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SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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38 new cases and one more life lost to COVID-19

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 27 SEPT:**

With 38 fresh cases of novel coronavirus reported in the State in the 24 hours ending 8 AM Sunday, Sikkim now has 692 active cases of COVID-19. South Sikkim returned to double-figure infections with 10 new cases today while East district held on to its leading role with 25 fresh detections while West Sikkim contributed the remaining three to the count of 38.

Also on Saturday, a 68-year-old male from Deorali in Gangtok passed away at around 9:30 PM at STNM hospital. He had co-morbid conditions of diabetes, hypertension and gout and kidney disease. With this, Sikkim has now lost 33 lives to COVID.

The COVID caseload for Sikkim has grown to 2,790.

In the meantime, 49 COVID-19 patients were

discharged from isolation facilities on Saturday swelling the number of discharged patients in the State to 2,065.

Out of 141 samples put through RT-PCR testing at the VRD Lab on Saturday, 25 returned positive, while only one sample out of 45 came positive for COVID-19 in TrueNat testing. Similarly, 12 persons were found positive in rapid antigen testing of 53 samples.

While providing the break-up of new cases in his daily health bulletin on Sunday, Health Department State IEC Officer, Sonam G Bhutia, informed that one person from DPH area [Gangtok], one from Indira Bypass road, three from behind SBI branch in Development Area, one from 6th Mile Tadong, one from near old Food Godown in Lumsey, three from opposite junior high school in Adampool, one from Dhakal Gaon, Lower

Shyari and one from Ranipool tested positive for COVID-19 in RT-PCR testing.

Likewise, one from below Janta Bhawan in DPH area, three primary contacts from the containment zone in Arithang, one from the containment zone in Daragon Tadong, one from near Shiva Mandir in Pani House area, one from AG quarters in Shyari and one from Deorali were also found COVID-19 positive, he said.

Mr Bhutia informed that two persons from Gyalshing in West Sikkim and three from Purano Namchi, Boomtar and Dew-Kopchey in South Sikkim were also reported positive for COVID-19 in RT-PCR testing. He added that in TrueNat testing, sample of a person from Gyalshing in West Sikkim also tested positive for COVID-19.

Likewise, one person from Jorethang, two from below Forest Bungalow on Kewzing

Road in Ravangla, one from near the outpost in Upper Mamring, one from Maniram, one employee of Animal Husbandry Department posted at Melli check-post and one from Situng Gaon in Kamrang in South Sikkim and a person from Upper Gerethang in West Sikkim tested positive via RAT.

He added that one person from Upper Assam Lingzey, one police personnel posted at Samman Bhawan, one from Singtam, and one from police quarters in Rongli were also tested COVID-19 positive at CRH, Tadong.

A 68-year-old male from Deorali in Gangtok passed away last night at around 9:30 PM at STNM hospital. He informed that the patient had co-morbid conditions of diabetes, hypertension and gout and kidney disease. With this, Sikkim has now lost 33 lives to COVID.

Gyalshing to get Anaerobic Bio Digester Plant

GYALSHING, 26 SEPT [IPR]: Gyalshing Municipal Council signed a Memorandum of Understanding with CSIR- Institute of Himalayan Bioresource Technology, Palampur, Himachal Pradesh for the installation of an Anaerobic Bio Digester Plant. The signing ceremony was held virtually through video conferencing.

The Minister-cum-Area MLA of Gyalshing Bermiok Constituency LN Sharma attended the programme virtually from Gangtok and was joined by the Chairman GMC IK Neopaney and Municipal Executive Officer Bhumika Pradhan from Gyalshing.

It may be mentioned here that the proposed digester will resolve the purpose of disposing the organic waste of the Municipal Council Gyalshing and the Biogas produces will be utilised by the municipality for cooking purpose. The quality compost produced will be made use in the agricultural farm lands.

The programme was organized on the occasion of 79th Foundation Day Celebration of CSIR which was also attended by Dr. Shekhar C Mande, Director General, CSIR & Secretary, Department of Scientific & Industrial Research, Govt. of India; Prof. Anil K Gupta, CSIR Bhatnagar fellow-cum-Founder of Honey Bee Network; Dr Sanjay Kumar Director CSIR-IHBT, Palampur.

Minister Sharma, in his brief address, marked the official formalities of signing an MoU as an achievement to address the issue of Organic Waste Management in Municipality Council Gyalshing. He also recalled contributions and cooperations of CSIR-IHBT to sanction the various notable

ongoing project in Sikkim including Moonew Tareybhair Enriched Composting/ Vermicomposting Cluster and Shiitake Mushroom Production and Processing Unit in West and South Sikkim.

He also recalled their contributions for the establishment of Common Facility Centre (CFC) that will be comprising of a microbial culture room, bioreactor room, compost quality test room, training hall and model 20 concrete compost pits. The project will impact 200 farmers where each farmer will get composting shades and toolkit and are expected to earn additional Rs 30,000/- per year by selling enriched compost, he added.

Minister Sharma also urged them to extend their expertise for scientific and technological intervention in upcoming plans likewise Roof Top Organic Vegetable Cultivation, Aromatic Plantation, Herbal Garden, Lemon grass Plantation, Oil Distillation Unit, legacy waste management, bee keeping, feed mills and bio friendly technical plants, technical support for fisheries farming etc.

The institute of IHBT assured to send research team comprising of technical experts and the scientists for empirical study and necessary technological supports. The program took off with the 'Virtual Plantation' within the premises of the institution at Palampur HP by Minister L.M Nepal, Dr. Shekhar C Mande Director General, CSIR & Secretary, Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, Govt. of India and Professor Anil Kumar Gupta, CSIR Bhatnagar fellow-cum-Founder of Honey Bee Network ending with the National Anthem.

Prez gives nod to 3 contentious farm bills



NEW DELHI, SEP 27 (PTI): President Ram Nath Kovind on Sunday gave assent to three contentious farm bills passed in Parliament last week that have triggered farmers' protest especially in Punjab and Haryana.

These three farm bills are: The Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, 2020, The Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement of Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, 2020 and The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill 2020.

A gazette notification has been issued in this regard.

Parliament last week cleared the bills that are aimed at liberalising the agriculture sector and allowing farmers to sell their produce anywhere they want at a better price.

The Opposition is, however, criticizing the manner in which these bills were passed in Parliament. They had alleged that the bills were passed "unconstitutionally" in a "complete disregard" of Parliamentary norms.

They had requested the President to return the bills, and only give his assent after they have been passed after following proper rules and procedures.

Even NDA's oldest ally Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) on Saturday parted ways on the issue of these farm bills as farmers in Punjab and Haryana intensified protest.

The government has asserted that these bills will allow farmers to sell their produce anywhere they want at a better price.

The Farmers' Produce Trade and

Three Sikkim teenagers attend World Climate Summit

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 27 SEPT:**

Three Sikkimese teenagers - Rishal Pandey Chettri, Rushali Golay [Tamang] and Ashwatth Tamang - attended the 'World Climate Summit, 2020' representing India on 25 and 26 Sept, 2020 after their organization, Wakeup Movement, was selected as a global partner of the event.

The Summit was organised by Eco-Network and saw delegates and guest speakers and climate

activists participating from 15 countries.

The main pivot of the summit was Sustainable Goal No. 13-Climate Action.

The trio inform, "World Climate Summit, 2020 provided a great opportunity and a platform to interact with renowned climate activists and participants from various countries. We hope that with the knowledge that we have acquired, we will be able to spread more awareness on Climate Change amongst the



Sikkimese populace." Aditya Chettri helped the team with technical

assistance. Owing to international travel restrictions due to the

COVID pandemic, the summit was held via video conferencing.

Karun Thapa's comic strip wins World Bamboo Day intl comptt

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 27 SEPT:**

Karun Thapa of Sikkim has won the first prize in the comic strip section of the online school contests organised as a part of the 11th World Bamboo Day celebrations by South Asia Bamboo Foundation, National Institute of Design & The Assam Valley School on 18 Sept.

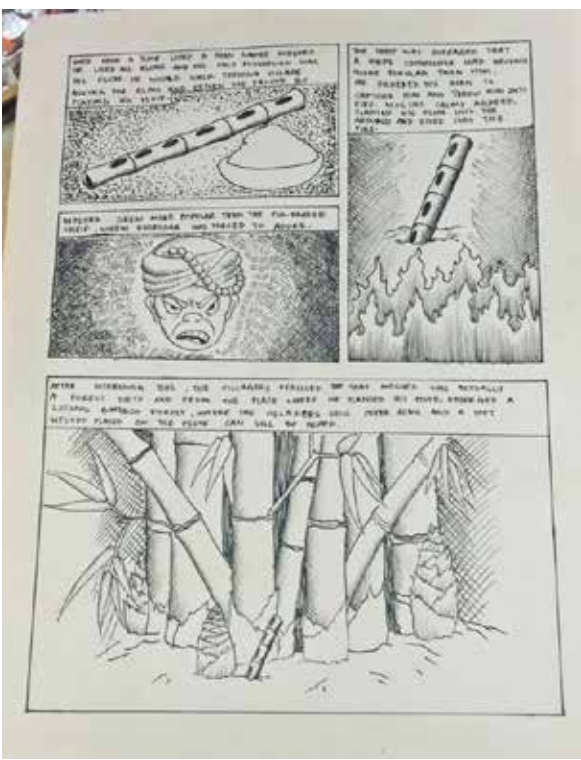
Karun's submission was in the Comic Strip Contest related to bamboo folktales.

214 entries from India, Taiwan, Bhutan, Bangladesh, UAE and South Korea were



received from school children from Grades 6 to 12 and equivalent.

The top three winning entries will be showcased the entire year in the digital World Bamboo Museum. Congratulations!



Odisha govt to reopen tourist destinations from October

BHUBANESWAR, SEP 27 (PTI): The Odisha government has decided to reopen all tourist destinations from October, more than six months after they were shut due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a minister said on Sunday.

Tourism Minister JP Panigrahi said his department has prepared a master plan to promote various destinations in the state to attract tourists.

"We have decided to

reopen all the tourist spots from October with strict adherence to health safety guidelines amid the COVID-19 pandemic," he said after a programme organised to celebrate 'World Tourism Day 2020'.

Panigrahi did not mention the date for reopening of tourist destinations.

Urging people to come to the state, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik

said all precautionary measures have been taken for the health safety of travellers, amid the coronavirus outbreak.

"I welcome you all to Odisha as we will open the state for tourism and look forward to offering you safe, pleasant and comfortable experience during your stay in Odisha -- a destination that is serene, safe and secure to visit and

explore," a statement quoted the chief minister as saying.

Patnaik launched 'Odisha by Road' campaign to encourage people to travel to various tourist destinations in the state through the road network.

He also highlighted the award-winning initiative of eco-tourism nature camps, which was run successfully for five years.

BJP-Sikkim goes virtual for Aatmanirbhar Bharat

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 27 SEPT:

A virtual meeting of the Bharatiya Janata Party, Sikkim, was held today in the presence of Sikkim-BJP president, DB Chauhan, MLAs DR Thapa and ST Venchungpa as well as the party's State, District and Mandal level executive members.

The meeting focused on the Aatmanirbhar Bharat mission of the central government and how entrepreneurs in the state are benefiting from it and the obstacles that stand in the way of reaping the benefits, a press release informs.

Addressing the meeting, MLA DR Thapa informed that he has facilitated loans for more than 50 beneficiaries from his constituency, Burtuk, through MSMEs



and various other means under Aatmanirbhar Bharat and informed that the process is underway for more than 150 others.

He remarked that the scheme would be successful in Sikkim if entrepreneurs from other constituencies of the state could also easily avail loans through banks and financial

institutions and the people's representatives took the initiative.

He shared his experience of the process and offered solutions to queries raised by various speakers at the meeting.

Similarly, the BJP-Sikkim president said that entrepreneurs could revive their businesses by availing

loans through the Aatmanirbhar Bharat Package.

He also underlined that the role of the people's representatives will be important for this mission to deliver.

Party treasurer, Kailash Agrawal also addressed the meeting and discussed various aspects of Aatmanirbhar

Bharat.

BJP is holding a weeklong special program on Aatmanirbhar Bharat and Vocal for Local Campaign through virtual meetings to mark the birth anniversaries of Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya (25 Sept) and Mahatma Gandhi (02 October),

CM joins virtual meet on Destination North East



GANGTOK, 27 SEPT (IPR): Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang [Goley] joined the Chief Ministers of other North-East states on the inaugural day of 'Destination North East, 2020' via live video today.

The theme for this year is 'emerging delightful destination' and was inaugurated by Union Home Minister, Amit Shah (Chairman, NEC) and will continue till 30 Sept, 2020. Dr Jitendra Singh (Minister of State, Independent Charge) and In-charge of Development of North East Region (DoNER) was also present as the Guest of Honour.

Last year the event was held at Varanasi and was celebrated grandly, this year due

to the pandemic it was not possible to do the same. Secretary North East Council (NEC), K Moses Chalai gave the welcome address which was followed by the theme song and other programmes.

In his speech, Dr Jitendra Singh thanked the Union Minister, Chief Ministers and officials of various states for their presence in the event. He talked about the unique culture and tradition of the North East region and its importance to the Indian economy in the coming years. He added that there is so much to be seen and learned from the region and the new role it will have in shaping the new India.

Similarly, in his

address, the Union Home Minister commended the work done by Dr Jitendra Singh in helping the North East region in the last six years. He said that the natural and scenic beauty of the region is one he has not seen anywhere else and called it a jewel in the crown on India. The peace and prosperity of the region is an important factor in the advancement of the area. He also made an invitation for the event to be held in Gandhinagar in Gujarat.

Towards the end, he talked about improving connectivity in the region paving way for more developmental projects. He mentioned that the North East region can be a gateway for India in its 'Look East Policy'.

STDC chairperson calls on stakeholders to move beyond the pandemic



SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 27 SEPT:

On the occasion of World Tourism Day, STDC chairperson, Lukendra Rasaily, has called on the tourism stakeholders to reorganize sector and take tourism forward.

In his message, he says: "As you all are aware that tourism has been the hardest hit due to Covid-19 pandemic restrictions

on the travel that has resulted in sudden drop in the tourist footfall impacting the economy of the entire population.

While such crisis presents a negative impact, this also presents our opportunity to re-think and re-organise the overall functioning of the tourism business for taking tourism forward and help us move beyond the pandemic."

WBTC to launch river cruise for just Rs 39

KOLKATA, SEP 27 (PTI): A river cruise for just Rs 39 may sound unbelievable, but the WBTC has come forward to launch a leisure ride on the Ganges for the price to give tourists and local visitors a memorable experience of viewing the heritage of the city, an official said on Sunday.

The unique pricing of less than a Dollar for a 90- minute cruise over the Ganges, like the London river cruise or Singapore boat ride or those on River Mandovi in Goa, is aimed at attracting people from all walks of life, West Bengal Transport Corporation (WBTC) managing director Rajanvir Singh Kapur said.

The cruise, traversing many landmarks and hidden gems of the city of joy, will be launched on October one, he said.

"The idea is to make heritage river cruise experience affordable and popular among people from all walks of life and all age groups," Kapur said.

He said that during the cruise, the guests will see 'Mayer Ghat', which Ma Sarada, wife of Ramkrishna Paramhansa visited regularly, apart from Ganga Arati on the banks of River Ganga after sunset.

The cruise will travel past the Armenian ghat, Nimtala ghat, Chandpal ghat, the Eastern Railway headquarters which came

into being in 1952, Binoy Badal Dinesh Bagh, among several landmarks of the city along the river, Kapur told PTI here.

"The guests will enjoy a ride into the history and heritage of Kolkata with light music playing in the background on the vessel, which is being decked up aesthetically to reflect the eclectic spirit of the city," the WBTC managing director said.

He said that the cruise will be operated on a no-profit basis by the West Bengal government-run transport corporation.

He said that the cruise will be operated on weekdays from Millenium Park at 4 pm and 6 pm, while on holidays, Saturdays and Sundays it will be operated at noon, 2 pm, 4 pm and 6 pm.

Assuring that proper sanitisation protocols are being followed for safety, Kapur said that a maximum of 150 people will be accommodated in one ride of the cruise for maintaining social distancing norms.

"For Rs 39, the cruise offers a free onboard heritage tour guide, complimentary cruise heritage navigation brochure for guests to take home as a souvenir and also to help them appreciate the landmarks and an onboard cruise cafe where one can purchase packed snacks and tea or coffee," Kapur said.

Panchayat and 29 families quit SDF to join SKM



SUMMIT REPORT
RANGPO, 27 SEPT:

Panchayat, Nallick Ward, Rupa Rai, Sanganath GPU in South Sikkim along with 29 families from the ward under Barfung constituency formally quit SDF and joined SKM today.

The joining was

formalized in the presence of Advisor, State Medicinal Plants Board, the SKM vice president, Dechen Phigu Bhutia, Lobzang Bhutia (Vice President CEC), NT Bhutia (Government Contractor), Govind Pradhan (CEC member), MB Rai (Former CLC

President 09 Barfung), Bishnu Sharma (CLC President 09 Barfung), Kesangla D Lhasungpa (CLC Advisor I), Aaron Rai (CLC Joint secretary), Tara Diwas Gurung (Convenor Chalak Morcha 09 Barfung), and Bhawani Shankar Gurung (Social worker), a press release details.

Syria minister calls Turkey main terrorism sponsor in region

UNITED NATIONS, SEP 27 (AP): Syria's foreign minister accused Turkey on Saturday of being one of the main sponsors of terror in his country and the region, and said it is guilty of a war crime and a crime against humanity" for cutting water to more than a dozen towns that resisted Turkish occupation.

In unusually harsh language, Walid al-Moallem said the Turkish regime reigns supreme" when it comes to sponsors and financiers of terrorism."

He said in a prerecorded speech to the first-ever high-level meeting of the U.N. General Assembly held virtually because of the COVID-19 pandemic that the cutoff of water supplies endangered civilian lives, especially during the coronavirus crisis.

The nine-year Syrian conflict, which initially began as a civil war, later became a regional proxy fight. Turkey, which now controls a zone in northern Syria, has backed opposition fighters against Syrian President Bashar Assad, Syrian Kurdish fighters and the Islamic State extremist group.

Al-Moallem also accused Turkey of moving terrorists and

mercenaries referred to by some as 'moderate opposition' -- from Syria to Libya," violating Iraq's sovereignty, using refugees as bargaining chips against Europe and laying claim by force to energy resources in the Mediterranean.

The current Turkish regime has become a rogue and outlaw regime under international law, the Syrian minister said.

Its policies and actions, which threaten the security and stability of the whole region, must be stopped.

Turkey's U.N. Mission said it rejects Syrian regime's delusional statement, ridden with ludicrous allegations, in its entirety.

It's shameful and unacceptable that the murderous Syrian regime which lost its legitimacy long ago continues to misuse (the) U.N. General Assembly debate to distort the facts, said a mission spokesperson, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

The Syrian regime is responsible for death, mutilation, abduction, starvation and enforced disappearance of millions of Syrians,"

the spokesperson said.

Its crimes against humanity, violations of international humanitarian law and the war crimes have been documented in countless U.N. reports.

Al-Moallem declared that the Syrian government will spare no effort to end the occupation by all means possible under international law of American and Turkish forces.

U.S. troops are deployed in the country to fight the Islamic State group.

The actions of these forces, taken directly or through their terrorist agents, secessionist militias, or manufactured and illegitimate entities, are null and void, with no legal effect, he said.

Al-Moallem, who is also deputy prime minister, denounced U.S. sanctions, saying they are blocking the delivery of life-saving medicine and equipment during the pandemic.

He called the Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act passed by the U.S. Congress an inhumane attempt to suffocate Syrians, just like George Floyd and others were cruelly suffocated in the United States, and just like Israel suffocates Palestinians on a daily basis.

Fighting erupts between Armenia, Azerbaijan in disputed area

YEREVAN, ARMENIA (AP): Fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan broke out Sunday around the separatist region of Nagorno-Karabakh and the Armenian Defense Ministry said two Azerbaijani helicopters were shot down.

Ministry spokeswoman Shushan Stepanyan also said Armenian forces hit three Azerbaijani tanks. There was no immediate word on casualties.

Nagorno-Karabakh is an ethnic Armenian enclave within Azerbaijan that has been out of Azerbaijan's control since the end of a war in 1994. Both sides have heavy military presence along a demilitarized zone separating the region from the rest of Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan's defense ministry denied the claim that its helicopters and tanks had been hit. But

President Ilham Aliyev said in a televised address to the nation that "there are losses among the Azerbaijani forces and the civilian population as a result of the Armenian bombardment."

Stepanyan said the fighting Sunday began with an Azerbaijani attack, but Azerbaijan said the Armenian side attacked and that Azerbaijan launched a counteroffensive.

The news was harshly received in Turkey, a close ally of Azerbaijan.

Turkey's ruling party spokesman Omer Celik tweeted: "We vehemently condemn Armenia's attack on Azerbaijan. Armenia has once again committed a provocation, ignoring law." He promised Turkey would stand by Azerbaijan and said, "Armenia is playing with fire and endangering regional peace."

Turkish presidential spokesman Ibrahim Kalin also took to Twitter to condemn Armenia. "Armenia has violated the ceasefire by attacking civilian settlements ... the international community must immediately say stop to this dangerous provocation."

Mostly mountainous Nagorno-Karabakh — a region some 4,400 square kilometers (1,700 square miles) or about the size of the U.S. state of Delaware — lies 50 kilometers (30 miles) from the Armenian border. Local soldiers backed by Armenia also occupy some Azerbaijani territory outside the region.

International efforts to settle the conflict have stalled and fighting sporadically breaks out. In July, one of the most severe outbreaks of fighting in years left 16 people from both sides dead.

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BUILDING FOR SALE

A two storey house building constructed on plot area 50×40 ft. Situated at Upper Phong near Phong SS , South Sikkim is on sale. Cost Rs 56 Lakhs (Negotiable). Interested may contact: 8145829309, 7864937800, 9749897695.

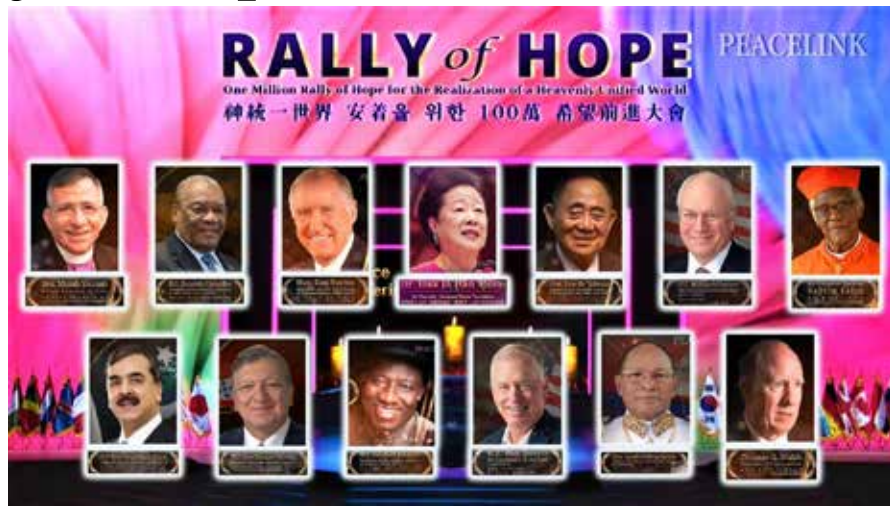
UPF 'Rally of Hope' attracts millions of viewers

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 27 SEPT:**

Universal Peace Federation convened its second "Rally of Hope" on Sunday.

The 3-hour event hosted 12 world leaders, along with some extended entertainment.

Chairperson of the organizing committee, Yun Young-ho, informs that two million people from 194 nations were given "tickets" to watch the event online, while



as many as a hundred the rally via various and internet platforms. million viewers joined broadcast providers The theme focused

on "realizing a world of peace through interdependence, mutual prosperity and universal values," a press release informs.

The gathering served as a wake-up call to national and world leaders that the well-being of humankind and the destiny our planet rests in the hands of responsible leaders, the release adds.

The first Rally of Hope was held on 09 August.

Dikchu discusses civic issues



**WANGCHUK BHUTIA
DIKCHU, 27 SEPT:**

Zilla Member, Ramthang-Tanek GPU, Phurje Lepcha, chaired a meeting here at Dikchu Naya Bazar today to address the continuing lack of a proper garbage dump for the area and

the inundation of the town area every time it rains.

The meeting was also attended by ward panchayat, Tamek, Gyan Tshering Lepcha and residents of the area.

The meeting decided to make proper garbage

disposal arrangements, shift the electricity distribution poles and overhead wires, clear the drainage system, install street lights, seek GRE and Sneh Kinetic consultation to solve the slush problem of the town area, install CCTV cameras etc.

Hand's free hand sanitizer installed at Pachak Secondary School

**SUMMIT REPORT
RANGPO, 27 SEPT:**

In preparation for the reopening of schools, Pramod Dhakal, a GT teacher at Pachak Secondary School has fashioned a hands-free sanitizer to be installed at the school. The equipment is easy to move around, operate and refill. The device has been put together with items which people usually discard.



Mystery disease wiping out dalley farms in lower elevations

**RUDRA KAUSHIK
GYALSHING, 27 SEPT:**

Some farmers from West and South Sikkim engaged in cherry pepper [Dalley] cultivation are facing the risk of losing their crop due to what remains a "mystery" disease plaguing their farms, especially those in the low lying areas.

The outbreak is being reported from various places of West Sikkim and is yet to be identified.

Farmers inform that infected plants tend to wilt and wither away.

"The disease appears to be contagious as has been destroying entire stretches of cherry pepper farm within a week. Scientific research on the disease is required



so that the farmers can find effective preventive measures," a farmer from Lower Arithang remarked.

Girman Dahal, another dalley-grower,

shared that farms in low-lying areas such as Lower Arithang, Ridang and Tinjering have been reporting extensive damage due to this unidentified disease.

He adds that this was especially hard on those farmers who recently gave up growing large cardamom and invested in Dalleys. Ironically, large cardamom has also been a devastated by disease.

Deep Raj Rai, a farmer from Sanganath Gram Panchayat Unit of South Sikkim also reports severe losses. What is more, he has even taken land on lease for chilli farming on a larger scale and is now left staring at deep losses.

TMC supports Akali Dal over quitting govt on farm bills

NEW DELHI, SEP 27 (PTI): The Trinamool Congress has come out in support of the Shiromani Akali Dal, which quit the BJP-led NDA government at the Centre over the three farm bills that were recently passed in Parliament.

In a tweet on Sunday, TMC national spokesperson and Rajya Sabha MP Derek O' Brien offered the party's support to the SAD. We support Sukhbir Singh Badal and Akali Dal's stand with the farmers. Fighting for

farmers is part of Trinamool DNA. In 2006, Mamata Banerjee risked her life on a historic 26 day fast for farmers' rights. We oppose #FarmBills2020 as they endanger States' role, MSP, PDS and procurement, he said on Twitter.

History of Sikkim Government Law College

DEW KUMAR CHETTRI

"A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots."- MARCUS GARVEY

The esteemed institution, Sikkim Government Law College, celebrated its 40th anniversary on 24 Sept, 2020. It is my profound pleasure to bring in front of you all the rich history of SGLC, its contribution towards society and its achievements.

Sikkim Government Law College is the first professional institute established in the State of Sikkim. It is the second oldest college throughout the state. This itself proves that SGLC has a resplendent history. The institution has come a long way from an evening school at a rented building to one of the esteemed professional institute in the State today.

The institution was established on 24 Sept, 1980. Initially, the institution was affiliated to North Bengal University and had a 3-year LLB course after graduation. Initially, the institute ran an evening college so as to provide feasibility to government service holders to study who were already graduate and placed in Sikkim government services and to those enthusiasts who had an interest to opt and avail law courses so as to provide such interested persons scope in the arena of judiciary, administration and legal practice.

In the initial days of its establishment the college ran its classes in Old West Point School below Banshilal Petrol Pump, Gangtok, today popularly known as "Hungry Jack". Later on, it was shifted to Kazi Road in a private building. It took a long span of time for the institution to get its own premises. It

was only in the year 2007 that the college shifted to its present premises on a State-owned Government Building.

This institution has been recognized under University Grant Commission since 1993 and have been granted the status of University under Section 2(f) and 12(b) of the University Grant Commission Act, 1956. In the year 1996 the law college transformed its 3-years LLB course to 5-years integrated B.A LL.B course after completion of Higher Secondary education.

Due to absence of any university in the State till 2007 the college was affiliated to North Bengal University since its inception. In 2008 the institution got affiliated to Sikkim University by virtue of Sikkim University Act, 2007 passed by the Indian Parliament. It was from the year 2014 that the college introduced BA LL Bhonor course under Sikkim University Regulation Act, by way of amendment being made time and again. The institution has produced many academicians, bureaucrats, judicial officers, police officers, lawyers, politicians and many more. There are many dignified personnel within the State and in other States of the country who were at one point of time student of this profoundly esteemed institution and there are many more alumni of this institution who have been doing their part in contributing towards society.

Talking about the achievements of the institution NSS Cell SGLC has been constantly organizing an awareness programs on various themes in order to aware public at large. Accordingly, Legal Aid Cell, SGLC has taken an initiative of imparting legal education to the public at large by organizing various awareness programs at different places. Furthermore,

the institute is also actively initiating a means and ways to work on environmental issues by carrying out cleanliness drive and awareness program. The institution within a short span of formation of Moot Court Society SGLC, which is indeed pivotal in furnishing the drafting and litigating quality, the team that was sent were able to grab Best Memorial in a National Moot Court Competition organized by Delhi Metropolitan Education. The institute also sends the team to different Schools of Law established throughout the country for national moot competition. Adding to it the team has also enthusiastically participated in a virtual moot organized by School of Law, Sharda University this year itself. The institute has also successfully organized 1st National Moot Court Competition in collaboration with NHRC and intra moot court competition consecutively for two years. The students have also grabbed various awards in the field of debate, quiz, essay and other extra curriculum.

Despite of an institution getting its own premises the institution lacks infrastructural facilities till date. However, with the collaboration of concerned department the institution has a belief that in the impending days the overall infrastructural development takes place whereby the institution will have its own auditorium, playground, hostel facilities, quarters for teachers and many more.

The institution indeed carries a rich history and moves on making its history an affluent one as I believe it gives society more of a learned counsels and intellectuals in days to come.

Ladakh reports 68 new COVID-19 cases, one more death

LEH, SEPT 27 (PTI):

The Union Territory of Ladakh reported 68 new coronavirus cases and one more death, taking the virus tally to 4093 and death toll to 57, an official bulletin said on Sunday.

With 47 more patients cured of the disease, the number of active cases in the region dropped to 1018 -- 615 in Leh district and 403 in Kargil district, the bulletin released by the directorate of health services Ladakh said.

It said a patient, who had recently tested positive for coronavirus, breathed his last in Leh on Saturday. His death was the 24th in Leh district, while rest of the

33 COVID-related deaths had taken place in Kargil district.

A total of 68 people tested positive for COVID-19 on Saturday, the bulletin said, adding the fresh cases include 54 in Leh district and 14 in Kargil district.

The bulletin said 39 patients in Leh and eight patients in Kargil were discharged after their negative sample reports were received, taking the number of those cured of the infection to 3018, an encouraging 74 percent of the total cases.

While 1785 patients recovered from the illness in Leh, 1233 were cured in Kargil district, it said.

Tripura reports 302 fresh COVID-19 cases, two fatalities



AGARTALA, SEP 27 (PTI): At least 302 people tested positive for COVID-19 in Tripura on Sunday, pushing the tally to 24,728, a health department official said.

The death toll rose to 267 with two more people succumbing to the infection, he said.

West Tripura district, of which state capital Agartala is a part, has accounted for 146 of the 267 COVID-19 deaths. Altogether 499

people were discharged on Saturday from G B Pant hospital, the main referral facility in the northeastern state for COVID-19 patients.

Tripura currently has 6,069 active coronavirus cases, while 18,369 people have recovered from the disease. Twenty-three patients have migrated to other states.

As many as 3,8,0782 samples have been tested for COVID-19 in the state so far, the official added.

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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.
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No Cut & Paste Preparedness Plans, Please

Customise Sikkim's response to disasters

A policy has been in the making for a while now to make earthquake resistant buildings a reality for the State. Occasionally, there have also been demonstrations on Earthquake Onsite Early Warning and Security Systems. While these came as comforting signs that policy is being focused in the right direction, the school-project level off these demos and ideas leaves one worried.

Sikkim always knew that its narrow valleys sit on a seismically active zone, but it was when a Big One rattled through the State in September 2011 that people and policy-makers realized just how vulnerable everything here was. There had been major earthquakes in the past, but people and policy-makers tend to have short memories, which, in the past, have not even lasted as long as even the relief and rehabilitation efforts. But the temblor of 2011 and the Nepal quake shortly after appear to have forced some sustained seriousness on these matters; now to ensure that these valid concerns lead to more robust safety and preparedness measures.

The little over nine years that have passed since the 18 September Earthquake have been unevenly spent on taking stock, prepare repair and reconstruction proposals, sourcing funds, getting over the shock and forgetting. Gangtok and the other urban centres of Sikkim no longer sport any scars of the earthquake, but a visit to the interiors continues to throw up reminders of the harrowing episode from that year. There are still schools which have not received full repairs and roads remain fragile in the worst-hit areas of North Sikkim and no one has really done a proper drill on whether the communication networks have been reinforced adequately or not. The priorities in Gangtok, where all major decisions continue to be made, appear to have moved on from earnest disaster mitigation and settled back to the disconcerting disinterested tokenism which catches the State on the wrong foot every time a natural disaster or any significance strikes. Awareness campaigns continue to remain embarrassingly superficial and disaster drills have become events. Cut and paste presentations on disaster preparedness or the occasional drills and demos will not make Sikkim any safer. In fact, as more time and attention is diverted to these exercises, the eroding of traditional safety mechanisms will make Sikkim even more vulnerable.

The first step towards effective disaster preparedness will need to source resource persons from rural Sikkim. Ditto, by the way, for any preparatory efforts to cushion climate change impact here. Funding from UNDP and GoI are welcome, but these have to be invested in customizing Sikkim's response to the challenge of natural disasters. The traditional knowledge base, which has already been severely compromised by the impracticality of centralized planning, has to be salvaged and distilled to inform Sikkim's response to its perennial challenges posed by the land and the climate.

Natural disasters are not new to Sikkim, so a good place to begin will be the compilation of a proper data base and then linking it to how local societies have managed such challenges and/ or avoided them. This knowledge should then be crunched with scientific models now at hand and a collection of region and village specific disaster plans put together to bind the State's preparedness. The proposal to ensure earthquake-resistant construction practices needs to be evaluated with this in mind. There is no arguing the fact that earthquake resistant buildings should be made the norm for Sikkim, but the rules and laws for it need to be customized for Sikkimese realities and situation. They have to be practical and enforceable and then they should be made watertight for implementation. A cut and paste job borrowed from somewhere else will defeat a welcome policy intervention.

The designated driver role gets a modern update, covering dangers from COVID-19 to social media

JACQUELINE LEWIS

THECONVERSATION.COM

The designated driver (DD) is a successful public health strategy dating back to the late 1980s. To better reflect the realities of today's society, now is a good time to evolve the initiative to help mitigate the harms tied to broader substance use and beyond drinking and driving.

The promotion of "buddy circles," as an expanded harm reduction strategy, is one possible way to achieve these ends. Similar to the DD, the aim of the proposed buddy circle initiative is to challenge norms and promote behaviour change in order to reduce harm.

The buddy circle concept, however, expands on that of the designated driver, taking into account other substances and risks — including COVID-19 and social media — in order to build a more comprehensive harm mitigation strategy for the 21st century.

THE DESIGNATED DRIVER AND BEYOND

In North America the concept of designated driving began in 1988 as part of Harvard University's School of Public Health's Alcohol Project. The project involved a partnership with major television networks and Hollywood studios. Over the past 30 years this program has achieved its goals, integrating the DD into our language and culture.

According to Jay Winsten, founding director of the Center for Health Communication at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, there were two crucial elements involved in the successful promotion of the DD to the public. The first was that it was framed as a positive message, one that "lent social legitimacy to the option of refraining from drinking and created social pressure to conform." The second was that the DD "needed to be viewed as an integral part of the evening's fun and not as a bystander."

Since its inception, the DD has been associated with alcohol consumption. That original focus still dominates our popular understanding of the program (for example see the online dictionary definition of DD).

Today, as an increasing number of countries explore relaxing their drug policies in response to and/or as a result of greater awareness of drug using behaviours and the harms



associated with prohibitionist policies and practices, including Canada where recreational cannabis was legalized in 2018 and there is increasing pressure to decriminalize possession of all drugs — similar to Portugal, a broader approach to substance use behaviour and its associated risks is needed.

PROGRAM EXPANSION

There are a variety of potential risks or harms that a buddy circle initiative may address. Four are highlighted here:

- overconsumption of substances
- unintended or non-consensual consumption of substances
- social media exposure
- COVID-19

The harms associated with over-consumption of substances include overdosing, passing out, vomiting, choking on vomit, sexual or physical assault or engaging in dangerous and/or embarrassing behaviour.

There is also a danger of unintended consumption, such as having a drink or other substance spiked by a more potent drug (for example, fentanyl-laced heroin) or via "date-rape" drugs (e.g., GHB and rohypnol).

Another area of risk in the 21st century is associated with smart

phones and social media. Taking and posting photographs of oneself and one's friends is an everyday occurrence. These include photos of intoxicated individuals, that can be (and often are) posted to social media sites by friends or by strangers.

Despite laws protecting privacy rights, such posts can have severe negative consequences for individuals. Elements of one's social media behaviour that are viewed as evidence of questionable "honesty, maturity or moral character" can result in loss of jobs or job offers, loss of scholarships, rescinding of offers for school admission or other lost opportunities.

Now in 2020, COVID-19 adds an additional layer to evolving substance-use harm-mitigation strategies. As communities lift COVID-19 restrictions, we see young people in particular participating in social gatherings on beaches, at house parties, on and off college campuses, and at bars, typically engaging in substance consumption and related behaviours that can increase the risk of COVID-19 transmission.

BUDDY CIRCLES

The promotion of buddy circles as a harm reduction strategy can address these concerns. The idea builds on the successes of the DD,

re-imagining how lessons learned can be applied to enhance the norms tied to socially responsible substance use behaviour. It also incorporates familiar elements from the more recent COVID-19 "social circle" campaigns, such as limiting our exposure to others to reduce risk.

Buddy circles are small groups of individuals who get together socially and look out for each others' well-being. Buddy circles can work whether the group is staying in or going out, attending parties (small or large, indoors or outdoors), or going to bars or other indoor public venues.

On successive social occasions, members of the circle take turns playing the integral role of "buddy guard" (similar to the DD) — abstaining from substance use and taking the lead in encouraging the group to watch out for each other in order to mitigate harm. This can include reminding members to: stay together, maintain social distance, wear masks, clean their hands and avoid taking and sharing inappropriate photos of members. The buddy guard can also get help when needed and make sure that everyone arrives home safely at the end of the night, whatever the mode of transportation.

Making te reo Māori cool: what language revitalisation could learn from the Korean Wave

RACHAEL KAAI-MAHUTA

THECONVERSATION.COM

Earlier this year, I met an Aucklander whose teenage passion for K-pop sparked an interest in the Korean language and culture in general, and led to them learning Korean as a second language.

It made me wonder what lessons could be learnt for the revitalisation of the Māori language. Specifically, given the importance of teenagers in those revitalisation efforts, what can we learn from the way the so-called "Korean Wave" is subverting the English language as the language of popular culture?

There is already work being done in this area. The central argument of Dr Hinurewa Poutu's PhD research in 2015 concerned the need to create opportunities for Māori to be considered "cool" by adolescents.

As she stated at the time: "English tends to be used socially, as there aren't enough opportunities to hear Māori in social situations or to learn Māori expressions for gossiping with your friends, courting, playing. For most kids, te reo Māori is used in formal contexts only."

MAKING MĀORI COOL

Five years on, AUT's Te Ipukarea Research Institute is leading a project looking at how the Māori language can be better supported in the lives of adolescents. Funded by Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga, this research is based on the idea the Māori language of adolescence forms the building blocks of non-formal adult language.

In other words, it is about the informal language of friendship, humour, relationships, emotions and mental health that sets a pattern for everyday use later in life.

Our preliminary findings show the potential strategic importance of the adolescent age group for Māori language revitalisation. Teenagers are trendsetters — as such, they can have an impact on (and be influenced by) the perceived value of the Māori language and therefore its status.

However, a previous study by Te Ipukarea found there are few Māori language resources and not much Māori language content (novels, TV, music, games) aimed at this age group.

This is especially true when compared to the resources available to younger age groups, such as early childhood learners.

When it comes to what is considered "cool", of course, the influence of entertainment, social media and pop culture on adolescents is clear. After meeting the K-pop-loving Korean language graduate, I began to imagine what it might look like if the Māori language revitalisation movement tapped into that age-group: trendsetting, fandom-building teens.

CHALLENGING ENGLISH LANGUAGE DOMINANCE

The Korean Wave is challenging the dominance of English as the lingua franca of pop culture. The rise in popularity of K-pop, K-dramas (which Netflix has acquired and invested in) and films such as Parasite (winner of the 2020 best picture Oscar, the first "foreign language" film to do so) with non-Korean audiences shows language is no longer the barrier it once was.

These forms of entertainment have simply become part of the wider popular culture. Take Korean group BTS (also known as the Bangtan Boys) — currently among the biggest pop acts in the world, consistently

breaking records and garnering a huge worldwide fan base.

BTS can sing in English but choose to release the majority of their music and other content (a variety show, a travel show, movies, behind-the-scenes footage) in Korean. This year they released Learn Korean with BTS, underscoring the link between the Korean Wave and the uptick in numbers learning the Korean language.

TOWARDS A NEW MĀORI WAVE

There are obvious differences between Korean and Māori. Māori is still a recovering, minority language, while Korean has over 50 million speakers in South Korea alone.

However, if young people in Aotearoa are inspired by Korean pop culture to learn the Korean language, it at least provides an insight into what the Māori language revitalisation movement can learn from the Korean Wave.

The Korean Wave is actually the result of a hugely successful strategic push by the Korean government to export its culture to the world and boost its "soft power". In other words, Korea set out to be the coolest culture in the world.

With that in mind, strategically resourcing the production of Māori language content for pop culture needs to be a priority in any plan to capture the adolescent age group.

I hope that one day Māori language music will consistently enter the charts, my Netflix list will be full of Māori language dramas, and a Māori language film will be promoted and celebrated the way Parasite has been.

[the writer is Senior Lecturer in Māori Language Revitalisation, Auckland University of Technology]

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Arunachal reports 198 new COVID-19 cases; tally 8,869

ITANAGAR, SEP 27 (PTI): At least 198 more people, including 15 security personnel and two healthcare workers, tested positive for COVID-19 in Arunachal Pradesh, raising the northeastern state's caseload to 8,869, a senior health department official said on Sunday.

Barring 25, all new patients are asymptomatic and have been shifted to COVID care centres, State Surveillance Officer (SSO) Dr Lobsang Jampa said.

Of the 198 fresh cases, 87 were reported from the Capital Complex region, 21 from East Siang, 14 from Changlang, 12 from Tawang, 10 each from Kurung Kumey and West Kameng, and seven each from Upper Subansiri, West Siang and Papumpare.

Five cases each were recorded in Longding and Lower Subansiri, four in Lower Siang, three in Tirap, two in Upper Siang and one each in East Kameng, Lower Dibang Valley, Namsai and Kamle, the official said.

“Fifteen security

personnel -- 10 Army men, four Assam Rifles jawans and a state police constable -- are among the new patients,” Dr Jampa said.

Ten personnel of the Border Roads Organisation and two healthcare workers have also contracted the disease, he said.

Altogether 167 people were discharged from various hospitals in the state on Saturday, which pushed the total number of recoveries to 6,397.

Arunachal Pradesh currently has 2,458 active COVID-19 cases, while the recovery rate stands at 72.12 per cent.

Fourteen have succumbed to the infection.

The Capital Complex region, comprising Itanagar, Naharlagun, Nirjuli and Banderdewa areas, has registered the maximum number of active cases at 1,324, followed by Papumpare at 150, West Siang at 128 and Changlang at 122, Dr Jampa said.

As many as 2,38,223 samples have been tested for the infection in the state, including, 2,244 on Saturday, he added.

Refrain from surpassing CM : Mamata to Dhankhar

KOLKATA, SEP 26 (PTI): West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Saturday wrote to Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar saying he should keep himself within the mandate of the Constitution and expressed anguish over his letter to the states police chief on the law and order situation.

In a nine-page long letter, Banerjee said that the governor's “aspersions sadly consist of uncorroborated judgements and insinuations” against the police and the state government.

“As per Article 163, you are mandated to act as per the aid and advice of your Chief Minister and her Council of Ministers which is the essence of our democracy. I am thus writing to you to express my deep pain and anguish at the excessive and blatant attempt at (the) usurpation of constitutional mandates and unwarranted excesses on your part,” she wrote.

“I was extremely upset, anguished and disillusioned on reading your captioned letter and the note addressed to the Director General of Police which was placed before me, as well as to see your Twitter post regarding the same,” she said.

Dhankhar, who has been at loggerheads with the TMC government since he assumed office in July 2019, had written to DGP Virendra earlier this month expressing concern over the law and order situation in the state.

Following the DGP's two-line reply, Dhankhar asked the state police chief to meet him by September 26 for details of the “alarming decline in law and order” and steps required to tone it.

In her letter, Banerjee said the governor is an executive nominee of the president whereas “I am the elected representative of the people of West Bengal”.

She referred to B R Ambedkar's elucidation of Article 167 of the Constitution in which he had said that the “Governor is like the ‘British Crown’ and thus has no right to interfere with the day to day administration of the state government”.

She also alluded to Supreme Court judgements of 1973 and 2016 and said the governor is the formal head of the state and cannot have an overriding authority over the people's representatives who constitute the state legislature, or even the executive government



functioning under the council of ministers with the chief minister as the head.

Banerjee said the governor's inquiry into the criminal investigations in connection with a particular accused in an incident and seeking reports regarding it from the DGP not only amounts to interference in the day to day administration of the state government, but also gives rise to serious suspicions of interference in and influencing the ongoing probe.

Banerjee said that Dhankhar, himself being a lawyer, “should not have entertained the accused and instead should have suggested that the accused follow the path of law and not seek extra-legal intervention in ongoing

investigation of the complaints”.

The chief minister, who is also the home minister of the state, took a dig at the Dhankhar's judgments on the current state of affairs of West Bengal.

She wrote, “Such unsubstantial statements without evidence are absolutely baseless and may cause unnecessary panic among the common people and cause of loss of life, for which law will hold you responsible.

“Rather than making sweeping statements casting serious aspersions upon the state government without providing any concrete material or evidence, it is your constitutional duty to furnish any and all such information you may have in your possession that would

enable and aid the state police to prevent any such crime from being committed in our happy, peaceful and prosperous state.”

“...I request, aid and advise you in the capacity of the Chief Minister of this state, to act within the mandates of the Constitution and refrain from acting on a political mandate, if any to destabilise a democratically elected government,” she said.

“... refrain from surpassing the Chief Minister and her Council of Ministers and communicating with and dictating to State officials, in excess of your powers under the Constitution and directing them to attend before you...

“I would like to take this opportunity to remind you that we

Bengal reports 56 more COVID deaths, 3,181 fresh cases

KOLKATA, SEP 26 (PTI): The COVID-19 death toll in West Bengal on Saturday went up to 4,721 with 56 more people succumbing to the disease, the state health department said in a bulletin.

The tally increased to 2,44,240 after 3,181 people tested positive for the infection.

In the last 24 hours, 2,955 patients recovered from coronavirus taking the states discharge rate to 87.61 per cent, the bulletin said.

Altogether 2,13,975 people have been cured of the disease so far.

The number of active patients is now 25,544.

15 new cases push COVID-19 tally of Andamans to 3,774

PORT BLAIR, SEP 27 (PTI):: The COVID-19 tally of Andaman and Nicobar Islands rose to 3,774 on Sunday as 15 more people tested positive for the infection, a health official said.

Six new patients have travel history, while nine fresh infections were detected during contact tracing, he said.

Twenty-three more people have been cured of the disease, the official

North 24 Parganas district accounted for 14 new deaths, followed by Kolkata with 13 fatalities, the bulletin said.

The remaining casualties were registered in several other districts.

Of the 56 fresh fatalities, 45 were due to comorbidities where COVID-19 was incidental.

The 3,181 new positive cases included 693 from North 24 Parganas and 668 from Kolkata, the bulletin said. Altogether 43,285 samples were tested for COVID-19 in the state since Friday, while the total number of such tests conducted till date is 30,55,039, it said.

15 new cases push COVID-19 tally of Andamans to 3,774

The Union territory now has 171 active coronavirus cases, while 3,551 people have been cured of the disease and 52 patients have succumbed to the infection so far, he said.

The administration has so far sent 56,059 samples for COVID-19 tests, of which 173 reports are awaited and the remaining have been received, the official added.

Assam reports 1,736 new COVID-19 cases, 13 more deaths

GUWAHATI, SEP 26 (PTI): Assam reported 13 more fatalities due to COVID-19, while 1,736 new cases raised the tally to 1,69,110, Health Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said on Saturday.

The death toll increased to 638 with the new fatalities, while the state reported 1,595 fresh recoveries, he said.

Most of the latest deaths happened in Golaghat where three patients lost their lives, followed by two deaths each in Sivasagar and Jorhat districts, Sarma said.

Dhemaji, Hojai, Udalguri, Sonitpur, Nagaon and Karimganj

also reported one death each, he added.

The highest 397 cases were reported from the Kamrup Metropolitan district, which primarily comprises the Guwahati city, followed by 145 in Jorhat and 130 in Dibrugarh, Sarma said.

So far, 1,38,307 persons have recovered in the state.

There are 30,162 active COVID-19 cases in the state at present.

The Assam Police said total 4,598 personnel have tested positive so far, of whom 4,415 have recovered and 20 died.

TAPAN MOHANTA

KOLKATA, SEP 27 (PTI): East Bengal have realised their dream to play in the top-tier Indian Super League but fans should not expect too much this season, the legendary Bhaichung Bhutia said on Sunday, keeping in mind the club's late entry.

Less than a month after East Bengal roped in Shree Cement as its principal investor, organisers of the ISL, Football Sports Development Limited (FSDL, officially announced the club's entry into the lucrative league.

The next edition of the league is slated to start in November in three venues of Goa due to the COVID-19 pandemic. And considering that the long uncertainty has hampered team-building, Bhutia said they have to make long-term plans.

“From the fans point of view, everyone was looking at playing the ISL this year. That has been achieved,” club legend and former India captain Bhutia told PTI in an exclusive interaction from his home town in Sikkim.

“Obviously there is going to be a challenge in terms of building the team. We should not really judge the team's

performance this year,” he said.

While rivals ATK Mohun Bagan have already entered into quarantine in Goa, East Bengal are yet to announce any foreign acquisition as well as the coach.

As of now, East Bengal have 35 players in their roster with centre-forward Balwant Singh being the only current Indian player. The rest are all youngsters or past their prime.

Bhutia said the club would face difficulties in making up a squad and should look to build a team for the long-term.

“All good Indian players have got long-term contracts. To build a team is going to take time because no player would be available in the market right now,” he said, citing the example of Sandesh Jhingan.

ATK Mohun Bagan inked a five-year deal with the star India defender, who was looking for a team after leaving Kerala Blasters.

“Jhingan has just signed for five years. All top-quality players have long-term contracts with their respective clubs. I think East Bengal will have to build long-term. They will have to develop players,” the 43-year-old

30 fresh cases push Mizoram's COVID-19 tally to 1,865

AIZAWL, SEP 27 (PTI): At least 30 people, including 12 Border Security Force personnel, have tested positive for COVID-19 in Mizoram, taking the state's tally to 1,865, a statement said on Sunday.

Of the fresh cases, 23 were reported from Aizawl district, four from Serchhip, two from Champhai and one from Mamit, it said.

Thirteen new patients, including a 6-year-old girl,

were diagnosed with the disease during contact tracing, the Information and Public Relation Department's statement said.

A health worker, engaged in sample collection, has also contracted the disease, it said, adding that 12 BSF jawans - 10 from Aizawl and two from Serchhip district, tested positive for the infection.

All the patients are asymptomatic, the statement said.

said.

In the current scenario, Bhutia said his former club would have depend on the foreign recruits.

Jaime Santos is currently the club's only foreigner with a long-term contract.

The delay in appointment of the coach -- who will have the final say in roping in foreigners -- is the reason behind no overseas acquisition.

The ISL derby will be the one to look out for and despite the setbacks in team-building, East Bengal cannot be written

off for the big match, Bhutia said.

“Derby is a different ball game. I think East Bengal should do well. The motivation and passion for a derby is at a different level, whatever may be the tournament. Emotions just soar up,” Bhutia said, recollecting his 1997 Federation Cup hat-trick.

“On paper, Mohun Bagan were way ahead. They were a very, very strong team but we defeated them,” the chief architect of the famous 4-1 win, recalled.

“Derby is totally a game of nerves. If the

best players can't keep their nerves, they can't perform. It's got a lot to do with the nerves and depends on who can take the pressure well on that given day. Anything can happen.”

Having started off with East Bengal in 1992, Bhutia went on to win every single trophy with the club, including the National Football League and the ASEAN Cup in 2003.

Hailing the inclusion of the Big Two in ISL, Bhutia said it will add a lot of star value to the league.

“It's good to see both

are bound to act within the four corners of our Constitutional mandates and the rule of law, This is necessary to preserve democracy and the collective will of people of West Bengal,” she added.

Dhankhar soon after receiving the communication from Banerjee took to his Twitter handle and said that instead of DGP Virendra appearing before him despite being summoned for the third time, the chief minister has replied on his “behalf”.

“DGP @WBPolice did not appear as requested-third time in a row- cant be overlooked. DGP does not want to explain affairs, CM writes instead, on his behalf. Is this what constitutionalism envisages? Is CM being rightfully counselled? Would respond to CM,” he tweeted.

Later posting his communication with the DGP, Dhankhar tweeted yet again. “As communication @MamataOfficial has found way in public domain I seek media to focus on my eye opener note @WBPolice. Significantly, unlike her earlier physical stance in support of cop, this time defence is by way of letter.

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Man U, Chelsea leave it late on another wild day in the EPL

LONDON, SEP 27 (AP): The clock was approaching 100 minutes and the final whistle had long been blown when Bruno Fernandes stroked home yet another penalty to secure a wild win for Manchester United.

Chelsea also left it late in the English Premier League on Saturday, but its goal deep into injury time could snatch only a draw from a perilous halftime position.

On another goal-filled day in a league where defences have temporarily gone missing, United beat Brighton 3-2 in a match that had pretty much everything to register its first victory of the campaign.

Chelsea then came from three goals down after 27 minutes to draw at West Bromwich Albion 3-3, with Tammy Abraham netting in the third minute of stoppage time.

Forty-four goals were scored in the last round a record haul since the division was reduced to 20 teams in 1995 and it is already up to 15 from four games in this round with Everton winning at Crystal Palace 2-1 and Southampton beating Burnley 1-0 away.

Five of the goals came at Brighton's Amex Stadium, and it should have been many, many more. Just ask Leandro Trossard, the Brighton midfielder who hit both posts and the crossbar in an uncommon triple.

With his teammates Adam Webster and Solly March striking efforts against the bar and post, respectively, Brighton somehow managed to hit the goal frame on five occasions a record since the Premier League statistics supplier Opta began compiling data in the 2003-04 season.

Still, Brighton looked like grabbing a draw few could have argued with when Solly March equalised in the fifth minute of stoppage time to make it 2-2.

Yet there was still time for United to immediately break forward from the restart, force a corner, and then earn a penalty when Harry Maguire's goalbound header glanced off the flailing arm of Brighton striker Neal Maupay before being cleared off the line.

Referee Chris Kavanagh immediately blew the final whistle, only to be surrounded by United players calling for handball to be given. Kavanagh reviewed the incident on the pitchside monitor and awarded a penalty, much to the anger of Brighton's players who remonstrated.

When the chaos died down, Fernandes kept his cool to convert from the spot. After scoring a record 14 penalties last season, United is already up and running on the spot-kick counter for the 2020-21 campaign in the craziest way imaginable.

"We got away with one," United manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer said.

"Maybe one point we deserved; we didn't deserve more."

LeBron's triple-double powers LA Lakers over Nuggets into NBA finals

LOS ANGELES, 27 SEPT [AP]: LeBron James is going to a 10th NBA finals – and for the first time in a decade, so are the Los Angeles Lakers. James punctuated his 27th postseason triple-double with a big fourth quarter, powering the Lakers to a 117-107 victory over the Denver Nuggets on Saturday night to win the Western Conference finals in five games.

James finished with 38 points, 16 rebounds and 10 assists to become the fourth player to reach 10 NBA finals. It took him two seasons to make it with the Lakers, after falling short of the playoffs in an injury-plagued first season following eight consecutive trips with Miami and Cleveland.

"My teammates said bring us home and it was my responsibility to try to make the right plays and do the right things on the floor to help us win ballgames," James said during a trophy presentation in mostly empty arena at Disney World, instead of in front of their fans at Staples Center.



The Lakers will face either Miami or Boston in their 32nd NBA finals appearance, most in league history. They haven't played for the title since beating the Celtics in 2010 for the last of their 16 titles.

Anthony Davis added 27 points and will end his first season with Los Angeles by playing in his first NBA finals.

"We battled through a lot this year starting with the beginning of the season and we know the job's not done," Davis said. "It's a great feeling but we've got four more to win."

Nikola Jokic and

Jerami Grant each scored 20 points for the Nuggets, who had fought off elimination six times before the Lakers finally put them away. Jamal Murray added 19 points and eight assists but the star guard struggled with foot pain and lacked his usual explosiveness.

The Nuggets had come back from 3-1 down in the first two rounds before being finally ousted a month since they would have departed the bubble had they lost the first time they faced elimination, in Game 5 against Utah on Aug. 25.

"It's not the end goal but to make it as far and

surprise as many people as we did, it's a good feeling," Murray said. "So, try to come back next year and try to come back stronger."

Denver fell far behind one more time but James wouldn't allow another comeback. Denver coach Michael Malone the difference in experience between his young team and James, who tied Kareem Abdul-Jabbar for third all-time with his 10 finals appearances.

"We were playing against a guy who this is routine for him and so we take some solace in that," Malone said, "and my challenge to

our group is that we'll be back."

Only Celtics Hall of Famers Bill Russell, with 12, and Sam Jones with 11 have reached more NBA finals than James.

The lead was up to 72-56 four minutes into the third with Murray hobbling, but the Nuggets – who were down 15 in the third quarter of Game 5 against Utah and 16 at the same point of Game 5 against the Clippers — put together a comeback fueled largely by Grant. They came all the way back to tie at 84 on Murray's free throws, before Davis made a three-pointer with a second to go.

James made consecutive baskets while getting fouled early in the fourth, pushing a two-point lead to 95-88. When Denver made one last push to cut it to four, James set up Danny Green for a three-pointer for his 10th assist, then made a jumper himself to extend it to 108-99.

Murray said he was battling a bruised foot that didn't improve when he changed sneakers.

European roundup: Real Madrid come from behind to win at 10-man Real Betis

PARIS, 27 SEPT [THEGUARDIAN]: Real Madrid had to come from behind for their first win of the season as a Sergio Ramos penalty clinched a 3-2 win against 10-man Real Betis. Betis had got themselves back into the game after going a goal behind early on but a red card for Emerson allowed Madrid to capitalise in the final stages and claim all three points at the Benito Villamarin Stadium.

In the 14th minute Federico Valverde gave Madrid the lead but Betis were rewarded for their first-half pressure with an equaliser from Sergio Canales. William Carvalho then fired past Thibaut Courtois to give Betis the lead.

Just after half-time, Emerson gifted Real the equaliser, turning the ball into his own net from a Dani Carvajal cross. In the 64th minute, Emerson was sent off for a foul on Luka Jovic.

Betis were unable to hold out for the draw after a penalty was awarded for a Marc Bartra handball in the 82nd minute, with Ramos converting.

"Sometimes the referee goes against us, other times the



decisions are in our favour, but I don't think it's intentional at all," said the match-winner. "It was a difficult game but this is what makes football special. We played well in the first 15 minutes then we gifted them the ball and a team like Betis who know how to play well will always create chances and score against you."

Real Sociedad eased to a 3-0 win at Elche, with Mikel Merino pulling the strings in their first victory of the season. Elsewhere, Valencia's early-season troubles continued as they could only draw 1-1 at home to promoted Huesca.

Bundesliga title

hopefuls Borussia Dortmund suffered a blow in a 2-0 defeat at Augsburg, surrendering without a fight as Daniel Caligiuri set up the first goal and scored the second in his 300th league game.

Despite Dortmund having close to 80% possession for much of the first half, it was Augsburg who scored when Felix Uduokhai connected with a Caligiuri free-kick in the 40th minute to nod in with their first chance of the match.

Dortmund lacked the magic from their young stars that helped them cruise past Borussia Mönchengladbach 3-0

in their Bundesliga opener last week. Caligiuri himself struck the second after the break.

RB Leipzig also dropped points, settling for a 1-1 draw at Bayer Leverkusen after taking the lead through Emil Forsberg in the 14th minute. A Kerem Demirbay strike six minutes later earned a point for the hosts.

Schalke continued their freefall with a 3-1 loss at home to Werder Bremen courtesy of Niclas Füllkrug's hat-trick. Mark Uth scored a stoppage-time goal for the hosts, who had Ozan Kabak sent off for two bookings. He was also caught by cameras spitting at an opponent.

B o r u s s i a Mönchengladbach are still waiting for their first win after drawing 1-1 at home to Union Berlin, while Mainz, who had to deal with a one-day players' strike in midweek, lost 4-1 at home to Stuttgart.

In Italy Inter fought back with two goals in the last five minutes as they began their Serie A campaign with a 4-3 win over Fiorentina.

Runners-up last season and seen as the

main challengers to the dominance of Juventus this term, Inter suffered one of their familiar slumps as they fell 3-2 behind to a Fiorentina side inspired by 37-year-old Franck Ribéry. But an 87th-minute equaliser from Romelu Lukaku followed by Danilo D'Ambrosio's header two minutes later gave them the points.

Lazio began their Serie A campaign with a convincing 2-0 win at Cagliari, suggesting they could again be among the title challengers this season. An early goal from Manuel Lazzari set Lazio on the way before Ciro Immobile sealed the points in the second half with a typically clinical finish.

Atalanta, Serie A's leading scorers last season with 98 goals, began their new campaign in the same carefree, entertaining style as they came from behind to win 4-2 at Torino, while promoted Benevento celebrated their return to Serie A after a two-season absence by hitting back from two goals down to win 3-2 at Claudio Ranieri's Sampdoria.

Manny Pacquiao confirms fight with Conor McGregor next year



MANILA, 27 SEPT [REUTERS]: The boxing champion Manny Pacquiao will face former two-weight UFC champion Conor McGregor in the ring next year, part of proceeds from the fight going to coronavirus victims in the Philippines, Pacquiao's office said on Saturday.

Both men are "getting ready for this one epic last boxing fight", said Jayke Joson, special assistant to Pacquiao and also a Philippine senator. Joson's statement followed a tweet by McGregor in which the Irishman said he would be "boxing Pacquiao next in the Middle East".

"We don't deny it," Joson said.

McGregor said on Twitter in June he was retiring for the third time. He first quit UFC in April 2016. In March 2019, he again announced he was hanging up his gloves, but on both occasions the retirements were short-lived.

McGregor boxed the multiple world

champion Floyd Mayweather, a long-time rival of Pacquiao, in an August 2017 junior middleweight "superfight" in Las Vegas, losing in 10 rounds.

Pacquiao, 41, is the only man in boxing history to hold world titles in eight different divisions. He beat Keith Thurman to win the WBA Welterweight Super Championship in July, taking his record to 62-7-2 with 39 knockouts.

Negotiations between representatives for Pacquiao and McGregor are "now starting to move on", Joson said, adding that a "huge portion" of Pacquiao's earnings would go to those affected by the pandemic.

Total confirmed coronavirus cases in the Philippines surpassed 300,000 on Saturday, while deaths rose to 5,284.

The Philippines has the most confirmed Covid-19 infections in south-east Asia and the region's second-highest number of deaths, next to Indonesia.

Tammy Abraham completes Chelsea comeback to snatch draw at West Brom

WEST BROMWICH, 27 SEPT [THEGUARDIAN]: The least one expects from any team, let alone one that this week took their spending for the window beyond £200m, is desire. Chelsea showed that here, along with a belated smattering of quality, to save face and salvage a point after practically giving away three goals.

In the first half Frank Lampard's team were wasteful up front and truly rubbish at the back and looked set to be humiliated by the Premier's League supposed whipping boys. For a long time West Brom, well organised and clinical, offered a perfect contrast to ramshackle visitors, with Callum Robinson scoring twice and Kyle Bartley adding a third to send the hosts in at half-time with a three-goal lead.

Chelsea improved sufficiently after the break to draw level thanks to goals by a trio of homegrown players, Mason Mount and Callum Hudson-Odoi finding the net before Tammy Abraham struck in stoppage time.

The only change Bilic was able to make from the 5-2 defeat by Everton was to draft in Conor Townsend for the suspended Kieran Gibbs. Compare that with Lampard's de luxe options: he gave a start here, and the captaincy, to Thiago Silva, for whom the trip to the

Hawthorns turned out to be clumsy first steps in his attempt to add a Premier League title to the 18 trophies he won with Paris Saint-Germain.

Lampard also elected to consign the world's most expensive goalkeeper, Kepa Arrizabalaga, to the bench even though Édouard Mendy, the £22m replacement signed from Rennes this week, was not ready for a debut. Willy Caballero began in goal instead, leaving Arrizabalaga to wonder if last week's blunder against Liverpool was the last he will ever be allowed to make for Chelsea. His absence certainly did not spell the end of his side's mistakes.

The visitors helped West Brom to take the lead after just four minutes. Marcos Alonso was the chief culprit, heading the ball straight to Matheus Pereira, who slipped a clever pass through to Robinson, who fired a shot from the left-hand corner of the area beyond Caballero.

Alonso goofed again two minutes later when he pulled back Semi Ajayi and got a booking as, perhaps, Lampard mentally sent another "Get well soon" card to Ben Chilwell.

Chelsea created chances after that but their finishing was slipshod, with Abraham and Timo Werner missing clear chances.

Leaders to UN: If virus doesn't kill us, climate change will

JOHANNESBURG (AP):

In a year of cataclysm, some world leaders at this week's annual United Nations meeting are taking the long view, warning: If COVID-19 doesn't kill us, climate change will.

With Siberia seeing its warmest temperature on record this year and enormous chunks of ice caps in Greenland and Canada sliding into the sea, countries are acutely aware there's no vaccine for global warming.

"We are already seeing a version of environmental Armageddon," Fiji's Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama said, citing wildfires in the western U.S. and noting that the Greenland ice chunk was larger than a number of island nations.

This was meant to be the year "we took back our planet," he said. Instead, the coronavirus has diverted resources and attention from what could have been the marquee issue at this U.N. gathering. Meanwhile, the U.N. global climate summit has been postponed to

late 2021.

That hasn't stopped countries, from slowly sinking island nations to parched African ones, from speaking out.

"In another 75 years, many ... members may no longer hold seats at the United Nations if the world continues on its present course," the Alliance of Small Island States and the Least Developed Countries Group said.

The main goal of the 2015 Paris climate accord is to limit the rise in global temperatures to 2 degrees Celsius (3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial times, but scientists say the world is on track to soar past that. A new study found that if the world warms another 0.9 degrees Celsius (1.6 degrees Fahrenheit), the West Antarctic ice sheet will reach a point of irreversible melting. It has enough water to raise global sea levels by 5 meters (16 feet).

The Pacific island nation of Palau hasn't had a single COVID-19 infection, but President

Tommy E. Remengesau Jr. warns it's the rising seas that will bring the country down.

"Themomentarydrop in (carbon) emissions this year cannot be allowed to generate any complacency about global progress," he said, referring to the sparkling skies that followed lockdowns to slow the spread of the virus around the world. Pollution has crept back up as restrictions ease.

World powers cannot shirk their financial commitments to fighting climate change during the pandemic, Remengesau said, even as economies are battered.

But few pledges have emerged at the U.N. gathering, aside from China's announcement that it aims to have carbon dioxide emissions peak before 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality by 2060.

The pandemic has muted the U.N. meeting, with world leaders speaking not from the podium in New York but via video from home.

That has sapped the urgency of diplomacy and left nations wondering just how many people are listening.

Amid concerns that the world is distracted, it was perhaps no surprise that the student-led movement Fridays for Future returned to the streets this week for the first major demonstrations for climate action in months. Still, island nations have seized on the unusual circumstances to show off what's at stake.

The prime minister of Tuvalu, Kausea Natano, delivered his U.N. speech with a vista of turquoise waters and swaying fronds behind him that instantly fired the imaginations of house-bound viewers.

But the prime minister quickly shattered any dreams. While Tuvalu is free of the coronavirus, the pandemic struck as the island nation was recovering from a pair of tropical cyclones — storms that scientists say are likely to become

wetter as the planet warms.

Tuvalu's highest point is just a few meters (yards) above sea level. The pandemic's effect on the movement of goods exposed food insecurity as local agriculture becomes more difficult with rising sea levels, Natano said.

"While COVID-19 is our immediate crisis, climate change remains the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security and well-being of the Pacific and its peoples in the long run," the prime minister said.

From the Marshall Islands, also free of COVID-19, President David Kabua used the virus's example to plead for more help now.

"Change relies on protecting the most vulnerable, because those on the frontline — whether healthcare workers battling the pandemic or small island nations sounding the alarm on climate change — are critical to the survival of us all," he said.

"Small island and

atoll nations like mine do not have time for paper promises," Kabua added.

Urgent pleas also came from Africa, which contributes least to global warming but stands to suffer from it the most.

"In favoring solutions based on the respect for nature, we're also preserving the health of our peoples," said President Issoufou Mahamadou of Niger, part of the Sahel region south of the Sahara desert where temperature increases are expected to be 1.5 times higher than the world average.

"Our global home that was teeming with millions of species of God-given creatures, both great and small, is slowly dying," said Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta, who last year noted that his country was the only one in Africa to reach the goal of making renewable energy 75% of its energy mix.

He added: "Our world is yearning for us to stop its ruin."

Some Breonna Taylor protesters out past curfew, fires set

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (AP):

A diverse crowd of hundreds marched in Louisville's streets chanting "Black Lives Matter" on Saturday night, the fourth night of protests after a grand jury declined to charge officers in the fatal shooting of Breonna Taylor.

People in the crowd also chanted "No justice, no peace" as cars honked along a busy downtown artery in this Kentucky city that has seen more than 120 days of demonstrations over the death of the 26-year-old Black woman in a police raid gone wrong.

A few police cars followed behind, with officers telling protesters to stay on the sidewalk and out of the street before the march ended. Many briefly ended up back at a downtown square that has been a focal point of protests.

But as a 9 p.m. curfew time approached, a police loudspeaker announced that anyone who remained in the park would be arrested for a curfew violation. The square emptied out as people departed, many dispersing though one group headed to a nearby church where protesters had found refuge on previous nights.

As a crowd gathered outside the First Unitarian Church late Saturday, fires were set in a street nearby after 11 p.m. Police said fireworks burned a car, and windows had been broken at Spalding University and Presentation Academy buildings close by.

Some demonstrators were seen with makeshift shields made of plywood. Others took shelter inside the church, which closed its doors around midnight.

About 100 people remained inside the church into the early hours of Monday, Jud Hendrix, executive director of Interfaith Paths to Peace, told WDRB-TV around 1 a.m. Hendrix said he was working with police to determine if people

could leave the church to go home without being arrested.

"People inside the church were asked to remain there while police were conducting the investigation and securing the area," the police department said in a tweet, sharing aerial and ground video of the fires that were set, windows that were broken and graffiti that had been spray painted.

As of the 2:20 a.m. tweet, 28 people had been arrested, the police department said.

A previous protest on Friday night was peaceful though police arrested 22 people for curfew violations. A police spokesman said some also were charged with failure to disperse.

Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer had urged continued peaceful protests in an appearance at a news conference Saturday evening.

"I'm mindful that many in our community are hurting and angry about the decisions announced this week," Fischer said. The mayor said he supports protesters' First Amendment rights to protest though "we just ask you to do that peacefully please."

Taylor was shot multiple times March 13 after her boyfriend fired at officers who had entered her home during a narcotics raid by white officers, authorities said. Taylor's boyfriend said he didn't know who was coming in and fired in self-defense, wounding one officer.

On Wednesday, Kentucky Attorney General Daniel Cameron announced a grand jury indicted one officer on wanton endangerment charges, saying he fired gunshots into a neighboring home during the raid that didn't strike anyone. That officer has been fired.

Cameron said the other officers were not charged with Taylor's killing because they acted to protect themselves.

Morocco faces down COVID spread with tough rules

RABAT, MOROCCO (AP):

With air and sea borders closed for months and eight cities barring people from entering or leaving, Morocco has been pulling out the stops to stanch the spread of coronavirus.

Still, the kingdom on the Atlantic coast, a magnet for tourists in better times, has registered more than 110,000 positive cases since March and has a death toll of 2,041 — the highest among its North African neighbors.

Morocco first decreed lockdown measures on March 20, but has been gradually easing restrictions. A recent upsurge in infections, however, has forced targeted measures.

Marrakech, a major tourist destination, is at a standstill, while police checks are part of the scenery in hard-hit Casablanca, the country's economic powerhouse.

Police are out in the markets, streets, drug-dealers' haunts and closed-off beaches, with military vehicles occasionally rolling by. They are a no-nonsense signal for citizens to respect the country's strict orders to contain the virus.

In the northern city of Tangiers, military vehicles were deployed last month to help enforce measures there. Movement between the city and others was stopped, as it was in Casablanca, barring exceptional authorizations.

In Casablanca, tough measures to keep people from leaving town are in place. Police at blockades focus on taxis, buses, freight trucks and private ambulances, vehicles known to be used by those trying to sneak out of town, said Karim El Idrani, commander of the Al Fida police district.

In Rabat, the political capital and site of the main palace of King Mohamed VI, police are posted at entrances and exits — although the city is not closed. Still, occupants of vehicles venturing into town are asked to show proof of residency, or provide

authorization if traveling in from elsewhere, especially closed-off cities, or risk fines. The director of epidemiology at the Health Ministry, Mohamed Lyoubi, conceded during a webinar that he expects the situation to worsen over winter as the flu season overlaps with the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Many hospitals and test sites for the coronavirus are expected to reach capacity," Lyoubi said. "The situation will also affect the ability of health authorities to carry out case investigations and ensure

contact follow-up and monitoring of patients treated at home."

Morocco's testing program is increasingly overwhelmed. Long lines for testing are now common outside hospitals and laboratories in Moroccan cities.

With a rise in cases, hospitals have been struggling to keep up with the growing influx of patients, and some intensive care units are reaching full capacity. Last month, health workers staged a protest outside Ibn Zohr Hospital in Marrakech to demand better working conditions. Photos showing COVID-19 patients lining the corridors of the overcrowded hospital, with some lying on the floor, caused an uproar on social media.

Medical professionals held

similar protests elsewhere, claiming that some health facilities are understaffed and lack protective equipment for workers. The Health Ministry has sought to remedy the situation by setting up field hospitals.

The rise in cases has come as a blow to Morocco, which had been phasing out lockdown measures. On July 19, it began a third phase of gradually lifting its lockdown and foreign business visitors were allowed to enter the kingdom starting Sept. 10.

But Casablanca doubled down after its infection rate began climbing. The city hosts 42% of the daily reported

cases, 40% of the serious cases and 38% of the deaths recorded at the national level, according to Health Minister Khalid Ait Taleb. To counter the surge, schools were forced to close again, with the adoption of remote education. Markets, cafes, shops and restaurants were ordered to close early. The city enacted a curfew between the hours of 10 p.m. and 5 a.m. Police set up roadblocks and patrols to enforce compliance.

The Moroccan monarch said last month that "if figures continue to increase, the COVID-19 Scientific Committee may recommend another (full) lockdown, perhaps with even tighter restrictions."

North Korea accuses South of intrusion to find dead official

SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA (AP):

North Korea accused South Korea of sending ships across the disputed sea boundary to find the body of a South Korean official recently killed by North Korean troops, warning Sunday the intrusion could escalate tensions. South Korea denied the accusation.

"We urge the South side to immediately halt the intrusion across the military demarcation line in the West Sea that may lead to escalation of tensions," the official Korean Central News Agency said. "It arouses our due vigilance as it may lead to another awful incident."

Along with its denial, South Korea proposed a joint investigation to resolve discrepancies in each country's account of the South Korean

official's death last week. Officials in Seoul have said the 47-year-old was likely attempting to defect before North Korean troops aboard a boat fatally shot him and burned his body.

According to Seoul, North Korea on Friday sent a message including a rare apology by leader Kim Jong Un for the shooting death of the official, who was found floating on an object in its waters.

The North Korean message distributed by South Korea said its troops shot the official because he attempted to flee after refusing to answer to questions. It said North Korea maintained troops were unable to find the official's body and burned the object he was floating on in line with anti-coronavirus rules.

Sunday's KCNA report confirmed North Korea notified South Korea on Friday with its account of the incident, but it didn't say whether the notification included an apology from Kim.

South Korea's military and coast guard responded to North Korea's claim of a border incursion by saying their ships and aircraft have been searching waters south of the boundary since Friday in case the official's body drifts back.

South Korean President Moon Jae-in met with his National Security Council on Sunday. Moon's office said the council viewed Kim's apology positively and proposed a joint investigation with North Korea to find out what happened to the official.

Senior presidential official Suh Choo-suk

said South Korea also wants North Korea to restore a suspended military hotline between the nations to facilitate communications.

Kim's apology was seen as an attempt to soothe anti-North sentiment in South Korea that could make it difficult for him to win concessions in any negotiations. Kim is currently struggling to overcome worsening economic woes caused by U.S.-led sanctions over his nuclear program and the pandemic that forced his country to close its border with China, its biggest trading partner.

While Kim's apology could help reduce the risk of escalation of tensions between the rivals, conservatives in South Korea have launched a political offensive against Moon for failing to prevent the man's death.

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SummitTIMES



WHITE HOT! Bachelor alum Hannah Ann Sluss was spotted on the beach in Miami.

Singer Himanshi Khurana tests positive for COVID-19

MUMBAI, SEP 27 (PTI): Punjabi singer and former “Bigg Boss” contestant Himanshi Khurana on Sunday said she has tested positive for COVID-19 after she participated in a protest against the farm bills passed by Parliament recently.

The 28-year-old singer requested those who came in contact with her to also get tested for coronavirus.

“I want to inform you all that I have been tested positive for COVID-19 even after taking proper precautions.

“As you all know that I was part of the protest day before yesterday and the area was crowded so I thought to get the test done before I go for my shoot today evening,” Khurana tweeted.

The singer-model, who was part of last year’s Salman Khan-hosted “Bigg Boss”, urged those taking part in the protests to take



proper precautions.

“It’s my request to all the people protesting to not forget that we are going through pandemic so please take proper care,” she added.

Farmers continued their “rail roko” (block the trains) agitation in many parts of Punjab on Saturday, protesting against the farm bills.

The movement of trains in the state remained suspended due to the agitation, with at least 28 passenger trains being cancelled.

Amitabh Bachchan on SP Balasubrahmanyam: He was voice of great divinity and soul

MUMBAI, SEP 27 (PTI): Megastar Amitabh Bachchan has paid tributes to the legendary SP Balasubrahmanyam, calling the late singer a modest man despite towering achievements.

Balasubrahmanyam, 74, died on Friday after an over two month-long battle with coronavirus.

Writing on his blog on Saturday, Bachchan said SPB, as he was fondly called, had a “God gifted voice”.

“In the middle of the work schedule, the mind works at a tangent that brings emotion for the departed - SP Balasubrahmanyam the God gifted voice gone silent. And day on day the very special have left us for the heavens and as they would often say ‘to a better place.’

“The pandemic claims yet another gem, the voice of great divinity and soul,” the actor wrote.

A six-time National Award winner, Balasubrahmanyam, who had sung over 40,000 songs, was also honoured with Padma Shri in 2001 and Padma Bhushan in 2011.

Bachchan, 77, posted a photo of the duo from an old event and said he was fortunate to meet the singer.



“Long years ago at a function I had had the honour of meeting him. A simple, modest human, despite the immense celebrity he was bestowed with.”

Balasubrahmanyam was laid to rest at his farmhouse on Saturday with a 24-gun salute by the Tamil Nadu Police.

Bachchan joined the rest of the Indian film and music industry members, including Lata Mangeshkar, Asha Bhosle, AR Rahman, Kamal Haasan, Salman Khan, Shah Rukh Khan, Ramya Krishnan, and Anil Kapoor in paying rich tributes to Balasubrahmanyam.

Emma Stone and Dave McCary Are Married! A Timeline of the Couple’s Relationship

Emma Stone and Dave McCary got engaged in December 2019

After months of speculation about their relationship, Emma Stone and Dave McCary have tied the knot.

A source confirmed to PEOPLE on Saturday that the Oscar-winning actress, 31, is married to McCary, a Saturday Night Live segment director. They first announced their engagement on his Instagram in December 2019.

Neither Stone nor McCary, 35, has publicly discussed their nuptials, but they were spotted wearing matching rings while on a walk together in Los Angeles on Sept. 11.

From meeting on SNL to their secret wedding, here’s a timeline of their relationship:

The First Meeting

The couple met when Stone hosted SNL at the end of 2016 and collaborated on a taped sketch titled “Wells for Boys.” The comedian directed the sketch, in which Stone plays a mom who’s baffled by her young son’s affinity for wells for “sensitive boys” where they can whisper their feelings and secrets.

PEOPLE confirmed their relationship in late October 2017.

Stone and McCary remained private about their romance, finally stepping out together in the beginning of 2019. They made their debut as a couple at the 2019 Screen Actors Guild Awards, where Stone was nominated for her work in The Favourite.

Later in 2019, a source told PEOPLE that the pair “got a home together in Malibu over the summer,” adding that they are “a great match.”

“Dave is a super down-to-earth guy. Most of his best friends are people he’s known since he was a kid, and he’s not affected by Hollywood,” the source added. “He’s very creative and funny, and he and Emma share the same sense of adventure.”

A Winter Engagement

Stone and McCary announced their engagement in December 2019 with a simple Instagram post showing off the Easy A actress’ pearl engagement ring.

Following their engagement, an industry source told PEOPLE that the strength of Stone and McCary’s



relationship lies in their ability to let each other shine.

“She is professional in every way, very talented and focused on her work, and Dave respects that,” the source said. “He totally supports her, and is unselfish in his desire for her success. Those are great qualities in a man for someone like Emma. She is impressed by his talent and respects him immensely.”

“Two highly successful people in the entertainment business don’t always give the other the space they need,” the source added. “But he encourages her, and she loves that.”

Secret Wedding

The couple had postponed their wedding in March due to the coronavirus

pandemic, according to Page Six, but fans soon began speculating that they had secretly gotten married.

In May, Stone participated in a video interview with fellow actress Reese Witherspoon and was wearing a solid gold band on her ring finger in place of the pearl engagement ring she had previously sported.

The new ring indicated to some viewers that she had tied the knot, though neither Stone nor McCary confirmed it at the time.

In September, the pair sparked new speculation when they were spotted wearing matching rings while on a walk together in L.A. — just before a source confirmed to PEOPLE that they had indeed wed in secret.

ARIES:

You’re entering a vibrant time in your life, which means it’s a great time to begin exploring a new hobby, interest, or career opportunity. Your brain is open to new ideas and new ways of doing things, and it’s ready to put in the practice or research required for you to excel. Stepping out of your comfort zone is usually a bit scary for you, but today it will feel downright invigorating to go where you’ve never been, see something you’ve never seen, and taste something you’ve never tasted.

TAURUS:

Today, you should spend your time seeking out real-world examples of innovative ideas or new philosophical concepts. Art or foreign films could be the perfect realm for this. Be open to using your mind in new ways and thinking through foreign or even uncomfortable ideas. It might be frustrating to figure out some of the heavier concepts right now, but it is the best kind of brain exercise possible.

GEMINI:

The new concerns you have about your career aren’t going away anytime soon, so deal with them like the intelligent person you are. It’s time to have a conversation with someone you trust, and it doesn’t have to be someone who is intimately involved with what you do on a daily basis. You just need a sounding board, someone you know will tell you the truth no matter how hard it may be to hear. Avoid talking to

anyone who is too close to your situation. They might hold back on you.

CANCER:

When was the last time you did something selfish? You’ve been so selfless lately, all of your giving is going to start to impact your emotions. It could almost feel like you don’t have any time for yourself. So put some plans in place for a day off. Or take a solo vacation. You need to devote all your energy to you! Taking a break will give people the chance to really understand what kind of an impact you make in their lives.

LEO:

There could be an awful lot of distractions around you today. Some will be fun, but some could be annoying, like a complaining co-worker or hyperactive friend. But you can have fun no matter what happens, so don’t let it worry you. All you need to do is keep a positive attitude and stay flexible. That way, you can get through the negative stuff quickly and have more time for the entertaining stuff.

VIRGO:

Today is a good time to initiate a project you may have wanted to start for a while. The universe is sending you a lot of positive energy, which all but ensures a positive outcome. If all of the key elements are in place, you should feel free to barrel ahead on a new venture with confidence. If you feel like you want to rush ahead but can’t, rush anyway. You’ll be surprised by how far you can go before anyone even notices what

you’re doing.

LIBRA:

Go out exploring and you’re bound to find a few pleasant surprises. Whether you just take a walk around the block or you book a flight, there are new people and places for you to get to know better. You’re curious right now, and the same old same, old won’t satisfy you. When you get out of your element, your creativity gets a boost and your attitude gets a makeover. Happiness comes when you are getting acquainted with new things..

SCORPIO:

You can’t ever anticipate how other people will react, but that’s especially true now. There is a high probability that someone at some time will overreact, including you. But you shouldn’t try to modify your behavior in order to avoid it because you’ll only end up stressing yourself out. Just carry on as you normally would and deal with any emotional outbursts as they come. And if you’re the one who blows your cool, just make sure you’re quick with the damage control.

SAGITTARIUS:

Touch base with a sad friend today. They’ll appreciate your kind words more than you can imagine. Your friendship means so much to them, and right now it could be one of the few bright spots in their life. It can feel like you have too much responsibility for their happiness, but you don’t. It’s not your job to make them happy. But as a friend, it is your job to let them know that you support them and are there for them

when they need someone to talk to.

CAPRICORN:

You’re smart enough to know that life isn’t fair, so if things don’t go your way, put it in perspective. You have to retain your balance between being practical and being idealistic, and roll up your sleeves and get ready to work, either toward accepting what’s going on or changing it to be more to your liking. This isn’t about pushing back against the decisions made by the folks in authority, though. It’s about working to make people see that your ideas are better.

AQUARIUS:

This is going to be an expansive day, full of friendship and big opportunities. Your day might be packed, so time will be of the essence. Do whatever you can to save time, but let yourself to do it all! If you get a little creative, you’ll be able to get your work done and enjoy yourself without skipping a beat!

PISCES:

oday, pay attention to the one person who is doing their darndest to avoid you! E-mails go unanswered, phone calls are never returned. They either did something they don’t want to tell you about or are afraid you already know about it. Reach out to them and be proactive about the situation. They aren’t going to fess up until it’s far too late to fix whatever they’ve broken. So it’s in your own best interests to track them down and make them spill.