

My grandmother shared her own experiences of struggle along with her two daughters who had to live under constant suspicion and fear of whether my grandfather would return home safe and sound that day, being among the few who were ordered to be shot at sight by the CRPF. This painted the everyday reality of many homes at that period. The 1986 andolan was just an offshoot of demanding separation from West Bengal which had its inception since, 1907 on the grounds that the people were linguistically, culturally, ethnically different from the people of other parts in Bengal.

Even then many of our people lost their lives, fighting for a secured identity and a place they can call theirs. The recent comment made by Neeraj Zimba Tamang, an MLA from Darjeeling, stating 'Hamro janta Sikkim ko janta haina, chyadaar ma bikri hunay' was just a 21 second clip that spurred uproar. However, I did not see any problem, as bribing is not just confined to Sikkim alone, instead it has been an old tactics as part of election politics, be it in cash or kind. But making such statements in his interview was uncalled for.

To clarify himself, he asked people to watch the entire video before coming up with any such conclusions. Thus, when I went ahead with watching it, the problem was not with the mere sentence but the entire interview seemed very problematic and disturbing, when coming from a person elected by the mandate of the people.

The 21 second clip was not the only problem and the entire interview was.

He has used the term COVID-17 to describe and reduce the 2017 andolan of Darjeeling hills into a 'virus'. The same andolan where our people vehemently fought for their

rights, which was preceded by resistance over imposition of Bengali language in schools of Darjeeling. There were bloodsheds again, raids, firing and such atrocities. The hills were locked down for three months with suspension of internet. It was

no less than the plight of Jammu and Kashmir after the abrogation of Article 370 and the lockdown that followed. Only it did not get as much attention in the media. People took to streets, fighting with the CRPF with cat-tis or catapult, stone pelting, rallies by women and men leaving behind their young children at home. Schools were suspended indefinitely. Food was stacked up. The region's revenue-generating industries such as tea, tourism, and boarding schools were suspended and ran at great loss.

While the rest were watching it all happen in Darjeeling hills, comfortably at home and debating on it. Well this was a fight led by people backed by emotions, sentiments of loss of their near ones and of the question of their identity and belongingness.

While, the whimsical leaders were trying to resolve problems within themselves and attending to all party meetings in a superficial manner bearing no outcomes. Thus, Zimba reducing such atrocities, sacrifices, bloodsheds, emotions and losses as a 'virus' is anything but tolerable. Yes, we do know Gorkhaland movement is a long drawn trajectory, before reaching anywhere near achieving the same. But when a leader good with words, projects it as an important aspect of their memorandum and promises something concrete by 2021, it is only obvious that the people in general believe in bringing this new face as their leader. When a person's identity is at stake ever since the inception, they are bound to go to any extent in believing or merely imagining that their long hoped dream would soon come true. Thus, I see no reason for leaders such as Zimba, to act so defensive and take the question by the journalist in the interview as a personal attack, when asked about the current stand on his

promises on to the people on Gorkhaland by 2021. When on the one hand he brings up his Gorkha nationalism and 'patriotism', he tries to veil his zero progress towards achiev-

ing it by stating that 'national interests' comes first. His chauvinism was clearly reflected when he mentioned 'nation first' and that the Gorkhaland issue is to be sidelined amidst Ladakh and China border issue. So then

Mr Zimba, what is the use of being a 'federal polity' the phrase

you uttered more than thrice to justify on why your hands were still tied? It is obvious that people have elected you because they hoped that a change would bring a change in their stance towards Gorkhaland. What they have not elected you for, is to sideline the home problem so as to take care of 'nation first'. If you cannot serve the people whom you are actually meant to, under a 'federal polity', then what is it that you are talking about when you say you want to serve the nation first? Darjeeling hill politics has been fraught with conspiracy and murder of anyone who seems eligible enough to represent. Classic examples would be series of assassination of likes such as Rudra Kumar Pradhan, CK Pradhan, Prakash Theeng and Madan Tamang who were few of the only sensible visionaries our people could have. Thus, it is sheer stupidity and irony when our leaders go on making comments about disorder in other states. To talk of Delhi after Kejriwal, the Union Territory has only seen commendable acceleration in spheres of health, infrastructure, education, women's safety, electricity and transportation. So Zimba making comments of Delhi elections as being based on bhawna, meaning emotions does not reason much. As one does not become a saviour or a protector synonymous to 'hanuman' simply by declaring him self as being one or by posting convincing pictures, carrying doko, symbolic of service to people, when all other spheres of development and promises remain unrealed. Just a month back he also took to Facebook making a sexist remark about a woman journalist, with an even sexist casual justification on it as a Facebook status. I truly expect that our leaders should atleast have some sense of respect towards their people. It is through problematic interviews and remarks by the leaders that we often find ourselves indulged in self doubts about our own identity. He also

needs to be reminded that Darjeeling was under the territoriality of Sikkim before being taken over by the British in 1835. Their history for a long time is intertwined, and hence it is impossible to separate knowing the history of one excluding the other. Even though Darjeeling took a sharp turn after the economic development of tea plantation from 1841, construction of mechanized roads, railways that connected it to Calcutta in 1855-58, made it a famous hill station for the British. While Sikkim still remained under the Chogyals but as a protectorate of the British until it was integrated into India in 1975 as the 22nd State of India. However, it was accorded Article 371F to meet its demands and special circumstances. This guaranteed all existing laws in force immediately before the appointed day in the territories comprised in the State of Sikkim or any part thereof shall continue to be in force until amended or replaced by a competent legislature or competent authority. The two regions however continue to share very close ties socially, economically and politically, only divided geographically as different states. Therefore, such comments by Zimba only attempts a drift and a differentiation as 'us' and 'them', thereby also making an effort to flash the Sikkimese as being gullible and naive to political foul plays, in comparison to the people of Darjeeling, whom he describes as being the 'most aware people in the world'. Should I call it your ignorance or arrogance, but surely the mixture of both is causing a great danger to our intertwined century-old prosperity. But I also see through the long threads on social media, that the common people make more reasonable and sincere an apology than the MLA himself. However, it was only likely that the public would react in the manner, and seeing the plight of a few intellectuals supporting the statement as just a 'slip of tongue' was even problematic. As it is a well thought of and more than 'off the cough remark', from a person who claims that his words were recorded by the Home Minister of India in his personal diary. Such an uproar, light the hay for unnecessary debates that were uncalled for, which mostly only works for the MLA to divert the question on Gorkhaland, which may surely be haunting him down as 2021 nears.

## Governor Prasad mourns passing away of Lalji Tandon

**SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 21 JUL:**

Governor Ganga Prasad has expressed grief over the demise of the Governor of Madhya Pradesh, Lalji Tandon.

Lalji Tandon, 85, passed away at a Lucknow hospital on Tuesday morning where he was admitted since last month.

Governor Ganga Prasad said, "I had

deep affection for Shri Lalji Tandon and was one of his close associates. Shir Tandon will always remembered for his contribution towards the nation's progress. His entire life was devoted to public service and his demise is a real loss to the nation."

Governor recalled his last meeting with Lalji Tandon at Rashtra-

pati Bhavan, New Delhi during Governors' conference in November 2019.

Governor Shri Prasad prayed to God for peace of the departed soul and expressed his condolence to late Lalji Tandon's family. "May his soul rest in peace and may God give strength to his family," said Governor Shri Ganga Prasad.

### Delhi cabinet clears doorstep delivery of ration

**NEW DELHI, JULY 21(PTI):** The Delhi government on Tuesday approved doorstep delivery of ration to eligible beneficiaries, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal announced, terming it as a "revolutionary" move.

The scheme will be known as "Mukhya Mantri Ghar Ghar Ration Ration Yojna", he said.

The scheme, which was approved at a cabinet meeting, is expected to be rolled out in the next 6-7 months after completing tendering process and other necessities.

"Under the scheme, wheat, flour, rice and sugar packed hygienically in bags will be delivered to doorstep of people. Taking ration from a PDS shop will be optional," he said in a virtual press briefing.

In its previous stint, the ruling AAP was involved in a long drawn tussle with the Lt Governor's office over its flagship doorstep delivery of ration scheme.

In March 2018, Lt Governor Anil Bajjal had asked the Delhi govern-

**Yes Bank case: PMLA court refuses bail to Rana Kapoor**

**MUMBAI, JUL 21 (PTI):** A PMLA court here on Tuesday rejected the bail plea of Yes Bank founder Rana Kapoor, arrested by the Enforcement Directorate in connection with an alleged multi-crore fraud at the bank.

Kapoor had sought bail on merits of the case.

His lawyers submitted that the investigation in the case was completed, hence there was no reason to keep keep him in jail. Also, most of the evidence was documentary in nature and cannot be tampered by the accused, they added.

However, special judge P P Rajvaidya rejected Kapoor's plea.

The banker, currently in judicial custody, was arrested in March under provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) is primarily investigating Kapoor, his wife and three daughters over Rs 600 crore received by a firm allegedly controlled by them from an entity linked to the scam-hit Dewan Housing Finance Limited (DHFL).

Kapoor, his family members and others got benefits of Rs 4,300 crore through companies controlled by them as kickbacks for sanctioning huge loans, the ED has alleged.

He is also accused of receiving bribes for going easy on loans given to a few big corporate groups that had turned into non-performing assets (NPAs).

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) is also probing a related case.

## Mangan BAC officials visit landslide imperiled areas



**WANGCHUK BHUTIA DIKCHU, 21 JUL:**

Nodal Officer, BAC Mangan, Gelay Denpa, along with BAC staff visited the landslide-prone areas

from Raffong khola to Lower Mallang ward where three affected families have been shifted to the Teachers' Colony even as some more homes, cow

sheds, a poultry farm and a piggery farm are still in danger.

The Nodal Officer handed over poly-tarpaulin to cover the slip and has directed them

to approach the Land Revenue and Disaster Management Department if further assistance was required.

Ganesh Bdr Karli with his family of sev-

en, Asim Lepcha with 5 family members and Dadup Lepcha with 4 family members have already shifted from Lower

Malling.

## ED freezes 60 bank accounts in India on Brazil's request

**NEW DELHI, JUL 20 (PTI):** The Enforcement Directorate is understood to have initiated a process to freeze over 60 bank accounts in the country on the request of the Brazilian government in connection with a money laundering case

in that country, officials said on Monday.

They said the agency has undertaken the action under the provision of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) in pursuance of a mutual agreement between the

two nations to combat financial crimes.

The over 60 bank accounts are held by some individuals and businessmen based in the country, they said.

The probe, they said, is linked to some high profile

The suspected accounts sought to be frozen by the Enforcement Directorate (ED), on behalf of the Brazilian government, are stated to be of banks in Delhi and Mumbai, they added.

## ~ SummitTIMES ~ CLASSIFIEDS

### LAND FOR SALE

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

### LAND FOR SALE

A land measuring an area for 50x32 1/2 at Road-side just below housing colony is for sale. It is just a one minute walking distance from Namchi bazaar taxi stand. Interested party may contact 9593733387 and 9434406761

### LAND FOR SALE

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

### FOR RENT

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

### GENERAL LAND FOR SALE

General roadside land for sale measuring 30 by 45 square feet near smile land below apica garden . Contact no.7797885351/9735358899.



## COVAXIN human trials start at SRM Medical College Hospital and Research Centre



**SUMMIT REPORT  
KATTANKULATHUR, 21 JUL:**

Human trials of COVAXIN have begun at SRM Medical College Hospital and Research Centre.

search Centre.

On 20 July, volunteers have been screened for this trial. SRM Hospital is the only medical college in Tamil Nadu to be selected for this trial.

The trial has already begun in AIIMS Patna, PGIMS Rohtak and Nizam's Institute, Hyderabad. The volunteers in the institutes have been given the

first dose of vaccine. They will be given the second dose of vaccine after an interval of 14 days.

COVAXIN is developed by the Bharat Bio-

tech International limited in Collaboration with ICMR and NIV (Pune).

COVAXIN has got the nod for human trials from Drugs controller of General of India.

## Plasma therapy begins in Odisha's Ganjam district

**BERHAMPUR, JUL 21 (PTI)** After encouraging results from plasma therapy in Bhubaneswar and Cuttack, the Odisha government on Tuesday started administering it on critically ill COVID-19 patients in Ganjam district, which accounted for 57 per cent of the total fatalities in the state, an official said.

Ganjam is the worst affected district in the state with 225 fresh novel coronavirus cases on Tuesday, pushing the tally to 5,991, the official said.

Fifty-nine COVID-19 deaths have been recorded in the district so far, he said.

"Plasma therapy has produced good results in other places. We hope this treatment will bring much relief to the patients here also," Ganjam collector V A Kulange said.

Under the therapy, antibodies from the blood of a recovered

patient are used for the treatment of those in a critical condition.

So far, Odisha has applied plasma therapy on six critical COVID-19 patients.

The condition of four patients has improved, a health department official said.

"Condition of two other patients is stable," he said.

The plasma units were collected at SCB Medical College and Hospital in Cuttack, which has been recognised as a nodal centre for a plasma bank.

"We have initially planned to treat at least four persons with plasma therapy," said a doctor attached to the Tata COVID-19 Hospital at Sitapalli.

Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik last week had inaugurated the COVID plasma bank for treatment of serious



patients at the SCB Medical College and Hospital.

"We think a plasma bank is likely to be set up here soon with the government giving stress on reducing COVID-19 cases in Ganjam district," the collector said.

Meanwhile, the district administration has started registration of persons who have re-

covered from the deadly infection and willing to donate plasma.

As many as 34 persons have come forward to donate plasma in the district so far, the collector said.

All the 22 BDOs in the district have been asked to find out at least ten plasma donors in each block, he said.

Susmita Behera, assistant professor, department of transfusion medicine at MKCG Medical College and Hospital here said that any healthy person, above 18 years, can donate plasma.

Cured COVID-19 patients can donate plasma at least 28 days after recovering from the disease, she said.

## Proactively trying to expand COVID-19 testing: Owaisi

**HYDERABAD, JUL 21 (PTI)** AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi on Tuesday said his party is proactively trying to expand COVID-19 testing, especially for those who have to deal with the public.

"Were proactively trying to expand Covid19 testing, espe-

cially for those people who have to deal with the public in large numbers.

In light of approaching Eid ul Adha, we arranged Covid19 tests for meat traders to ensure that they, their families & customers can be safe," Owaisi, Lok Sabha member from Hyder-

abad, tweeted.

The AIMIM said Owaisi visited Sarojini Devi Eye Hospital and Nizamia Tibbi Hospital in the city to oversee arrangements for COVID-19 testing especially for meat traders of Charminar and Nampally Assembly Constituencies.

## Amarnath Yatra cancelled due to COVID-19



**SRINAGAR, JUL 21 (PTI)** The Shri Amarnath Shrine Board (SASB) on Tuesday decided to cancel this year's pilgrimage to the cave shrine in south Kashmir Himalayas in the wake of the closure of religious places in Jammu and Kashmir due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The decision to cancel the annual Amarnath Yatra was taken at a meeting of the shrine board chaired by SASB chairman Lieutenant Governor G C Murmu here.

"Based upon the circumstances, the Board decided with heavy heart that it is not advisable to

hold and conduct this year's Shri Amarnathji Yatra and expressed its regret to announce the cancellation of Yatra 2020," the SASB said in a statement.

It said the board will, however, live telecast the 'virtual darshan' of the prayers twice a day.

**HAVE A STORY TO SHARE?**

news@summittimes.Com

### CBI questions Gehlot's OSD in suicide case of Rajasthan police officer

**NEW DELHI, JUL 20 (PTI)** The CBI on Tuesday questioned Deva Ram Saini, OSD to Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, in connection with the alleged suicide by state police officer Vishnudutt Vishnoi in Churu on May 23, officials said.

A team of special crime unit of the CBI from Delhi is in Jaipur to record statements in connection with the death of Vishnoi, who was SHO of Rajgarh. His body was found hanging from the ceiling of his official residence in Churu, officials said.

The move comes at a time when the Rajasthan government is facing political turmoil after Sachin Pilot's rebellion and his subsequent sacking as deputy chief minister.

Sources, however, made it clear that the agency is conducting investigation in a professional manner in a case handed over to it by the state government itself.

The agency had on Monday evening questioned Congress MLA Krishna Poonia for nearly three hours at her home in Jaipur, they said.

The sources said people are being examined to know various aspects of the case and it does

not mean that they are accused as a final picture will emerge only after completion of probe.

The Rajasthan Government had handed over the probe to the CBI in the case.

Bishnoi's brother had filed a complaint with the Rajasthan police alleging he was under pressure which led him to take this drastic step, they said.

Two suicide notes were recovered from Vishnoi-- one addressed to his parents and the other to the Superintendent of Police of the district.

In the suicide note to the SP, Vishnoi had said he was not able to bear the pressure put on him. In his suicide note, he had also said that he tried to give his best to the Rajasthan Police.

A screenshot of a purported WhatsApp chat that Vishnoi had with one of his activist friends, in which the police officer talked about being trapped in dirty politics, had also gone viral.

The leaders of the BJP and the BSP have alleged that the officer, who was known for his honesty and hardwork, was being pressured by Congress MLA Poonia, a charge that she has denied.

Poonia represents Sadulpur constituency in Rajasthan.

**DONATE BOOKS FOR NOBLE CAUSE  
TO BUILD LIBRARY**

*If anyone willing to donate books or support through Finance, than you are most welcome*

**"GIVING IS NOT JUST ABOUT  
MAKE A DONATION,  
ITS ABOUT MAKING  
DIFFERENCE"**

For more Details Contact : 6294745117, 8768809862  
Email : chitishchetri7@gmail.com

SummitTIMES

## Sanitiser - a fire HAZARD!

*Hand sanitisers, now part of everyday life, can also be a fire hazard if used carelessly. There are different types.*

*One comes with Isopropyl alcohol base and the other with ethyl alcohol base. Many are a mixture of both. They readily evaporate at room temperature into an ignitable vapour. When sanitiser evaporates in a confined area, like a car, it only takes a spark to start a fire. They are inflammable and people should be aware. They should be kept in safe and cool places. Exposure to extreme heat can alter the chemical composition. Alcohol-based hand sanitiser should be rubbed over hands and other surfaces until it evaporates and dries up. Even a small quantity of alcohol on your hands exposes yourself to fire risks while cooking or smoking.*

*While sanitizing your vehicle, never use alcohol based sanitisers on hot or running vehicles, they can be sanitized with hypochlorite solutions type sanitisers.*

**-Sikkim Fire & Emergency Service-**

**Specialized Dental Clinic of Siliguri  
(Sevoke Dental Clinic)  
Branch Open in Gangtok.**

**GANGTOK DENTAL CLINIC**



**NOW OPEN**



10AM to 7PM

**BOOK YOUR APPOINTMENT**

**82106 99271**

**Dr. Anjali Gupta**  
**BDS, Dental Surgeon**

Near Sisa Golai  
Below Greendale Hotel  
Gangtok, East Sikkim

+91 8210699271  
+91 8768213966



What is Novel Coronavirus - nCoV?

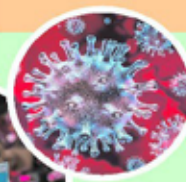
The Novel Coronavirus (nCoV) is new strain of Coronavirus that originated in Wuhan, China. Notorious for mutating quickly and acquiring new qualities, it is a rising epidemic that was previously not identified in humans.

### Symptoms of nCoV

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

### Treatment

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



### Precautions to Prevent nCoV

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

If you seek help, you may call :  
-Toll free no. 104  
District surveillance Officer  
EAST : 7029372100  
WEST : 9593297800  
NORTH : 9641957468  
SOUTH : 7407691463  
New STNM  
AMS : 9434711402

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



## Crime is Never Petty

*Social bankruptcy feeds antisocial tendencies*

Speak to the old-timers, or leaf through a vintage edition of the Guinness Book of World Records, and chances are that you will learn that Sikkim, at one time, figured in the book under the enviable entry of a state with “zero crime rate.” The data that earned Sikkim this status is obviously suspect, since not reporting or documenting crimes is not the same as not having any, but no one can deny that Sikkim has been a safe place for a long time. Of course there have always been crimes committed; that, after all, is something every society has to live with. Of late, however, the nature of crimes has been showing a disturbing trend. Not only is violence entering the crime roll in higher numbers, but an increasing number of petty-burglaries with big hauls have become common, again, not all of them get reported to the police. News-reports arrive often about the nature of crimes now becoming increasingly common in the State – a planned burglary in which specific items are lifted, then a drug bust which occurs too routinely only because addiction rates are climbing, and then the rare murder which occurred over a minor issue. The other worrying statistic is the involvement of juveniles and the very young in too many crimes. One needs to only look at the criminal graph of the notorious “spiderman” of Sikkim to realize how minds and hearts, once inured to minor crimes can graduate to the more dangerous crimes. “Spiderman” started off as a petty burglar who climbed into hotel rooms and stole from tourists. He has since be involved in murders and violent jail-breaks. There have been other instances when masked gangs have carried out dacoities in villages and attempted heists, although that trend has thankfully subsided.

What continues to occur too often, and what should worry everyone, are the opportunist crimes. Ask anyone who lives in the urban sprawls of Gangtok and Namchi, and they will know of a neighbor who had stepped out for a brief errand only to return to find the house burgled. This has happened often and have rarely been solved. It was obviously someone who has noticed habits and patterns and is familiar with the place, perhaps even the target persons, to pull off a quick job like that.

For a state already grappling with a host of social challenges ranging from runaway substance abuse to growing number suicides to a high school drop-out rate, crime has clearly become the latest cause for distress. Although each of these challenges will require individual attention, they should not be seen in isolation because they are essentially interconnected in that they result from the socio-cultural and socioeconomic changes that have visited the State as part of ‘development’, modernity and mainstreaming. None of these are essentially negative influences but have collaborated to change lifestyles in Sikkim and while this change could have been eased with a more responsive society, fact remains that people at large were left to their own devices to ‘adjust’. The spurt in crimes and the involvement of kids too young to be held responsible for their deeds is possibly a product of imitative consumption which is too disquietingly common, especially among the younger generation. The obvious income inequality does not help matters and this situation, when catalysed by a largely absent civil society, eases the path leading to crime.

The inference made above is admittedly speculative, and it should be a worrying sign when journalists end up speculating on social trends when these are better handled by professionals trained in making sense of such issues. But that is not happening in Sikkim, is it? And that is where the main problem lies. For all the profusion of NGOs in the State, there is none of any consistent commitment to issues of the youth. It is important that the people and their representative organisations notice the trend and arrest the slide by first understanding what it is that drives some of its young to such easy delinquency and then setting the aberrations right. The situation demands a collective response, which, if not addressed soon, will snowball into a presence that cannot be erased as easily later. The cops will obviously do their job of rounding up suspects and finding the culprits, but until the root cause is not corrected, the problem will persist. What is worse, disinterest will from a hardened crop of anti-socials, because juveniles in obvious need of compassionate counseling would have received only ‘police action’ and derision. Antisocial tendencies are not fed by economic poverty, it is social bankruptcy that cements it.

### 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)

## Oxford immunologist on coronavirus vaccine: our early results look highly promising

REBECCA ASHFIELD

THECONVERSATION.COM

A vaccine against COVID-19 is urgently needed if we’re to stop the virus spreading and prevent potentially millions of further deaths. We’re now one step closer to that goal.

We have published early results from our clinical trial of the vaccine ChAdOx1 nCoV-19 (also known as AZD1222), designed by the University of Oxford and developed in partnership with AstraZeneca. The preliminary data shows that it is safe and induced a strong antibody response in all vaccinated volunteers, suggesting that an effective vaccine could be within reach.

This trial was the first time that the vaccine had been given to humans: 543 healthy adults aged 18-55 were vaccinated with a single dose of ChAdOx1 nCoV-19. A further 534 people were given a control vaccine that gives similar minor reactions, including injection site redness and mild pain. Volunteers are having their immune response (both antibodies and T cell levels) monitored for at least 12 months, and will also be observed to see whether or not they develop COVID-19.

The preliminary data from the trial clearly demonstrates that the vaccine induces an antibody response within 28 days. This response is in a similar range to that in individuals who have recovered from COVID-19, providing encouragement that the vaccine will be able to protect the majority of people against infection.

Ten volunteers were also given a second “booster” dose of the vaccine. This increased the antibody response to even higher levels, and 100% of blood samples from this group showed neutralising activity against COVID-19 infection in a laboratory setting.

The vaccine also induced T cells that specifically recognise SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. It’s encouraging to see both antibody and T cell responses, as together this is the right kind of immune response that could lead to protection against the virus. Importantly, the vaccine demonstrates an acceptable safety profile, with no vaccine-induced severe adverse events – that is, no major side-effects.

We were confident testing the vaccine in humans after encouraging trials with mice and rhesus macaque monkeys. These had shown that the vaccine was safe and induced a robust



immune response. Significantly, the vaccinated monkeys were protected from severe disease after they were challenged with a much higher dose of SARS-CoV-2 than humans would encounter through natural exposure.

### HOW DOES THIS VACCINE WORKS

Vaccines work by training the immune system to recognise and fight off infectious agents (pathogens), such as bacteria and viruses. Vaccines do this by presenting the immune system with a readily identifiable part of a pathogen, which the immune system remembers so that it can quickly respond should it encounter that same pathogen in the future.

Most vaccines in development for SARS-CoV-2 – including this one – focus on presenting the spike protein that decorates the surface of the virus. It’s this protein that allows the virus into human cells by binding to a molecule on their surface called ACE2.

There is a broad range of approaches to vaccine design; ChAdOx1 nCoV-19 is what’s known as a viral vector vaccine. To make this vaccine, particles of a different, harmless virus (called ChAdOx1) are loaded with the portion of SARS-CoV-2 DNA that instructs cells how to build the spike protein.

When these ChAdOx1 particles infect human cells, the coronavirus DNA is then “expressed”, building the spike protein for the immune system to respond to. Importantly for vaccine safety, the viral vector can’t replicate and cause an ongoing infection.

The ChAdOx1 viral vector has been used to make eight vaccines already in clinical trials for other human diseases, including Mers (Middle Eastern respiratory syndrome), a coronavirus that is related to SARS-CoV-2.

### WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

Crucially, we need to demonstrate that the vaccine is effective – that it results in significantly lower (ideally zero) cases of COVID-19 in the ChAdOx1 nCoV-19 vaccinated group versus the control group. Falling infection rates in the UK are an excellent outcome for the health of the nation, but may compromise the ability to show this.

If there are no cases of COVID-19 in the group receiving the control vaccine, comparing that group to the vaccinated group would be meaningless. Deliberately infecting people with the virus may be possible in future (after careful consideration of the ethical implications), but is not currently allowed.

For this reason, a second trial has been launched in approximately 10,000 UK individuals, focusing on

health workers, and further trials are being conducted in Brazil and South Africa, where infection rates are much higher. The expanded UK trial will include children and older adults to estimate vaccine efficacy in these age groups. Immune responses in people over 70 are often lower than those in younger adults.

It’s essential to follow the vaccine-induced immune response over a period of at least one year, to estimate whether booster injections will be required, and if so how often. My personal prediction – based on decreases in antibody levels in individuals infected with other types of coronavirus, rather than data from the current vaccine trial – is that we’re likely to need yearly boosters, similar to annual flu jabs.

Finally, if the vaccine proves effective, rapid manufacture of potentially billions of doses would be required to supply the world. To facilitate this, AstraZeneca has already initiated a large-scale vaccine manufacturing programme, aiming to have hundreds of millions of doses with delivery starting by the end of 2020. Agreements are in place to provide the vaccine to low-income and middle-income countries and also to the UK, Europe and the US.

*[the writer is Senior Project Manager, Jenner Institute, University of Oxford]*

## Is global fertility really plummeting? How population forecasts are made

BRIENNA PERELLI-HARRIS & JASON HILTON

THECONVERSATION.COM

When the BBC reported on the results of a new study on global population in mid July, the tone was alarmist. “Jaw-dropping” declines in births were foretold, while one of the study’s authors revealed worries about his daughter’s future in light of “enormous social change”.

The study by the University of Washington’s Institute for Health Metrics Evaluation (IHME), published in The Lancet, projects that global population will peak at 9.7 billion around 2064 and then fall to 8.8 billion by 2100.

However, we needn’t start panicking just yet. Understanding how such forecasts are produced can help to explain why.

To predict how global population will evolve over the next century, we must make predictions about two key components of population change: mortality and fertility. These can then be combined to estimate population growth or decline.

Forecasting these components over such a long time period is hard, as social and economic change and technological advances may alter their path. Nevertheless, global population forecasts are important, for example to help coordinate responses to climate change. And so organisations such as the UN regularly produce world population forecasts.

### ESTIMATING FERTILITY

Fertility is the most important of the three components for determining global population change. Demographers have known for decades that the total fertility rate, a measure used to calculate the number of children a woman would have in her lifetime, has been declining around the world.

By 2020, more than 90 states and territories in the world had fertility rates below 2.1. This is the average number of children women would have to have in order to replace themselves and their partners, taking into account those who die before they reach adulthood.

Some countries in southern and eastern Eu-

rope have had extremely low fertility since the early 1990s, with total fertility rates of 1.3 or below. East Asia, including Japan and South Korea, have had very low fertility rates throughout most of the 2000s, and Korea currently has a total fertility rate of 1.1. So “jaw dropping” falls in fertility occurred in these areas some time ago.

It is the speed of decline and eventual level of fertility in low income countries that is the major difference between the IHME and other population forecasts. A key element of the IHME forecasts is that they predict fertility based on women’s education and access to contraceptive methods.

Intuitively, this makes sense: education and contraception are known to reduce fertility, as women gain autonomy and are better able to make choices about childbearing. However, predicting fertility based on future access to education and contraception is not easy.

This is why the UN focuses on predicting fertility and mortality alone. It bases predictions for countries that have high fertility and mortality on the average patterns of decline for countries that have already reached lower levels. These projections result in a world population peaking at 11 billion in 2100, much higher than the IHME projections.

What will happen in Africa? Another approach is to base projections on expert opinion. In 2014, researchers at the Wittgenstein Centre for Demography and Global Human Capital interviewed over 550 population experts around the globe, and used their informed opinions to guide their estimates.

They predicted that world population would peak at 9.4 billion around 2070 and then decline to 9 billion by 2100 – not so different from the IHME. However, these demographers made it very clear that the size of the world’s future population would depend on how quickly girls’ education expands, especially in Africa.

The IHME also notes that Africa’s population will grow, and Nigeria will become one of the world’s most populous countries. Yet how large depends on the underlying assumptions about

how quickly societies change. The IHME tends to assume that Africa will achieve higher education level and meet the need for contraception, resulting in fertility rates far below replacement level.

But most demographers are more cautious, noting that many countries in Africa have experienced stalls in declining fertility rates, potentially due to the failure to educate girls and a resurgence in religion and patriarchal ideas. Demographers studying Africa tend to think that fertility will remain high, due to lack of political will and unequal development across the continent. So whether fertility does start to decline throughout Africa is still very unclear.

### DOLLOPS OF UNCERTAINTY

Most demographers recognise that we need to include estimates of uncertainty in their projections to make sure that we are realistic about how well we can predict future populations. While the IHME has produced alternative scenarios, these nuances seem to have been lost in the publicity surrounding the study. Of course, conservative estimates of future population forecasts noting considerable uncertainty do not make for attention-grabbing headlines.

A group of demographers are now preparing a letter – which we have signed – for the Lancet about the IHME study. It notes concerns that the models, data and underlying assumptions have not received sufficient scrutiny.

The doomsday scenario publicised in the media does not recognise that declining fertility often represents positive developments, such as increasing female autonomy and education. Nor does it recognise that such alarmist predictions may lead governments to pursue policies which undermine reproductive rights.

So, such studies must receive critical scrutiny, and the media coverage surrounding future population scenarios needs to be less alarmist and more cautious.

*[Brienna Perelli-Harris is Professor of Demography, University of Southampton; Jason Hilton is Lecturer in Social Statistics and Data Science, University of Southampton]*



# Delhi's sero-prevalence study finds 23.48 per cent people affected by COVID-19

**NEW DELHI, JULY 21 (PTI):** Delhi's sero-prevalence study has found that 23.48 per cent of the people have been affected by COVID-19 in the city, which has several pockets of dense population, the Union Health Ministry said on Tuesday.

The study, which was conducted from June 27 to July 10 by the National Center for Disease Control (NCDC) in collaboration with the Delhi government, also indicated that a large number of infected persons remain asymptomatic, it said.

A sero-survey involves testing of blood serum of individuals to check for the prevalence of antibodies against an infection.

"The results of the sero-prevalence study show that on an average, across Delhi, the prevalence of IgG antibodies is 23.48 per cent. The study



also indicates that a large number of infected persons remain asymptomatic," the ministry said in a statement.

"This implies that nearly six months into the epidemic, only 23.48 pc of the people are affected in Delhi, which has several pockets of dense population," said the ministry, attributing it to efforts taken by the government to prevent the spread of infection

including lockdown, containment and surveillance measures, including contact tracing and tracking, as well as citizen's compliance to COVID appropriate behaviours.

It, however, said that a significant proportion of the population is still vulnerable and therefore, the containment measures need to continue with the same rigour.

Non-pharmacological interventions such as physical distancing, use of face mask/cover, hand hygiene, cough etiquette and avoidance of crowded places etc., must be followed strictly, it underlined.

For all the 11 districts of Delhi, survey teams were formed. Blood samples were collected from selected individuals after taking written informed

consent and then their sera were tested for IgG antibodies and infection using COVID KAVACH ELISA approved by the Indian Council for Medical Research.

It is one of the largest sero-prevalence studies conducted in the country using the ELISA testing.

A total of 21,387 samples were collected as per lab standards and were tested.

The tests help in identification of presence of antibodies in the general population. The test performed is not a diagnostic test but only provides information about past infection due to SARS-CoV-2 in individuals who test positive, the ministry said.

According to the Health ministry's data updated at 8 am, Delhi's COVID-19 caseload increased to 1,23,747 while the death-toll rose to 3,663 on Tuesday.

# Mizoram inducts 8 canines, revives dog squad

**AIZAWL, JUL 21 (PTI):** The Mizoram government on Tuesday inducted eight dogs into the state police for anti-crime, anti-drug and search and rescue operations, officials said.

Home Minister Lalchamliana was present at the function in which four German shepherds and four Labrador Retrievers were inducted.

The authorities thus revived the dog squad which was formed around 20 years ago but does not have a member for the past few years.

"It is a great achievement for the state police to induct

a good canine squad after a generation and I hope the dog police will comfort the people," Lalchamliana said on the occasion.

The home minister said that three of the eight dogs are trained in tracking and detection of criminals while three others are sniffer dogs skilled in finding drugs.

One dog is trained to detect explosive materials and another will be used in search and rescue operations, he said.

Lalchamliana said that on several occasions, the police have faced impediments and inconveniences in tracking crim-

inals and in anti-drug operations due to absence of a canine squad.

He thanked the Centre for providing financial assistance to the state for purchasing the dogs and the cost of their training.

Mizoram Director General of Police SBK Singh termed the dog squad as a "definitive tool" to combat drug smuggling across Myanmar border.

The newly inducted canines, trained at the National Training Centre for Dogs in Gwalior, showcased their skills at the function.

## India's COVID-19 fatality rate drops to 2.43% from 3.36% on Jun 17: Health Ministry



New Delhi, Jul 21 (PTI): India's COVID-19 fatality rate has dropped significantly to 2.43 per cent from 3.36 per cent on June 17 due to effective clinical management of coronavirus cases, the Centre said on Tuesday, asserting the country has handled the pandemic "relatively well"

Thirty states and Union Territories have COVID-19 positivity rate lower than that of the national average which stands at 8.07 per cent, Rajesh Bhushan, officer

on special duty in the Union health ministry, told a press conference here.

"Nineteen states and UTs are performing more than 140 tests per day per million population. Just doing tests is not enough, they have to be done at a level of 140 tests per day per million so that the rate of positivity reduces and comes down to 10 per cent first and then continue the testing

process so that the rate of positivity further reduces to 5 per cent or lower," he said

"So that is the ultimate aim to maintain this level of testing and bring positivity lower to 5 per cent eventually or even lower than that," he said

In India, the COVID-19 deaths per million population stand at 20.4 per million which is amongst lowest in the world, Bhushan said

"There are several countries where the deaths per million is 21 times or 33 times higher than in India. The global average stands at 77 deaths per million population," he said

"So far, the nation has managed COVID-19 relatively well. The Government of India is co-operating with all states and UTs. All decisions are being taken based on science and evidence-based inputs and in consultation with domain knowledge experts," Bhushan

said

He also shared a chart showing that the COVID-19 case fatality rate has declined from 3.36 per cent on June 17 to 2.43 per cent now.

He asserted that the significant decline in the case fatality rate has been due to effective clinical management of cases India recorded 37,148 COVID-19 cases in the last 24 hours, pushing its tally to 11,55,191, while the total number of recoveries increased to 7,24,577, according to Union health ministry data issued on 8 am Tuesday

The death toll due to the disease rose to 28,084 with 587 fatalities reported in a day, the data showed

There are 4,02,529 active cases of the coronavirus infection currently in the country, while 7,24,577 people have recovered till now.

Thus, 62.72 per cent people have recovered so far, the ministry said.

## 50 fresh COVID-19 cases in Arunachal; count rises to 790

**ITANAGAR, JUL 21 (PTI):** Fifty more people, including nine Army jawans and six police personnel, have tested positive for COVID-19 in Arunachal Pradesh, taking the northeastern state's tally to 790 on Tuesday, a senior health official said.

Thirty-four fresh cases were reported in the Capital Complex region, 10 in the border district of Tawang, five in Lower Subansiri and one in West Siang, he said.

Nine Army jawans are among those infected in Tawan district situated along the India-China border, State Surveillance Officer, Dr L Jampa, said.

Six police personnel from Naharlagun police station are among the 34 new patients in the Capital Complex region, he said.

Four new patients from Lower Subansiri district and the one from West Siang are returnees from other states, Dr Jampa said.

All barring six new patients are asymptomatic and they were shifted to COVID-19 care centres, he said.

Three more persons from Lower Subansiri district recovered from COVID-19 on Monday and were advised 14-day home isolation upon their release from hospitals, the official said.

Of the 790 cases in the state, 502 are active while 285 people have recovered and three patients have died, Dr Jampa said.

The Capital Complex region comprising Itanagar, Naharlagun, Nirjuli and Banderdewa areas has registered the highest number of cases in the state at 306, followed by Changlang (33), Namsai (30), East Siang (24), Papum Pare (22), Lower Subansiri (16), Lower Siang (14) and Leparada and Tawang (10 each), he said.

The Health Department has received around 1.5 lakh antigen test kits, of which 78,000 have been distributed

among various districts, the official said.

"Most of the rapid diagnostic kits will be used in the Capital Complex region," he said, adding sero-surveillance of ELISA (enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay) test is also being conducted in the region.

The coronavirus recovery rate in the state stands at 35 per cent, Dr Jampa said.

"There is a rapid rise in COVID-19 cases in the Capital Complex region. But the good news is that most of them are asymptomatic," he said.

Dismissing reports of community transmission of COVID-19 in Capital Complex, Dr Jampa said,

## Meghalaya floods: Amit Shah speaks with CM, condoles loss of lives



**NEW DELHI, JULY 21:** Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday spoke to Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad Sangma and assured all support in dealing with the flood situation in the state.

Shah also condoled the death of people due to floods in West Garo hills of the state.

"Loss of lives due to the floods in West Garo Hills, Meghalaya is very disturbing. I have spoken

to the Chief Minister, Shri @SangmaConrad and assured him all possible help from the Central government. Nation stands resolutely with the people of Meghalaya in these trying times," he said in a tweet.

At least five people were killed in floods in Meghalaya's West Garo Hills district where the deluge has affected about one lakh people, reports said.

## Tripura's COVID-19 tally crosses 3,000-mark; toll mounts to 71

**AGARTALA, JULY 21 [PTI]:** Over 200 more people, including 19 BSF personnel, have tested positive for COVID-19 in Tripura, taking the total number of cases in the state to 3,094, officials said on Tuesday.

The state also reported two fresh deaths due to the disease in the last 24 hours, they said.

Two women, aged 80 and 62 years, died at the Agartala Government Medical College on Monday. They both were suffering from heart ailments, the officials said.

The state had registered its first COVID-19 death on June 9. All the coronavirus patients

who have died till date in the state had comorbidities, the officials said.

"Alert! 202 people found COVID-19 positive out of 4,747 samples tested. Among the total 202 COVID-19 positive, 19 are BSF personnel. 2 COVID-19 positive patients died today," Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb tweeted on Monday night.

Also, 86 patients were discharged from hospitals on Monday, he added.

The fresh infections have taken the number of active cases in the state to 1,228, while 1,845 people have recovered and 14 have migrated to other states, the officials

said.

The chief minister held a high-level meeting with his cabinet colleagues and senior government officials on Monday to take stock of the coronavirus situation in the state.

"I had extensive discussions regarding the situation and effective ways to tackle the pandemic," he said in a Facebook post.

A Border Security Force (BSF) spokesperson said all the newly-infected personnel are being treated at a COVID-19 hospital set up at the paramilitary force's state headquarters in Salbagan area of Agartala.

## Five sports academies to be set up in Mizoram

**AIZAWL, JUL 21 (PTI):** Mizoram Sports Minister Robert Romawia Royte on Tuesday said that five sports academies will be set up in different parts of the state.

Addressing a general body meeting of Mizoram State Sports Council, Royte said all the required official procedure for setting up of the five sports schools in the state and a district sports complex at Mamit town have been completed and constructions will commence soon.

He said that the central government has released the first installment of the funds for the purpose.



"Looking at Mizoram's tally in the last Khelo India, there is a lot to be done in order to reach national and in-

ternational level," said Royte who is also the owner of I-League side Aizawl FC.

Lauding the central

government for including Mizoram among eight states where Khelo India State Centre of Excellence (KISCE) will be set

up, the sports minister said that efforts are on to materialise the project.

Last month, the central government announced that the Aizawl Sports Academy at Rajiv Gandhi Sports Complex at Mualpui has been included among eight facilities in the country to be developed as KISCE.

Royte informed the meeting that the state government is planning to set up sports infrastructure through Externally Aided Projects (EAP). He said the state government has recently granted industry status to sports, which will help develop infrastructure.

## Tripura CM Biplab Deb triggers row, says Punjabis, Jats less brainy than Bengalis

**AGARTALA, JULY 21:** Tripura Chief Minister Biplab Deb has stirred yet another controversy by saying Punjabis and Jats are physically strong but less brainy while Bengalis are known to be very intelligent. However, on Tuesday, he apologised for his remarks and sought forgiveness from the two communities on Twitter.

Every community in India is known for its certain type and character, the BJP leader said while addressing a programme at the Agartala Press Club on Sunday. A video clip of Deb's statement has gone viral on social media.

The Congress termed chief minister's remarks "shameful and unfortunate".

"For Bengal or Bengalis, it is said that one should not challenge them when it is regarding intelligence. Bengalis are known as very intelligent and it is their identity," Deb was heard

saying in the clip. Whereas, Punjabis and Jats are known for their physical strength, he said.

"When we talk about the people of Punjab, we say he's a Punjabi, a Sardar. They may have less intelligence but are very strong. One can't win them over by strength but with love and affection. A large number of Jats live in Haryana. So what do people say about Jats? Jats are less intelligent but are very healthy. If one challenges a Jat, he will bring a gun from his house," Deb said.

Congress chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala said Deb has insulted the "Sikh brothers" of Punjab and the Jat community of Haryana.

"This is the BJP's lowly mindset. Why are Khattar ji and Dushyant Chautala silent? Where are Modi ji and Nadaji? Apologize, take action," Surjewala had tweeted.

Deb later apologised. However, on Tuesday

apologised for his statements comparing Punjabis and Jats with Bengalis, and said he did not intend to hurt sentiments.

In a series of tweets in Hindi on Tuesday morning, the chief minister sought forgiveness for his remarks and said many of his friends were Punjabis and Jats, and he is proud of people hailing from the two communities.

"I always salute the contributions of the Punjabi and Jat communities in the freedom struggle of the country. And I can never imagine raising questions on the role played by these two communities in advancing India," Deb tweeted.

"I had expressed the views some people have about them. I am proud of Punjabi and Jat communities. I have lived among them for quite some time... If my statement has hurt anyone's feelings, I apologise for that," the chief minister said on Twitter.



*Tickets bought for postponed T20WC will remain valid if Australia hosts it in 2021: ICC*



**International Cricket Council**

**DUBAI, JUL 21 (PTI)** The tickets sold for the now-postponed ICC T20 World Cup will remain valid if Australia hosts the edition in 2021 instead of India.

In case the event is shifted to 2022, all ticket-holders will be entitled to a full refund, the ICC stated on its website on Monday night after postponing the mega-event this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The tournament was to be held in October-November but will now be conducted later because of the pandemic.

The ICC has not yet announced which country will host which edition as there are operational issues that both the Indian and Australian cricket Boards need to sort out.

The world body had opened ticket booking through its ticketing partners and a significant number was already sold.

"Ticket holders are welcome to retain their tickets, noting, if Australia hosts in 2021, tickets will remain valid for fans who have already bought and will be automatically updated to reflect the new dates.

"If Australia hosts in 2022, for tickets already bought a full refund will be processed automatically," ICC stated in a series of FAQs.

Fans can retain their tickets until a date is confirmed for the event.

Refund requests can be made until December 15 and they will be processed within 30 days after an online submission.

The hospitality package will also remain valid for the 2021 fixtures.

## CONTACT

**SUMMIT TIMES REPORTERS**

**SINGAM**

**8170070813**

**MANGAN/ DIKCHU**

**9832612485/**

**9434011213**

**GANGTOK**

**9800571148**

**8116388176**

**9832424750**

**8016270440**

# Happy that so many people have discovered chess during pandemic: Anand

**YOSHITA SINGH**

**UNITED NATIONS, JUL 21 (PTI):** Chess has attracted many first-timers during the COVID-19 pandemic and the massive reach of the internet has made it a "truly global sport", five-time world champion Viswanathan Anand said to mark the first ever World Chess Day.

"Thanks to the internet, (chess) has become a truly global sport. I believe that it is never more widely disseminated as it is now," Anand said in a virtual commemoration of the World Chess Day at the UN on Monday.

"And of course, during the pandemic, I'm very happy that so many people have discovered the game of chess. Perhaps they didn't have the time or they never got around to it. But this has been a very good chance for chess to spread," he said.

The former world champion said "most Indian parents are right" that chess will help their children do better in school.

"I hope that the current positive trajectory of chess that we have experienced recently will continue in the future, without pandemics even," Anand said.

The high-level virtual event Chess for Recovering Better' bought together chess players,



UN and governments officials, representatives of civil society and academia.

In December 2019, the UN General Assembly had proclaimed July 20 as World Chess Day to mark the date of the establishment of the International Chess Federation (FIDE) in Paris in 1924.

Over the past few months, the overall interest in chess is reported to have doubled, with more players than ever coming together to participate in chess events that are being increasingly held through online platforms, the UN said.

Anand told the virtual session that he had learned chess from his mother and highlighted the history and evolution of the game from India to other parts of the

world.

He said a lot of families across India played chess with great enthusiasm.

"If in fact you mentioned to anyone that you played chess, quite often the head of the family will go out and pull out his own chess set and play a game.

"So it was part of our culture, even though it had to be rediscovered in a sporting context, he said, adding that while chess spread across Russia and Europe and other parts of the globe, Asia had to rediscover it and India had to come back to it."

"In fact, when I won the world championship in the year 2000, it felt like my journey mirrored the ancient paths, he said adding that he was living in Spain at the time and

the venues for the knockout tournaments were Delhi and Tehran.

"So, these were the first three countries where chess seems to have spread," and he brought the chess title back to India, he said.

The UN said that with the COVID-19 pandemic impacting most sports worldwide, the first ever World Chess day celebrates the highly-competitive game that can be played safely indoors or online and which also helps in reducing anxiety and improving mental health.

"Today is a day of celebration for an intellectual game that for centuries has managed to entertain, stimulate and sometimes even confound millions of us, the world over, Under-Secretary-General of UN Global Communications Me-

lissa Fleming said.

"And as we celebrate, we remind ourselves of the special value that a game such as chess is bringing to so many people during this awful COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdown that many people are enduring," she said.

She added that the pandemic represents a global crisis in multiple ways - physically, socially and economically - and the restrictions that it has imposed is affecting the mental health of many.

Chess also offers important opportunities to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

"The UN is mainstreaming sports initiatives into its work towards development and peace and part of our wider efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, Fleming said adding that increasingly people realize that sport can act as an enabler of sustainable development, peace and social inclusion."

President of the International Federation of Chess (FIDE) Arkady Dvorkovich said chess can become a tool to improve the world, "strengthen peace, conduct non-discriminatory policies and create better societies".

## WI could "destroy" Hope if he plays third Test: Ambrose

**MANCHESTER, JUL 21 (PTI):** Pace legend Curtly Ambrose reckons that West Indies must rest out-of-form Shai Hope for the series-deciding third Test because repeated failures may "destroy" him.

Ambrose said "something has gone terribly wrong" with the Barbadian batsman since his famous centuries at Headingley.

Heading into the series, the spotlight was on Hope, who notched up two centuries at the Headingley Test in 2017.

The wicketkeeper-batsman has struggled to even breach the 30-run mark in his four innings against England. His scores read 25, 7, 16, 9 so far.

"He is a much better player than what he is showing at the moment and is obviously very low on confidence. Maybe in the next game we should rest him so he can regain some confidence," Ambrose told 'Sky Sports'.

"If you keep playing him and he keeps failing it will only get worse. You are going to destroy him if it continues like that.

"Something has gone terribly wrong for him since those two centuries

at Headingley - he hasn't done anything really in Test cricket since then," he added.

Ambrose, who claimed 630 wickets in his 98 Tests and 176 ODIs for West Indies, feels it's a tough call as playing Hope will hurt his confidence.

"I like Hope a lot. I think he is a fantastic player but this is not doing his confidence any good. Are West Indies going to go with him again? It's a tough call.

"I am inclined to give him another go but by bringing someone else in he could get totally away from the game for a little bit and get his mind together."

West Indies fielded an unchanged side from their four-wicket win in the opening Test at the Ageas Bowl, while England rotated their pace attack. The visitors will have need to make tough decisions if they want to retain the Wisden Trophy.

As the series stands levelled at 1-1, both teams will head to the third and final match on the same ground on Friday, with West Indies needing just a draw to retain the Wisden trophy.

## Juventus nears title after

### Ronaldo scores 2 beating Lazio

**TURIN, JUL 21 (AP):** Over a three-minute span of the second half, Cristiano Ronaldo ensured Juventus would not lose to Lazio for a third time this season.

Ronaldo's double strike in a 2-1 win on Monday meant Juventus could clinch a ninth straight Serie A title this week. With four rounds remaining, Juventus moved eight points clear of Inter Milan, nine ahead of Atalanta, and 11 in front of Lazio, which trailed the Bianconeri by just one point before the break for the coronavirus pandemic.

Juventus earned a measure of revenge after losing twice to Lazio in December -- in Serie A and the Italian Super Cup.

Ronaldo converted a penalty after the VAR determined a handball, then finished off a counterat-

tack following a generous pass from Paulo Dybala.

Ciro Immobile pulled one back for Lazio with a penalty in the 83rd.

Ronaldo and Immobile are level atop the Italian league scoring chart with 30 each.

Also, Ronaldo became the first player to score at least 50 goals in the Premier League, the Spanish Liga and Serie A. His 51 in Italy go with his 84 in the Premier League, and 311 in La Liga

Records are always important, but the most important thing is that the team wins," Ronaldo said.

We are a phenomenal team and we showed that again today, although we always want to improve and raise the bar.

Both sides hit the post in the first half; a headed volley from Juve's Alex Sandro, and a long-range effort from Immobile.

## India to undergo two-week quarantine period in Adelaide: CA acting chief

**MELBOURNE, JUL 21 (PTI):** India will have to undergo a two-week

quarantine period, most likely in Adelaide, once they touch down in Australia for the much-anticipated tour later this year, said Cricket Australia acting chief Nick Hockley.

Hockley's statement is in complete contrast to the views of BCCI president Sourav Ganguly, who had already made it clear that he was not in favour of a two-week quarantine period for the Indian team once they disembark in Australia.

Following the official postponement of this year's T20 World Cup in Australia, Hockley said all the players and support staff will be provided with the best of the facilities to train within quarantine rules.

"The two-week quarantine is pretty well-defined. What we are working on is making sure that even within that quarantine environment, the players have got the absolute best training facilities, so that their preparation for the matches is as optimal as it can possibly be," Hockley was quoted as saying by ESPNcricinfo.

"We'll obviously take



the guidance of the health experts and the authorities. Whether it's a hotel on-site or hotels in close proximity to venues, it's certainly about creating that environment where we are minimising risk of infections and creating a bio-secure environment is the absolute priority."

The website reported that not just the visiting Indian team but also the IPL-returned Australian cricketers will have to serve the mandatory quarantine period.

The current series between England and West Indies, which has marked resumption of international cricket, is being played in a bio-secure environment with the teams' accommodation arranged on-site.

"There's a huge

amount at stake if we are unable to do that. Certainly the fact that the Adelaide Oval has a hotel...it does provide a facility not dissimilar to Old Trafford or Ageas Bowl where the hotels are integrated into venue," said Hockley.

In these circumstances, the Adelaide Oval and its newly constructed hotel, built on the ground's eastern side, is considered as the best place for creating a bio-bubble.

But Hockley said with a rapid spike in COVID-19 cases in the Indian sub-continent leading to travel restrictions, the visiting teams will have to follow all the protocols laid down by the Australian government and the ICC.

"It's widely known and it's unlikely that international travel restrictions would have lifted by the time that India will be due to come into the country," he said.

"Clearly there will be testing regimes. We will be able to test people before that they get on to the plane and it is the nature of the situation of making sure we have the quarantine arrangements in line with government and health authority protocols.

"The key thing for the players is that there's regular testing and that we appropriately quarantine them when they come in and all of those plans are currently in development."

Now that that T20 World Cup is postponed,

the BCCI is in all likelihood will hold the postponed IPL during the vacant September-November window, in all probability in the UAE.

"I think the BCCI have made no secrets that they are considering what that means for the IPL," Hockley said.

"For us it's about getting a bit of an understanding and certainty around what that means. Clearly in a normal course, some of our best players are obviously top picks for those IPL teams.

"It's a bit premature to speculate on that. We need to understand what the plans are if any and once we understand that we will make decisions accordingly.

## Days off? Guardiola wants two weeks' training to prepare for Real Madrid

**PAUL WILSON**

**LONDON, 21 JUL [THEGUARDIAN]:** Pep Guardiola has said he will make a few changes when Manchester City travel to Watford on Tuesday for their penultimate league game of the season. The City manager is already looking forward to the visit of Real Madrid in the Champions League once the domestic season is over, and while Zinedine Zidane has promised to give his players some time to rest in the meantime, Guardiola intends to spend a fortnight preparing for the game.

City lead Spain's league champions 2-1 on aggregate going into the second leg of their last-16 tie, which they host, on 7 August. "We will carry on training when the league season finishes, we will be able to devote two weeks to working on a specific way to play Real Madrid," he said on Monday. "They are now going to have to play without Sergio Ramos so we will have to try and work out the way they are going to play. We have to improve our own performance too.

"We had enough chances to score against Arsenal at

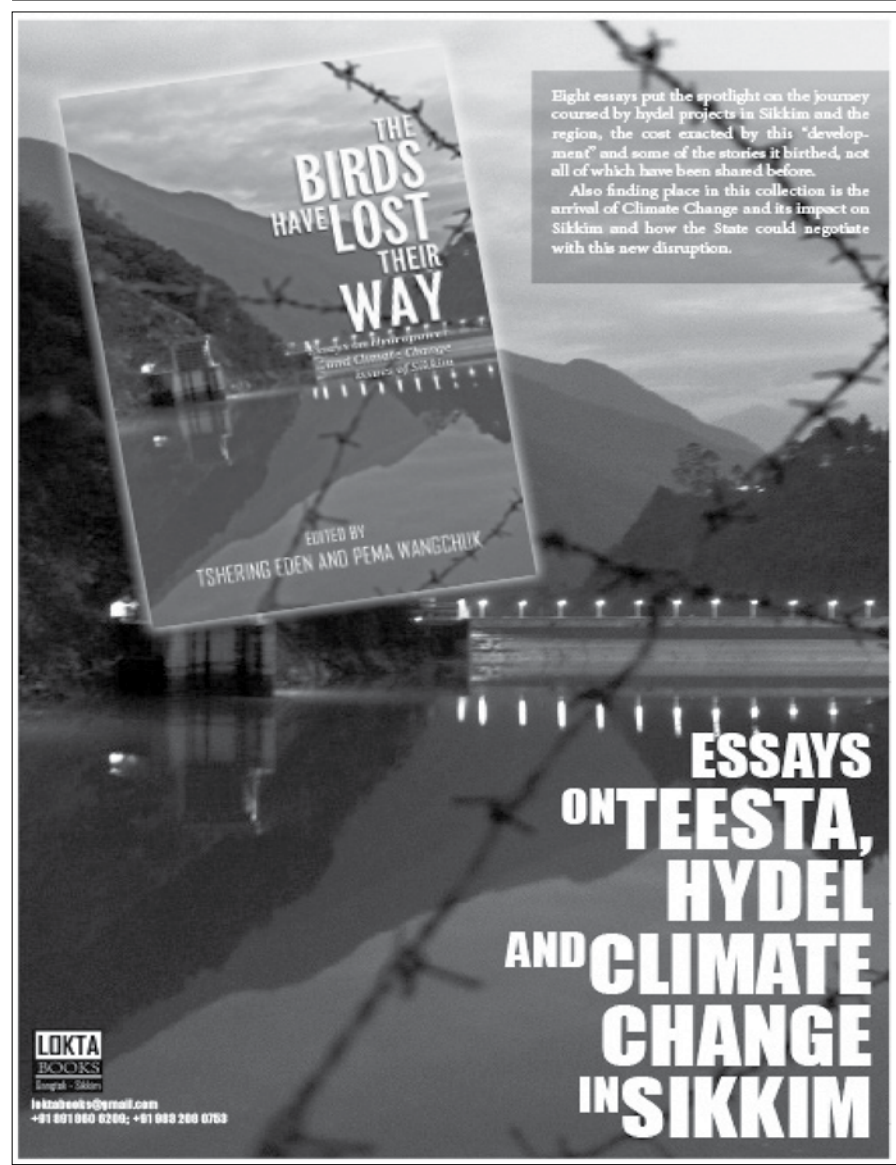
Wembley [in Saturday's FA Cup semi-final] but we didn't take them. I'm sure we will be able to create chances against Real Madrid, but if we don't take them we'll be out. Generally though I feel positive. I'm excited to be able to prepare for a game against Real Madrid, with the players we have I am optimistic about making it into the next round."

Guardiola also admitted that a fifth season at Manchester City will be a challenge but anticipates bringing in some new players to help freshen the side.

"I have never been five years

in one club as manager, but I know you face different challenges if you stay for a long time," he said. "We are going to try and make small changes, perhaps attack in different way, but it all depends on the players that we have next season.

"New players who may join us will help with changing the freshness of the team. We are not going to bring in eight or nine players, that would be impossible. I would say around 85% of the team will stay the same but I am expecting to have some new faces around by next season."





## EU nations clinch \$2.1T budget, virus aid deal after 4 days

**BRUSSELS, JUL 21 (AP):** Weary European Union leaders finally clinched an unprecedented 1.82 trillion euro (USD 2.1 trillion) budget and coronavirus recovery fund early Tuesday, somehow finding unity after four days and as many nights of fighting and wrangling over money and power in one of their longest summits ever.

To confront the biggest recession in its history, officials said the EU had a consensus on a 750 billion euro coronavirus fund to be sent as loans and grants to the countries hit hardest by the virus.

That comes on top of the seven-year 1 trillion euro EU budget. At first the grants were to total 500 billion euros, but the figure was lowered to 390 billion euros.

"Never before did the EU invest in the future like this, Belgian Prime Minister Sophie Wilmes said.

"It is a historic day for Europe, said French President Emmanuel Macron.

Just shy of being the longest EU summit in history, the 27 leaders all huddled back in the main room of the Europa center and bumped elbows and made jokes before giving the package the final approval.

Deal!" wrote summit host Charles Michel on Twitter.

## To book ad-space, contact SummitTIMES at GANGTOK:

For circulation details Contact: (Sandeep) 9734152451 & for Advertisement booking at 9933427505 or at office no 03592 208698. Mail us at [advertise@summit-times.com](mailto:advertise@summit-times.com) **SILIGURI:** Mr. Mani Rai, M/s. Space Ads, B.R. Ambedkar Building, Room No.7, 1st floor. Opp. Ganga Hotel. Hill Cart Road. Siliguri – 03. Ph. 9832318644/ 9800682989/ 9153035100 or mail at [mani\\_siliguri@yahoo.co.in](mailto:mani_siliguri@yahoo.co.in). **KOLKATA OFFICE:** Irshad Ali/ Imteeyaz. Synapse, 6, Madan Street, Mezzine – 2, 2nd floor. Kolkata – 700072. Ph. 033-22124348/ fax 033-22124337/ mob. 9830547774/ 983108397. E-mail: [contact.synapse@gmail.com](mailto:contact.synapse@gmail.com)/ [irshad\\_ali123@rediffmail.com](mailto:irshad_ali123@rediffmail.com)

## China warns UK against interference' on Hong Kong

**LONDON, JUL 21 (PTI):** China has hit back with a warning that Britain must bear the consequences if it continues what it believes is interference in its internal affairs after the UK suspended its extradition treaty with Hong Kong. UK Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab told the House of Commons on Monday that China's new National Security Law had significantly changed key assumptions underpinning the arrangements with former British colony of Hong Kong and therefore the treaty would remain suspended indefinitely.

The United Kingdom is watching. And the whole world is watching, Raab said, in a warning to China.

Soon after, the Chinese Embassy in London and the Chinese ambassador to the UK issued strong statements condemning the UK's move as a disregard for its representations and blatant interference in its internal affairs.

The UK blatantly interfered in China's internal affairs and contravened international law and the basic norms governing international relations.

China urges the UK



tions, Liu Xiaoming said in a Twitter statement.

China has never interfered in UK's internal affairs. The UK should do the same to China. Otherwise it must bear the consequences, he said.

A longer official Chinese Embassy statement also expressed its grave concern and strong opposition of the UK's moves related to Hong Kong.

The Chinese Government remains unwavering in its resolve to implement the National Security Law for Hong Kong SAR, to safeguard national sovereignty, security and development interest, and to oppose external interference.

China will firmly fight back at any move that interferes in its internal affairs, the statement noted.

However, there are widespread global concerns over the law be-

side to immediately stop interfering in Hong Kong affairs, which are China's internal affairs, in any form. The UK will bear the consequences if it insists on going down the wrong road, it added.

The Chinese authorities insist that the controversial new National Security Law for Hong Kong is an anchor for the steady and sustained implementation of One Country, Two Systems and for the long-term security, prosperity and stability in Hong Kong.

This Law will make Hong Kong a safer, better and more prosperous place. We are full of confidence in the bright future of Hong Kong SAR, the Chinese Embassy claimed.

However, there are widespread global concerns over the law be-

ing used to breach the human rights of Hong Kongers.

In reference to the extradition arrangements, Raab told the UK Parliament that Britain was particularly concerned about Articles 55 to 59 of the new National Security Law, which gives mainland Chinese authorities the ability to assume jurisdiction over certain cases and try those cases in mainland Chinese courts.

Highlighting considerable uncertainty about the way in which the new National Security Law will be enforced, the minister said the UK will hold China to its international obligations.

The tensions between the UK and China have been ramping up across a range of issues, with Britain already offering around 3 million

Hong Kongers citizenship rights in response to the controversial National Security Law.

The UK handed Hong Kong back to China in 1997 but, as part of an agreement signed at the time, it enjoys some freedoms not seen in the mainland.

Over the weekend, Raab also accused China of egregious human rights abuses against a minority group known as the Uighurs, mostly Muslims and see themselves as culturally and ethnically close to Central Asian nations.

The majority live in Xinjiang, western China, where they number about 11 million people. It is alleged that the Chinese government has detained up to a million Uighurs over the past few years in what the state defines as "re-education camps".

UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson has tried to steer away from what he fears could become an anti-China rhetoric but stressed that Britain is committed to a "calibrated approach".

"We're going to be tough on some things, but we're going to continue to engage," he said.

## China's mighty Yangtze nears crest again, new floods feared

**BEIJING, JUL 21 (AP):** Engorged with more heavy rains, China's mighty Yangtze River is cresting again, bringing fears of further destruction as seasonal floods that already have left more than 140 people dead or missing have grown in force since last month.

The rains are putting renewed pressure on the massive Three Gorges Dam that straddles the river upstream of the city of Wuhan in Hubei province.

The official Xinhua News Agency said the rate of flow in the reservoir behind the dam would hit a record for the year on Friday night, at 55,000 cubic meters (almost 600,000 cubic feet) per second.

The inflow peaked on Saturday at 61,000 cubic meters per second, before easing to 46,000 by Sunday night, Xinhua later reported.

Rivers in the Yangtze

system have broken their banks in places. A helicopter was used to drop stones into a breach to block the intruding waters in Hubei.

Crews were dispatched with poles to probe waterlogged embankments for weakness and thousands of sandbags were being filled in preparation for more breaches that would need to be swiftly closed.

Water rose to the level of first-floor windows in exposed ancient towns and crops were completely inundated around vast Poyang Lake, a network of waterways that empty into the Yangtze below Wuhan.

On the lake's eastern edge in Jiangxi province, 45-year-old Xu Yongxiang said his village of Lifufang had been without running water or electricity for almost a week.

Although it was time for the rice harvest, that crop, along with cotton,



corn and beans was now underwater.

We do not have one inch of dry ground. It has all been flooded," Xu, who sells pork for a living, was quoted as saying on the official newspaper China Youth Daily's microblog.

Flooding since the beginning of the month has forced evacuations of around 1.8 million people in 24 provinces, mainly in southern China. Direct losses attributed to flooding are estimated at more than 49 billion yuan (USD 7 billion), according to the

Ministry of Emergency Management.

Floodwaters reached as high as 1.4 meters (almost 5 feet) in Linshui county in the southwestern province of Sichuan, the ministry's rescue department reported.

Torrential rain also caused three landslides Thursday in a town in mountainous Chongqing, upstream on the Yangtze, leaving six dead, the Chongqing Emergency Management Bureau said. The bodies had been found by Friday evening after more than 200 people

were dispatched for search and rescue. The rainfall in the town of Dunhao totaled 39 centimeters (15 inches), the bureau said.

Seasonal flooding strikes large parts of China each year, especially in its central and southern regions, but conditions this year have been especially bad. Major cities have thus far been spared but concerns have risen over Wuhan and other downstream metropolises that are home to tens of millions of people.

China's worst floods in recent years were in 1998, when more than 2,000 people died and almost 3 million homes were destroyed, mostly along the Yangtze.

The Three Gorges Dam was built mainly to generate electricity, but the government also said it was expected to mitigate catastrophic flooding.

White House aides said the format, venue and frequency of the president's forthcoming appearances haven't been finalised. And it wasn't clear whether he would field questions or share the stage with others, including Vice President Mike Pence and Drs Deborah Birx or Anthony Fauci.

But it all pointed to an apparent course-reversal. Trump for months had heeded aides who pushed for him to all but ignore the virus and instead focus on the economy and more politically advantageous terrain.

Trump will use the briefings "to speak directly to the American people about the federal government's coronavirus response and other pertinent issues, said White House depu-

## He's back: Trump to re-up virus briefings amid lagging polls

**WASHINGTON, JUL 21 (AP):** President Donald Trump is set to once again take centre stage in the government's coronavirus response after a White House debate over how best to deploy its greatest and most volatile asset him played out in public as his poll numbers falter.

One week after a campaign shake-up, the plan is for Trump to again become a regular public presence at the podium starting Tuesday as confirmed coronavirus cases spike nationwide.

Trump advisers have stressed the urgency of the president adopting a more disciplined public agenda in an effort to turn around his lagging poll numbers against Democratic rival Joe Biden.

I think it's a great way to get information out to the public, Trump told reporters in the Oval Office on Monday, saying he hopes to discuss progress on vaccines and therapeutics.

His once-daily turns behind the White House briefing room podium largely ended in late April after the president's off-the-cuff suggestion that injecting toxic disinfectant could help treat the coronavirus.

In another sign of recalibration, Trump belatedly tweeted a photo of himself in a face mask Monday, calling it an act of patriotism, after months of resistance to being publicly seen in the coverings deemed vital to slowing the spread of the virus as a sign of weakness.

White House aides said the format, venue and frequency of the president's forthcoming appearances haven't been finalised. And it wasn't clear whether he would field questions or share the stage with others, including Vice President Mike Pence and Drs Deborah Birx or Anthony Fauci.

But it all pointed to an apparent course-reversal. Trump for months had heeded aides who pushed for him to all but ignore the virus and instead focus on the economy and more politically advantageous terrain.

Trump will use the briefings "to speak directly to the American people about the federal government's coronavirus response and other pertinent issues, said White House depu-

ty press secretary Sarah Matthews.

The return to briefings has been championed in the West Wing by senior adviser Kellyanne Conway, who advocated publicly last week that Trump should return to the podium to more clearly highlight steps toward economic recovery but also create a stage to display leadership by addressing Americans' concerns about COVID-19.

His approval rating on the pandemic was higher when he was at the podium, Conway said Friday, in a tacit admission of what is largely unspoken aloud by Trump aides: that he is behind in both public and private surveys.

It was at 51 per cent in March. And I think people want to hear from the president of the United States.

It doesn't have to be daily, she added. It doesn't have to be for two hours. But in my view, it has to be.

In addition to discussing medical developments, Trump also was expected to focus on his advocacy for schools to reopen for in-person education, following his threat to try to withhold federal funds from those that stick to remote education.

Other Trump aides have for months pushed the president to keep a lower profile on the virus response and instead champion the economic recovery and other issues with a clearer political upside. That camp, led by chief of staff Mark Meadows, has attempted to plot out something close to a traditional messaging strategy for Trump to contrast him with Biden on policy issues.

In the last week, they've organized White House events highlighting Trump's efforts to support law enforcement, talk tough on China and roll back regulations, all while sharply criticizing Biden. And Trump himself has teased forthcoming moves on immigration and health care.

Meadows was among the most forceful White House aides in pushing Trump to end the once-daily coronavirus briefings more than two months ago after the president mused about injecting disinfectants as a cure for the virus. It sparked state medical warnings against the potentially deadly move.

### HAVE A STORY TO SHARE?

news@summittimes.com

**SummitTIMES**  
ON TOP OF THE NEWS

Sikkim SCAN | CapitalTIMES | Neighbourhood WATCH | Sports & Specials | ElseWhere | EICETERA

*It's easy to relax... When you can trust the News.*

**To book ad-space, contact SummitTIMES at**

**GANGTOK:** For circulation details Contact: +91-9148997591, +91-9447822692 & for Advertisement booking at +91-9933427505 or at office no 03592 208698. Mail us at [advertise@summittimes.com](mailto:advertise@summittimes.com)

**SILIGURI:** Mr. Mani Rai, M/s. Space Ads, B.R. Ambedkar Building, Room No.7, 1st floor. Opp. Ganga Hotel. Hill Cart Road. Siliguri – 03. Ph. 9832318644/ 9800682989/ 9153035100 or mail at [mani\\_siliguri@yahoo.co.in](mailto:mani_siliguri@yahoo.co.in).

**KOLKATA OFFICE:** Irshad Ali/ Imteeyaz. Synapse, 6, Madan Street, Mezzine – 2, 2nd floor. Kolkata – 700072. Ph. 033-22124348/ fax 033-22124337/ mob. +91-9830547774/ +91-983108397. E-mail: [contact.synapse@gmail.com](mailto:contact.synapse@gmail.com)/ [irshad\\_ali123@rediffmail.com](mailto:irshad_ali123@rediffmail.com)

**Phone**  
03592-208698  
91-9832556698  
91-9832080753

**www.summittimes.com**  
[news@summittimes.com](mailto:news@summittimes.com)  
[summittimes6@gmail.com](mailto:summittimes6@gmail.com)  
[advertise@summittimes.com](mailto:advertise@summittimes.com)

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

**VIDEO NEWS SECTION**

facebook.com/SummitTIMES

**SUMMITTIMES**



## Christopher Nolan's 'Tenet' delayed again

**LOS ANGELES, JUL 21 (PTI):** Warner Bros has pulled its Christopher Nolan-directed espionage thriller "Tenet" from its release calendar.

The highly-anticipated film was originally scheduled to debut on July 17, but it was pushed back to July 31 and then August 12.

According to Variety, the studio is looking forward to announce a new release date "imminently".

"We will share a new 2020 release date imminently for Tenet," Christopher Nolan's wholly original and mind-blowing feature.

"Our goals throughout this process have been to ensure the highest odds of success for our films while also being ready to support our theater partners with new content as soon as they could safely reopen," said Warner Bros chairman Toby Emmerich in a statement.

The development came at a time when cinema halls across the US are in the process of reopening after months of coronavirus-induced shutdown.

Emmerich further said they are not treating "Tenet" like a "traditional global day-and-date release", adding that their upcoming marketing and distribution plans will reflect so.

The movie features John David Washington, Robert Pattinson, Eliza-



beth Debicki, Kenneth Branagh, Aaron Taylor-Johnson, Michael Caine, Clemence Poesy, Dimple Kapadia and Himesh Patel.

Warner Bros may release the film overseas before it opens in the US.

"We're grateful for the support we've received from exhibitors and remain steadfast in our commitment to the theatrical experience around the world, Unfortunately, the pandemic continues to proliferate, causing us to reevaluate our release dates," the senior executive said.

Warner Bros also announced that "The Conjuring 3" has been postponed

to June 4, 2021. The eighth entry in the studio's horror franchise was slated to be released on September 11.

"The Conjuring: The Devil Made Me Do It", which was supposed to have additional shoots in April, wouldn't be ready in time for its target release date.

Other awaited titles from the studio, including "Wonder Woman 1984" and Denis Villeneuve's "Dune" remake, are still on schedule for this year.

While "Wonder Woman 1984" is arriving on October 2, "Dune" is eyeing December 18 release.

But the dates could be reshuffled if the pandemic continues to surge.

## Kareena Kapoor Khan, Saif Ali Khan and Taimur Ali Khan are moving into a new home

In a recent interview, Saif Ali Khan revealed that the Khans are moving into a slightly larger apartment in the building complex opposite their Bandra home. Here's everything you need to know about it

Kareena Kapoor Khan and Saif Ali Khan have been keeping themselves quite busy during the nationwide lockdown. The duo, who currently reside at Fortune Heights in Bandra, a suburban neighbourhood in Mumbai, have been spending lots of family time with son Taimur Ali Khan over the past few weeks. While at home, we've seen the stars indulge in everything from at-home haircuts to gardening and painting sessions too. Most recently, the Khan family was also spotted enjoying an afternoon by the sea at Mumbai's Marine Drive.

Now, with the lockdown beginning to ease a little, the Khans have jumped into a much larger project: moving out of their home. The Bollywood couple has been staying connected with fans and followers via video chats and interviews, and recently, Saif revealed in an interview that there's a reason why he's been stepping out of his home more often than usual of late. Turns out, the family has bought a slightly larger apartment

in the building complex across the street from Fortune Heights. "Our new home is being renovated, which is why I hop across to see how things are coming along and not because I feel cooped in. I'm enjoying this time with my family," he said.

Saif Ali Khan also shared that the rest of his family is also following all social distancing norms, and he's been able to visit them every now and then. "My sister Soha [Ali Khan] and her husband Kunal [Kemmu] come over sometimes, as do my kids Sara [Ali Khan] and Ibrahim [Ali Khan]. My other sister, Saba [Ali Khan], too, has moved to Mumbai." However, Saif Ali Khan's mother Sharmila Tagore is currently in the capital. "Only, my mother is in a rented apartment in Delhi because the lockdown happened while she was doing up her place. So now, even she is overseeing the renovation work there. She is a real trooper and never complains."

During the chat, the Jawaani Jaaneman star also revealed that he has



taken up cooking while in lockdown and has been enjoying whipping up dishes for Kareena Kapoor Khan and Taimur Ali Khan. So far, Saif has tried his hand at Asian fish, roast chicken and Chinese. All recipes have been handpicked by his wife. "It's ironical that when I was playing chef on screen, I didn't cook much. Now, I enjoy it and everyone enjoys my meals."

What's this new way of living taught Saif Ali Khan? The actor, who seems to have always enjoyed his annual vacations in Gstaad and London said, "I have never been a maniac shopper and while vacations are important to one's well-being, some extravaganzas we can do without. That's a lesson the lockdown has taught me."

### Zack Snyder breaks silence on Robert Pattinson taking over as Batman from Ben Affleck

Filmmaker Zack Snyder has expressed his excitement for Robert Pattinson and Matt Reeves taking over the Batman franchise from him and Ben Affleck.

Director Zack Snyder, who is working on his cut of Justice League during quarantine, has said that he hasn't seen the theatrical version of the film, and is very excited for Robert Pattinson and filmmaker Matt Reeves taking over Batman.

"You look at what Matt's doing with Batman," he told Beyond the Trailer in a new interview, and added, "And by the way I'm super excited about that; I think he's an amazing filmmaker and I think it's going to be great. And Robert's cool, I just think it's great. I'm a fan, so I'm ex-

cited."

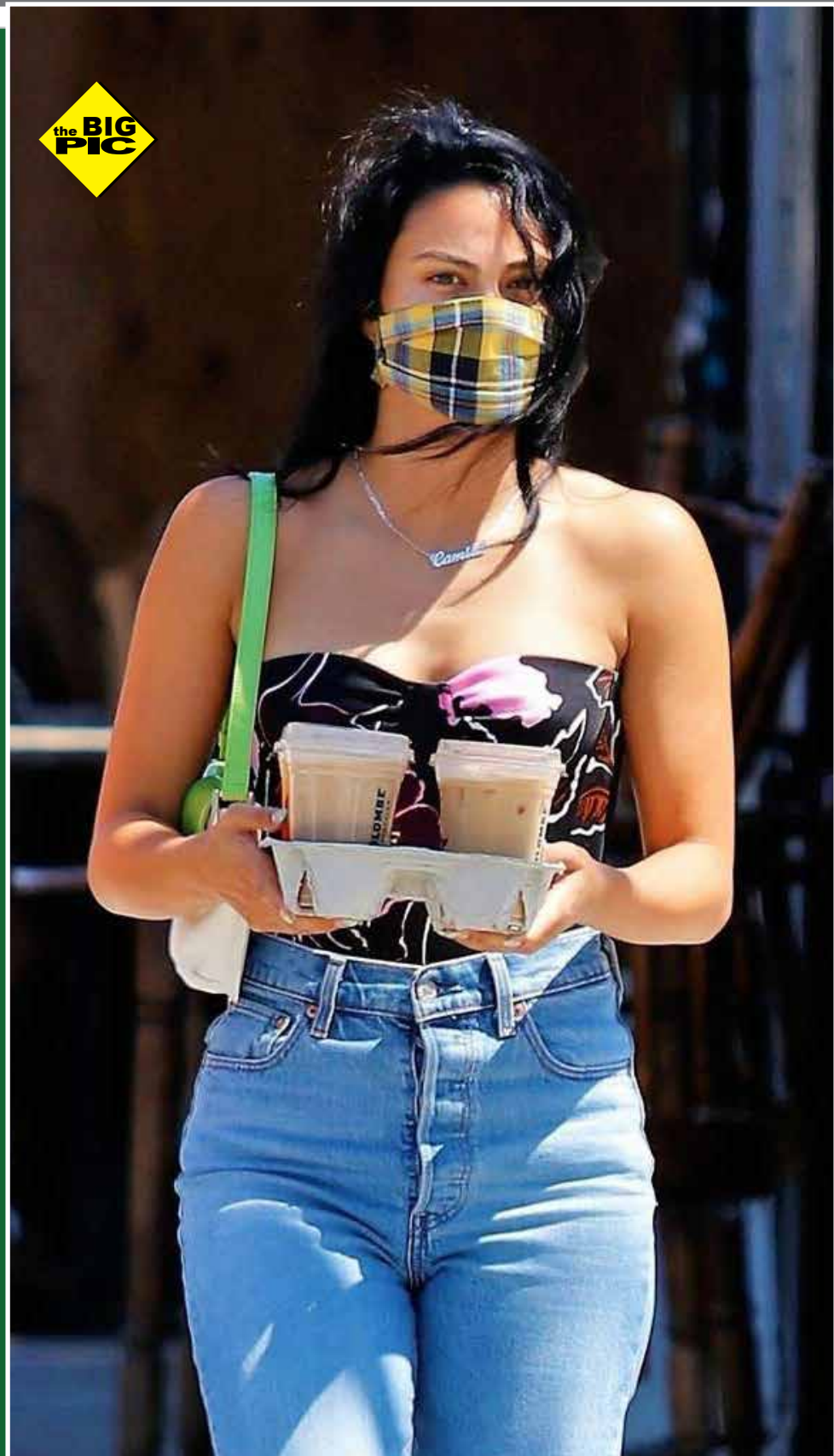
Snyder confirmed that he hasn't seen the theatrical version of Justice League, a film that he is credited for having directed. Snyder was forced to depart the project because of a family tragedy, and was replaced by Joss Whedon (The Avengers). HBO Max afforded Snyder a shot at finishing his cut of the film, following sustained fan demand.

He continued, "I think really the big pressure on me is just for it [Justice League] to be exactly true to itself. And I know that sounds obvious but we as storytellers and as filmmakers a lot of times there's a lot of different powers that push and move and change what you're doing as you're doing it. But I

think with this process and this project, it really is an amazing opportunity just to, and what I think the fans want, is just a very pure and exact version of the movie."

He said that his three films in the DC Extended Universe exist in a vacuum. "Frankly, the DC cinematic universe has branched like a tree and blossomed and grown in amazing and great ways. But for me, where [Justice League] falls, I believe that it really sort of represents its own path. It's kind of separate now from the DC cinematic universe continuity. And I think that's a good thing," he said.

Both Reeves' Batman and Snyder's Justice League are slated for a 2021 release.



**COFFEE BREAK!** The Riverdale star, Camila Mendes steps out for some coffee with a friend.

## HBO begins casting for Game of Thrones' prequel



**LOS ANGELES, JUL 21 (PTI):** HBO is moving forward with the prequel of its mega hit Game of Thrones.

The network has begun casting for its series, House of Dragon, reported Entertainment Weekly.

The project is based on George R.R. Martin's Fire & Blood book, a history of House Targaryen set 300 years before the events de-

scribed in Game of Thrones, which finished its eight season run in 2019.

Ryan Condal is attached as the showrunner along with Miguel Sapochnik, who helmed Game of Thrones episodes such as The Battle of Bastards and the Winds of Winter.

Sapochnik will direct the pilot and additional episodes in the show HBO has committed to 10 episodes of the series.

Martin's book covers 150 years and includes the rise and fall of many leaders in the Westeros but it is not clear who has been cast for which roles so far.

House of the Dragon replaces HBO's previously announced but now scrapped prequel project, starring Naomi Watts. BO is planning House of the Dragon for 2022.

### ARIES:

You're always talking about manifesting the big stuff, but what's standing between where you are now and where you want to be? Something to think about, Aries. This phase of your life requires you to stop making excuses and get down and dirty with what needs to be done. The rewards will be magnificent, we promise. But that's not something you're meant to worry about now.

### TAURUS:

While there is a voice in your head that's whispering, "You can", there's another that's holding you back from taking the next step. Two opposing forces are at play, Taurus. Whose demands will you ultimately give in to? The cards are pointing towards movement and activity. This may have been a period of lull, but things are finally getting ready to hit the accelerator button.

### GEMINI:

This is a time of deep, soulful conversations, of connecting with your squad in a way you never have before. Skip the small talk and get to the real stuff, Gemini. The cards are also talking about the importance of sharing stories. Listening to your loved ones share their struggles will prove to be therapeutic in so many ways, and provide you with just the motivation you need to slay \*your\* demons.

### CANCER:

There's a reason certain memories are more distinct in our mind's eye than others. Today, the cards are urging you to explore the unpleasant ones, no matter how painful the process. This will help you understand the wounds that are still bleeding into the present. Yes, we're talking about inner childhood issues that shape us and influence our interactions with the world well into adulthood. Without judging what's coming up, acknowledge the past pain.

### LEO:

Prioritise, priorities! Yes, there are deadlines to meet, loved ones to check in on, and loaves of banana bread to bake, but your laundry basket isn't going to clear itself. Let's not get started on the mess that has made a home around you. Your word for the day: declutter. It's time to let go of the things that are adding to the noise or narrating a story of who you used to be, as opposed to who you are becoming. As for the things that are precious to you, find a way to arrange them in a way that makes them easy to access.

### VIRGO:

Actions speak louder than words, Virgo. Observe what the other person is communicating via their body language. If you feel like they're not as invested as they used to be, chances are, they're not. You need to stop

pinning for their attention—starting now. Some of you may find out there is a third party involved in this equation.

### LIBRA:

The 'always the bridesmaid, never the bride' narrative is getting a little old, Libra. It's time to stop comparing your journey with that of others, which is only making you feel like you've missed your train. The Universe wants you to experience divine union in this lifetime, and if you haven't as yet, it's because you're being prepared for something magnificent.

### SCORPIO:

Playing it by the book has its perks. For starters, it's a fail-safe method to achieve your goals and arrive at the desired destination. But does it come with the guarantee of growth? Will it challenge you to expand in a new direction and push your limits? You already have the answer to this one. Today you're being asked to contemplate all the ways in which you have been holding yourself back from walking the path of greatness.

### SAGITTARIUS:

The cards are painting a picture of chaos and commotion. Things are unlikely to go according to the plan, and no, a false sense of optimism will not help you salvage the situation. Your killer instinct, however, will. This is the week to channel your inner Buddha and act from a

space of awareness. As you do, become aware of what the Universe is showing you.

### CAPRICORN:

This is a time of unlearning, Capricorn. Unlearning who you were told to be and the false beliefs you have held onto since time immemorial. You are experiencing a massive awakening, one that is helping you realise you are not your body, you are your soul. As a result of this, your spiritual beliefs are undergoing a shift too.

### AQUARIUS:

This is a time of truth and freedom in the Aquarius HQ. You're growing weary of the costumes that have provided you with a false sense of security over the years. You're yearning to break free from the prison that's keeping you from meeting your true self. Unlearning the old way of life and bringing forth the gift of acceptance is going to be a big game-changer for you.

### PISCES:

Set a few minutes aside this morning for a quick body scan. Close your eyes and examine your vessel with the help of your internal gaze. This will help you become aware of the energy blockages, if any. The cards are urging you to take stock of your dietary habits. Remember, food is medicine, and approaching what you put on your plate from a holistic perspective will help restore balance.