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SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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Sikkim records nearly three times more recoveries than cases in a single day

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 16 JUN:**

Sikkim posted a strong number of recoveries today with 420 formerly Covid-positive people beating the virus and completing their prescribed period of home isolation with a good enough cushion of days without symptoms to get discharged and return to their normal lives.

This is the highest number of recoveries in a day in Sikkim and one which becomes even more reassuring when bundled with the fact that over the same 24 hour period, the number of new cases was nearly a third of this number.

As per the 'Daily Report of Covid' released by the Integrated Disease Surveillance Project at 8AM this morning, 147 people tested positive for COVID-19 in the State from the testing of 1,096 samples on Tuesday.

The number of recovered Covid cases here has now crossed the



15,000-mark and currently stands at 15,307. Meanwhile, a total of 18,806 have tested positive for Novel Coronavirus in Sikkim in the year and half that the world has grappled with Covid.

Of the 2,965 active cases in the State at present,

only 167 are in hospital [14 of them in ICU] while 2,798 have mild or no symptoms and are recuperating at facility or home isolation. Only 6 more Covid positive patients were admitted to hospital today.

While number of tests being conducted per day

have come down over the past few days, the thousand-plus samples being screened everyday are still noticeably higher than what the average of 600-800 daily tests in the pre-second wave days. Targeted mass testing, however, continues in the districts

and the fewer numbers could be ascribed to fewer people coming for tests by themselves since infections have also come down.

Over the past 24 hours, 618 samples were screened via RT-PCR of which 103 returned positive while 44 other were found positive for Covid in Rapid Antigen Testing of 463 samples.

Unfortunately, one more Covid death was reported in the State over the same 24 hours with a patient passing away at STNM Hospital.

The second wave has been in Sikkim for 54 days and 62% of the State's cases reported since the beginning of the pandemic last year have been detected in these 54 days. Of the 18,806 cases registered in the State thus far, 11,647 we in the past 54 days alone. The State has also lost 149 lives to the virus in these 54 days. In the year before the second wave, the State had recorded 136 Covid deaths.

One Chairman appointed; one Advisor relieved

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 16 JUN:**

Advisor, Cooperation Department, Jit Bahadur Basnett has been relieved from his duty as per a notification issued by the Home De-

partment today.

In another notification by the Home Department, BB Chettri of Lower Sumin, East Sikkim has been appointed Chairperson of Cooperation Department.

Hike in allowance for differently abled

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 16 JUN:**

The Subsistence Allowance scheme for the differently abled has been renamed Chief Minister's State Disability Pension Scheme. Social

Justice and Welfare Department has issued a notification on 14 June to this effect.

The pension amount has also been increased to Rs 1500 from the existing Rs 1000 per month.

CISCE Class 12 results by July 20, assessment on internal marks: Sources

NEW DELHI, 16 JUN [NDTV]: The Council for Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE) is expected to declare its Class 12 exam results by July 20, sources have said. Its assessment will be based on the students' internal marks for Classes 11 and 12, they said. The board will also consider the best performances from 2015 to 2020. The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), meanwhile, is expected to submit before the Supreme Court tomorrow its report on the Class 12 assessment system.

The court had earlier granted it, along with the Centre and the CISCE, two weeks to finalise the criteria for declaring the Class 12 results.

Following much uncertainty and deliberation, the government had

on June 1 declared that the CBSE Class 12 Board exams stood cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The top court welcomed the decision but enquired about the principle to be applied to devise evaluation criteria to prepare results. The Centre sought two weeks to respond. CISCE, however, wanted four weeks, but the bench said that would delay the process for students looking to study abroad.

CBSE has now issued a new circular on the change of mode of the school-based assessment and practical test. The board has asked its affiliated schools to complete pending internal or practical exams online.

It had set up a 13-member panel to work on the report to be submitted before the Supreme Court.

730 doctors died of Covid in India's second wave: IMA



NEW DELHI, JUN 16 (PTI): As many as 730 doctors have succumbed to coronavirus infection during the second wave, according to data available by the Indian Medical Association (IMA).

Bihar saw the max-

imum number of 115 deaths, followed by Delhi at 109, Uttar Pradesh 79, West Bengal 62, Rajasthan 43, Jharkhand 39, and Andhra Pradesh 38, the data showed.

According to the IMA,

748 doctors died in the

first wave of the pandemic. "Last year 748 doctors across India succumbed to COVID-19, while in the current second wave, in a short period we have lost 730 doctors," a doctor associated with the IMA said.

Future-oriented budget will deliver quick benefits for people: Khaling

SAGAR CHETTRI

GANGTOK, 16 JUN:

Sikkim Krantikari Morcha spokesperson, Jacob Khaling, who is also the Political Secretary to the CM, said today that the general budget passed by the SKM government for the financial year 2021-22 was development and future-oriented.

He further expressed confidence that the budget will deliver substantial development to the people of Sikkim over the year.

Addressing a press conference here today, Mr Khaling stated that the budget has given top priority to education, healthcare, rural development and other important areas and will cover every section of the Sikkimese society.

"Our work for the people of Sikkim in the present would speak itself in the future," he said.

The Assembly, it may be recalled, passed Bills to pave the way for three new private universities to come up in Sikkim, one of them, EILM being revived after being renamed. This last one has not gone down too well with the people given the thousands of students who had their academic futures ruined by EILM which was folded up by the government after allegations of fraud became too many to ignore.

Mr Khaling today contended that the SKM government has been working tirelessly to create more avenues for higher education in the State.

He remarked that the SDF government had also started many private universities in its tenure but SKM had never opposed them since it believes

that Sikkim needs more universities to take the education sector forward.

SDF, however, did things half-baked while the SKM Government has invested due diligence to ensure that the new universities deliver good results.

Mr Khaling added that the passing of the Sikkim Labour (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Bill was historic in the safeguards it has put in place for the people.

His fellow SKM spokesperson, CP Sharma, who is also the Press Advisor to the CM, echoed these sentiments and stressed that the SKM government in its barely two years in office has worked with vigour on education and health on top priority despite the challenge of the pandemic.

Responding to media queries on the Namchi Incident in which an effigy of Bhaichung Bhutia was burnt for his criticism of the SKM Government, Mr Khaling said that SKM does not support such actions.

"SKM never burned anyone's effigies even when it was in the opposition so there is no question to do so when the party in government as it is not the character or mentality of the SKM party," he contended.

He remarked that Sikkim was a small State and everyone was somehow or the other related to some political party or the other. In this regard, he remarked that from reports that have come out, there were people from affiliated to a wide range of parties, from SKM to SDF to even Bhaichung's own HSP, involved in the incident.

"Don't come back": Trinamool says Bengal Governor violating Constitutional norms

KOLKATA, 16 JUN [PTI]:

The ruling Trinamool Congress in West Bengal has accused Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar, who is on a visit to New Delhi, of violating constitutional norms and asked him not to return to the state.

The BJP, on the other hand, alleged that it is the Trinamool which has no respect for the Constitution and asked the Mamata Banerjee-led party to respect constitutional posts.

Mr Dhankhar, who shares a strained relationship with the state government, went to the national capital on Tuesday night for a four-day trip. He had not specified

any reason for the visit.

The governor today said he met Union ministers Prahlad Joshi and Prahlad Singh Patel. "Had useful interaction with Union Minister of Coal, Mines and Parliamentary Affairs of India @JoshiPralhad on varied issues," he tweeted.

Senior Trinamool leader and party spokesperson Sougata Ray lashed out at Mr Dhankhar for allegedly violating constitutional norms and not taking the state government into confidence over various decisions and statements he has made in the recent past.

"We have never seen

such a governor who has no regard for the Constitution and its norms. He has been violating every constitutional norm. According to our Constitution, the governor is supposed to act as per the instructions of the council of ministers headed by the chief minister. But he doesn't follow any such norm and acts as per his whims and fancies," Mr Ray said.

He wondered why he has gone to Delhi and is meeting union ministers.

Mr Ray's party colleague and MP, Mahua Moitra, asked Mr Dhankhar not to return to the state.

turn to pg02

1-20 year-olds accounted for under 12% Covid cases in both waves: Centre

NEW DELHI, 16 JUN [PTI]: Dismissing assumptions that children and the younger population were more affected in the second wave of Covid, the government on Tuesday said those in the 1-20 age group accounted for less than 12 per cent of the cases recorded during both the waves.

Those aged 1-20 years accounted for 11.62 per cent of the total cases during the second wave (March 15 to May 25) as against 11.31 per cent in the first wave (July 1 to December 31), indicating not much difference in the proportion of those infected in this age-group, according to the data shared by the government at a press conference.

The data showed that the 21-50

age group was the most affected category in both waves with the people from this category accounting for 59.74 per cent of the infections in the first wave as against 62.45 per cent in the second.

As for people aged above 61 years, the proportion was 13.89 per cent in the first wave and 12.58 in the second wave. Presenting age bifurcation of cases in first and second waves, Lav Agarwal, Joint Secretary in the Health Ministry, said the first wave saw 3.28 per cent cases coming from 1 to 10 years age group while it is 3.05 per cent in the second wave.

The age group 11-20 years accounted for 8.03 per cent in the first

wave and 8.57 per cent in the second wave. Amid fears about the possibility of children getting more affected if a third wave comes, the government said there appears to be no substantial evidence to indicate there will be severe infection among them but then highlighted that people of all age groups need to stay vigilant and follow precautions.

Highlighting the improvement in the Covid situation in the country, Mr Agarwal further said that almost 85 per cent decline in daily new cases has been noted since the highest reported peak on May 7 and the number of districts reporting more than 100 daily cases have reduced from 531 as

recorded in the week ending May 4 to 165 in the week ending June 13.

There has been a decline of 75.6 per cent from the peak of Covid active cases recorded on May 10 across the country. At present, there are 20 states and union territories where the Covid active caseload is less than 5,000 and a drastic reduction is being noted in almost all states.

Due to the restriction being imposed at the field level in terms of containment activities, a sharp decline of 78 per cent has been noted since the highest reported weekly Covid case positivity of 21.4 per cent recorded between May 4-10 during the second wave.

LTVC thanks DT Lepcha for raising LT seat issue in Assembly

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 16 JUN:**

Limboo Tamang Voluntary Committee [LTVC] expressed its gratitude today to MLA, DT Lepcha for raising the issue of Limboo-Tamang seat reservation in the State Assembly.

Mr Lepcha had raised the issue during the discussion on the second day of the Budget Session on Tuesday.

LTVC has also expressed its disappointment on the silence of leaders from the Limboo-Tamang communities on the issue during the discussion.

An LTVC press release of its publicity secretary, Deepak Tamang states, "It is very disappointing that elected representatives of our own community like the Chief Minister PS Tamang himself, Bhim Hang Subba and Aditya Golay haven't uttered a single word on the LT seat issue since 2019 in the assembly and have failed in fulfilling their responsibilities as



it is their duty to be the voice of Limboo-Tamang community and their aspirations."

The release mentions that DT Lepcha questioned the SKM government on their seat reservation formula for LT and also reminded them of the election manifesto promising LT seat reservation within 10 days.

On the other hand, the statement given by the CM on the subject stating that the government has been in constant touch with the union ministry

for considering this long pending demand is absolutely misleading and vague, it adds.

LTVC informs that as per RTI reply received by LTVC President, Yehang Tshong from Ministry of Home Affairs dated 22/01/21 vide. F. No.11012/06/2001-NE-VI, it has been mentioned that no new formula or proposal has been sent to Ministry of Home Affairs by New SKM government pertaining to LT seat reservation solution in SLA which itself is a clear

answer to the CM's false claim and reflects the current government's ignorance with regard to LT seat issue.

"Until SKM govt doesn't pass a bill in SLA for LT seat solution with formula and propose it at Centre, LT seat reservation will remain a dream," the release states.

LTVC would like to remind SKM govt that during opposition their own SKM MLAs and leaders always demanded LT seat solution from 32 to previous SDF govt and

also brought a Private No resolution in SLA for LT seat reservation from 32 and this was a known fact that the party had supported the issue which is known to all, the releases mentions.

"SKM's cold approach towards LT seat solution has deeply hurt LT communities. LTVC would request SKM govt to honour their pre-poll election and manifesto promise given to LT communities of Sikkim and resolve LT seat reservation issue at the earliest," the release adds.

NDA members refuse Covid discussion, House Panel Chairman offers to quit

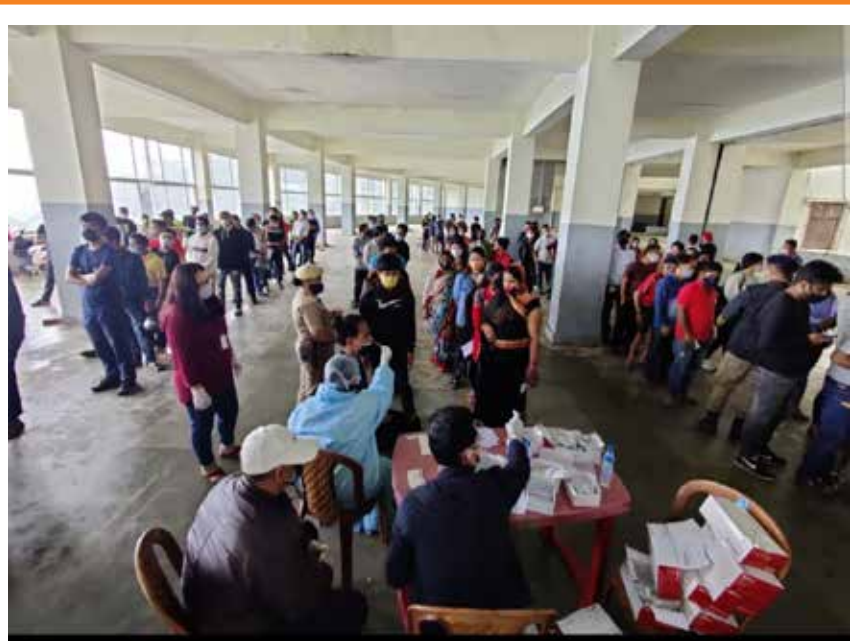
NEW DELHI, 16 JUN [PTI]: Strong differences prevailed at the parliament's Public Accounts Committee (PAC) meeting today over the Covid pandemic in the country. BJP and JDU members of the panel raised their objection to the matter being raised by Chairman Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury of the Congress, according to sources in the know.

The PAC, an important watchdog and the oldest House panel, monitors and audits the revenue and expenditure of the Government of India. As soon as Chairman Chowdhury began talking about the pandemic and issues related to it today, NDA members, led by Jagdambika Pal and Lalan Singh, objected to taking up matters suo motu. It was, however,

pointed that in previous Lok Sabhas matters -- be it the 2G spectrum or road construction -- had been taken up in this manner on a number of occasions even before the Comptroller and Auditor General readied any reports.

The NDA parliamentarians, with a clear brief, paid no heed. An exasperated Mr Chowdhury then offered to quit as Chairman if the committee exceeded its brief, urging it to take up the matter of responses and preparations for the expected third Covid wave.

Interestingly, other members, including those of the DMK and the Naveen Patnaik-led BJD, kept quiet about the Chairman's proposal seeking a comprehensive review on Covid.



South scores 8/796 at Kissan Market mass testing

**SUMMIT REPORT
NAMCHI, 16 JUN:**

Eight of the 796 people screened at the mass testing camp set up by the Health Department in association with Namchi Municipal Council

at the Kissan Market tested positive for Covid-19, a press communique from the IPR Department informs. Those who tested positive were quarantined and provided access to the required treatment, the release adds.

How India's most crowded city Mumbai beat the odds, and Covid

MUMBAI, 16 JUN [AFP]: When COVID-19 arrived in India, few places looked as vulnerable as Mumbai. But a year on, South Asia's most crowded city has surprised many by tackling a vicious second wave with considerable success.

Gaurav Awasthi even travelled hundreds of kilometres from his home on the outskirts of Delhi to get his ailing wife a hospital bed there, paying an ambulance more than a thousand dollars to drive 24 hours straight.

"I cannot ever repay my debt to this city," the 29-year-old told AFP, recounting an ordeal that saw him spend five days fruitlessly searching for a bed across several cities, including Delhi.

"I don't know if my wife would be alive today if it weren't for Mumbai's health facilities."

BODIES IN WARDS

The bodies began turning up early in India's financial capital during the first wave of infections last year -- a man collapsing on a busy road, a rickshaw driver slumped over the wheel, a corpse lying in the street -- in a grim echo of the 1918 flu pandemic.

By May 2020, Abhignya Patra was working 18-hour days at the massive Lokmanya Tilak Municipal General Hospital, better known as Sion. "It was non-

stop," the 27-year-old anaesthesiologist told AFP.

Patients' relatives described distressing scenes inside packed wards, with one man telling AFP he had to change his sick mother's diapers himself because staff were too overworked.

A video shot inside Sion and widely shared on social media showed corpses wrapped in black plastic left on beds in a ward where patients were being treated.

Every night, the city helpline fielded thousands of calls from desperate citizens, many with no chance of getting admitted to a publicly-funded hospital: Mumbai had just 80 ambulances and 425 intensive care units for a population of 20 million.

'CHASE THE VIRUS'

Something had to change fast, said Iqbal Chahal, a no-nonsense bureaucrat who took over as Mumbai's municipal commissioner last May.

New field hospitals added thousands of beds, private facilities handed over their Covid-19 wards to the government and 800 vehicles were turned into ambulances. But these efforts could not combat the swift rise in infections.

"We needed to chase the virus," Chahal told AFP.

A proactive approach focused on 55 slums including

India's largest, Dharavi, where a strict lockdown was accompanied by aggressive sanitisation of public toilets, mass coronavirus screening and a huge volunteer effort to ensure that nobody went hungry.

All positive test reports in Mumbai were routed through "war rooms" manned by doctors who would triage cases and decide where to send the patient, irrespective of "whether he is a minister, a big shot or a slum dweller", Chahal said.

FORWARD THINKING

As 2020 wore on, it looked like India might have miraculously beaten the pandemic and lockdown restrictions were eased. But in Mumbai, authorities didn't dismantle a single bed in the now-deserted field hospitals.

This meant that when cases surged in March, the metropolis was much better prepared than many other Indian cities, where the health care system came close to collapse.

In the capital Delhi and elsewhere, patients died outside hospitals and crematoriums were overwhelmed. But not in Mumbai.

Despite having a much higher population density than many other cities, Mumbai has seen significantly lower mortality rates. The city still suffered

COVID-19: India reports 62,224 fresh cases

NEW DELHI, JUNE 16 (PTI): A single day rise of 62,224 new coronavirus infections were reported taking India's total tally of COVID-19 cases to 2,96,33,105, while the active cases were recorded below nine lakh after 70 days, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Wednesday.

The COVID-19 death toll climbed to 3,79,573 with 2,542 fresh fatalities, the data updated at 8 am showed

The active cases further declined to 8,65,432 comprising 2.92 per cent of the total infections, while the national COVID-19 recovery rate has improved to 95.80 per cent. A net decline of

47,946 cases has been recorded in the COVID-19 caseload in a span of 24 hours.

Also, 19,30,987 tests were conducted on Monday taking the total cumulative tests conducted so far for detection of COVID-19 in the country to 38,33,06,971.

The daily positivity rate dropped to 3.22 per cent. It has been less than five per cent for nine consecutive days, the ministry said, adding the weekly positivity rate has declined to 4.17 per cent.

Recoveries continue to outnumber daily new cases for the 34th consecutive day. The number of people who have recuperated from the disease

surged to 2,83,88,100, while the case fatality rate stands at 1.28 per cent, the data stated.

Cumulative, 26,19,72,014 COVID-19 vaccine doses have been administered so far under the Nationwide Vaccination Drive.

India's COVID-19 tally had crossed the 20-lakh mark on August 7, 30 lakh on August 23, 40 lakh on September 5 and 50 lakh on September 16. It went past 60 lakh on September 28, 70 lakh on October 11, crossed 80 lakh on October 29, 90 lakh on November 20 and surpassed the one-crore mark on December 19. India crossed the grim milestone of 2 crore on May 4.

Another lion dies of COVID-19 in TN zoo

CHENNAI, JUNE 16 (PTI): Another lion at the Arignar Anna Zoological Park (AAZP) in Vandalur near here, succumbed to SARS-CoV-2 on Wednesday morning. Confirming the death of the Asiatic male lion named Pathbanathan, aged 12 years, Deputy Director of AAZP said the lion was housed in the safari area of the park.

"Samples of the said lion had tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 as per the report of National Institute of High Security Animal Diseases (NIHSAD), Bhopal, communicated on June 3.

The lion has been under intensive treatment since then," he said in a statement.

This is the second tragedy that struck the zoo which lost a nine-year-old lioness Neela due to Coronavirus on June 3. Since the detection of the

infection among animals, the zoo management has been involved in hectic efforts to prevent its spread among other animals.

On Monday, the zoo authorities said three lions were responding to the treatment very slowly.

However, all endeavours were being made by the team of zoo veterinarians in coordination with the experts of TANUVAS to ensure that they recover, the AAZP had said.

Owing to COVID-19 infection on its premises, the park launched measures to contain the spread by introducing thermalscanning, social distancing, UV irradiation of feed, complete vaccination of zoo staff against Corona.

Animal enclosures were sanitised and the staff was mandated to wear the PPE kit.

First body retrieved from flooded Meghalaya coal mine

SHILLONG, JUN 16 (PTI):

A body was retrieved on Wednesday afternoon from the flooded coal pit in Meghalaya's East Jaintia Hills district where five miners were trapped since May 30, an official said.

The body was retrieved from the bottom of the 152-meter-deep pit by divers of the Indian Navy and NDRF, the district's Deputy Commissioner E Kharmalki told PTI.

It is yet to be identified but suspected to be of one of the trapped miners, he said.

The Navy on Tuesday detected two objects, which they suspected to be as bodies of the miners, he said.

The operation to retrieve the second "suspicious object" was called off as the visibility in the water was affected during the retrieval of the first body, the official said.

"They are expected to resume the retrieval of the second suspected body on Thursday when the visibility under water improves," he said.

The water level in the pit also rose considerably as there was heavy overnight rainfall in the area, he said.

Ten high-powered pumps have been deployed to dewater the main shaft and a nearby shaft that are connected underneath at the seams, Kharmalki said.

A team of 13 personnel of the Navy last week joined the rescue teams of NDRF, SDRF and the Fire Services deployed at the accident site since May 30.

The Navy brought with them their ROV -- an unmanned search vehicle deployed in the deep waters. The ROV had in 2019 retrieved three bodies of the 15 miners trapped deep inside another flooded coal mine, located about 20 km further at Lumthari.

At the illegal mine in Umpleng, four of those trapped are from Assam and one is from Tripura.

Six others, who narrowly escaped the onrush of the water during a dynamite explosion deep inside, were sent to their homes in Assam, Kharmalki said.

Dynamite was used to break the coal seams, which accidentally either hit a water body or another nearby flooded mine, inundating the mine and trapping the five miners, officials said.

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) had banned the hazardous rat-hole coal mining and transportation of coal in Meghalaya in 2014.

The rat-holes are dug horizontally across the coal seams. To reach the coal seams, coal miners dig deep vertical shafts to take out the coal to the top of the surface.

The district police have arrested Shining Langstang, the mine owner, and charged him with violation of the NGT order.

The 'Sordar' (mine manager) is on the run and a lookout notice has been issued since he was the one who brought migrant workers from Assam and Tripura to work in the illegal mine, a senior police officer said.

Based on the account of the survivors, an FIR was registered.

"Don't come back..."

"Uncleji going to Delhi on June 15th he says... Do us a favour WB Governor Sahib - don't come back," she said in a tweet.

The governor went to Delhi a day after a delegation of BJP MLAs petitioned him on alleged deterioration of the law and order situation in the state.

Hours before his departure to the national capital, Mr Dhankhar wrote a letter to Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee accusing her of being silent over post-poll violence in the state and not taking steps to rehabilitate the suffering people".

He shared the letter on Twitter and

the state Home Department criticised the move claiming that it was violative of all established norms.

West Bengal BJP general secretary Sayantan Basu supported Mr Dhankhar and charged the TMC with not respecting the constitutional post.

"The governor has done nothing unconstitutional. He has been working as per norms. It is the TMC and the state government which have been doing all sorts of unconstitutional things. Before talking about norms, the TMC should first learn to respect the chair," Mr Basu said.

Community radio station to operate from early 2022 in Ladakh

LEH, JUN 16 (PTI): A community radio is all set to operate in the Union Territory of Ladakh from early 2022, officials said on Wednesday.

Umang Narula, Advisor to Ladakh Lieutenant Governor, chaired a meeting to review the implementation strategy for setting up the community radio network in the UT.

To cater maximum area of Ladakh, a network of transmission sites will be activated for radio setup, the officials said.

The community radio network will transmit to the whole of Ladakh and will be utilized largely in the field of education and disaster management, they said.

There will be one central studio and 48 transmission locations with priority to transmit signal to the unconnected areas of Ladakh, they said.

The Education Department will be the licensee and will have various licensee schools across Ladakh from where transmissions will happen, they said, adding the project is being implemented by the Information Technology Department, Ladakh.

The advisor directed the IT Department to also have a robust maintenance contract in place for ensuring regular maintenance and upkeep of the network for the coming five years.

Leh-based 14-corps paid tributes to Galwan martyrs

JAMMU, JUNE 15 (PTI): Leh-based 14 Corps known as 'Fire and Fury Corps' on Tuesday paid homage to Galwan martyrs on the first anniversary of the violent clashes along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Ladakh, a spokesperson of the Northern Command said.

Twenty Indian Army personnel, including a colonel, were killed in the clash with Chinese troops in Galwan Valley in June last year, the biggest military confrontation in over five decades that significantly escalated the already volatile border standoff in the region.

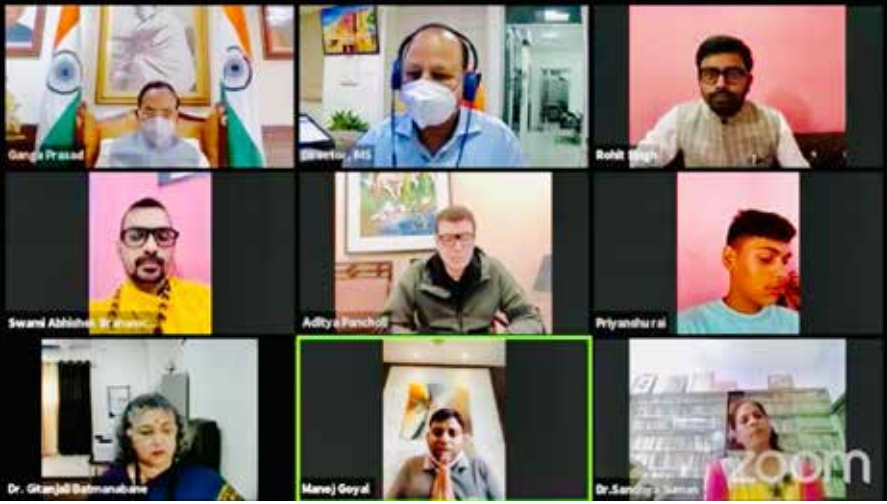
Fire and Fury Corps paid homage to the bravehearts on the first anniversary of the clash on Tuesday, the spokesperson said.

"In the face of unprecedented Chinese aggression, 20 Indian soldiers laid down their lives defending our land and inflicted heavy casualties on the PLA," he said.

In a solemn ceremony, 14 Corps Chief of Staff (CoS) Major General Akash Kaushik laid a wreath at the war memorial in Leh on the occasion.

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Governor attends webinar on Covid Counter Measure



SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 16 JUN:

A webinar on 'Corona & COVID Counter Measures' was organised on Wednesday in memory of Late Lallan Rai which had Governor of Sikkim, Ganga Prasad as the chief guest. The webinar was organised by national convenor of Yuva Chetna, Rohit Kumar Singh.

During the webinar, Swami Sarweswaranand Saraswati from Shri Karpatri Dham, Varanasi honored Late Lallan Rai as Punya Aatma. In his inaugural address, Swami Abhishek Brahmchari asserted on the need for effort from all sides to defeat coronavirus. He stated that awareness among the youth was needed to fight against coronavirus.

In his address, the Governor stated that Lal-

lan Rai was a great man and contributed a lot towards the society. He also appreciated the works of Yuva Chetna and its fight against coronavirus. He congratulated Yuva Chetna for starting a community kitchen for people.

Likewise, national convenor of Yuva Chetna, Rohit Kumar Singh mentioned that Yuva Chetna has been fighting against COVID-19 at all levels and supporting the needy people during this pandemic. He mentioned that Yuva Chetna has been working tirelessly to make India a Viswa Guru.

Bollywood artist, Aditya Pancholi said that India would soon win its fight against coronavirus and stressed upon the need for active role of youth in this mission,

while Dainik Jagaran Varanasi edition editor, Bharatiya Basant Kumar stated that journalists are answerable towards the society in this COVID pandemic.

Himachal Central University Vice Chancellor, Dr Roshan Lal Sharma, Sobhit University Vice Chancellor, KS Vijendra, RIIMS Ranchi Director, Dr Kameshwar Prasad, AIIMS Bhuaneswar Director, Dr Gitanjali Batamnabney, IMH BHU Director, Dr BR Mittal, Woodland Hospital, Kolkata Director, Dr Rupali Basu, Sanjeevani Hospital Bilaspur Director, Dr Binod Tiwari, Industrialist Manoj Goyal and a NMCH Patna senior teacher, Dr Sandhya Suman also placed their opinions and suggestions during the webinar.

Chidambaram slams Finance Minister, says GST dues not given to all states

NEW DELHI, 16 JUN [PTI]: Senior Congress leader P Chidambaram on Wednesday said Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is "wrong" in claiming that GST dues of states have been cleared and cited the example of Congress-ruled Rajasthan, Punjab and Chhattisgarh. Citing an interview given by Ms Sitharaman, he said the finance minister "angrily rebuffed the interviewer and snapped: "What dues, I have cleared the GST (Goods and Services Tax) dues of all states"".

"The FM was wrong. The anger was unjustified," the former Union finance

minister said in a statement.

P Chidambaram said he has gathered data about GST dues from three states which stand at ₹ 7,393 crore for Punjab as on June 1, 2021, ₹ 7,142 crore for Rajasthan as on May 21 and ₹ 3,069 crore for Chhattisgarh as on June 1.

"I am trying to gather data from other states," he said.

Opposition-ruled states have been at loggerheads with the Centre over GST dues in the past also and have demanded that they be paid at the earliest so that they can keep funding pandemic-related spending.

IIT Guwahati develops low-cost sterilization box to disinfect household items

NEW DELHI, 16 JUN [PTI]: Researchers at Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati have developed a low-cost sterilization box to disinfect small household items by combined heat and UV radiation to prevent COVID-19.

The results of their investigation have also been recently published in Environmental Research (2021).

According to the team, the products available in the market use only UV-C irradiation facilities to disinfect items at a cost between ₹ 13,000 and ₹ 15,000, while the developed device has both heat and UV-C irradiation facilities to disinfect items and costs around ₹ 3,500.

The developed device works using the com-

bined effect of dry heat and UV-C irradiation. UV-C radiation is more effective in killing the pathogens at the surfaces and heat is effective in sterilizing the unexposed areas and pores.

"The combination of UV-C radiation and heat can be used for disinfecting small items like masks, wallets, currency notes, wristwatches, and other routine items for their safe reuse or disposal to the environment," said Lalit M Pandey, Professor at IIT's Department of Biosciences and Bioengineering.

"This published study suggests that the combination of heat and UV-C at 70 degrees Celsius for 15 minutes can be useful for the inactivation of the virus through the unfold-

ing of proteins and killing of bacterial pathogens," he added. The designed sterilization box comprises a wooden box, two incandescent bulbs for heating, two UV-C lamps for irradiation, one Digital Temperature Controller (DTC), and a timer.


The box also has the provision to maintain different inside temperatures through DTC. For operational safety, a limit switch-controlled top cover is used to prevent the direct exposure of UV-C light to the human eye and skin.

"The box was tested for the sterilization or disinfection of virus and bacteria. The novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) is composed of inner nucleic acid, which is covered with surface spike glycoprotein.

Jhora near DAC West at risk

Ajhora located near the ADAC West Sikkim, near Pelling phatak is in a precarious condition as land around it is sinking. According to locals, water run-off from the Bazaar area drains into this jhora and heavy rainfall in the past few days has led to the situation. Those residing near the jhora are living in fear.





GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM

SOCIAL JUSTICE AND WELFARE DEPARTMENT

Samaj Kalyan Bhawan, Tadong, Lumsey

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Sl. no.

Name of work

Value put to Tender (in Rs).

Completion Time (in months)

Amount of Earnest Money @ 2.5% for issue of tender form (Rs.)

Amount of Bank receipt for cost of tender document Rs.)

Constituency / GPU/ Ward.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	Construction of 8 room School building at Mulukey in East Sikkim.	79,09,344	18 months	1,97,734.00	5,000.00	Mulukey Ward, Chujachen Constituency.

Time Schedule is as follow:-

1. Date for submission of application with Bank Receipt – 18th June , 2021 (10.00am to 4.30pm) for issue of Tender Documents (Excluding the tender form).
2. Last date for issue of tender form - 23rd June, 2021 (11:00 to 13:00 hrs).
3. Date and Time for submission of Tender - 20th July, 2021 (10.00 hrs to 13:00 hrs).
4. Date and Time of opening of Tender - 20th July, 2021 (13:30 hrs to 16.30 hrs), in the respective Ward.

Note: The details of tender documents including tender form can be obtain from the office of the Assistant Engineer- East (II) SJ&WD on production of receipt of deposit made to the respective Ward.

1. Tender is open only to the eligible Contractors / Firms of appropriate Class/Area.
2. The intending tenders/contractors should apply in writing for issue of tender documents. The application would invariably be signed by the contractor himself/herself. The tender documents will not issued to any person other than the INTENDING TENDER.
3. The applicants should enclose attested copies of the (a) Valid GSTIN Registration Certificate, (b) Latest Income Tax Clearance Certificate as per the Indian Income Tax Act and (c) Validated Contractor Enlistment Certificate, and Professional Tax Clearance Certificate along with the application. It is mandatory to produce the original validated/updatd Enlistment Certificate during sale/ issue of the Tender Document for verification (d) PAN Card.
4. The prescribed Non-Transferable Tender Documents (Excluding the Tender Form) can be obtained during the period specified in (As above from the office of the Addl.Chief Engineer/ Superintending Engineer of Social Justice & Welfare Department, Samaj Kalyan Bhawan , Lumsey, Tadong, East District , Sikkim, on production of receipt deposit to the revenue of the respective GPU/Ward.
5. Earnest Money Deposit @ 2.5% in the state bank of Sikkim in the form of deposit receipt of schedules bank which includes in the form of temporary deposit receipts fixed deposits receipts in favour of the Sr. Accounts Officer of the Department Tender Form shall be issued only on the production of the deposit receipt to the contractors who has obtained the tender documents, on production of deposit receipts of 2.5% earnest money.
6. The Tender documents, including the Tender Form with quoted offer should be placed in a sealed cover with the name of the Tenderers and the name of the work superscripted on it. Supporting documents listed at SL3 (a), (b) and (c) above sho7uld be enclosed with the offer.\
7. Sealed Tenders may be deposited in the Tender Box in the concerned ward on the date and time indicated above.
8. Tenders will be opened by a Tender Opening Committee as prescribed by the Government in the presence of the tenderer on the date and time indicated above.\
9. The Tender should sign on every page of the tender documents as Acceptance of the General Direction and Conditions of Contract and other laid down norms. The rate quoted should be both in figures and words and should be inclusive of GST and all other Taxes and Levies. Over writing and correction should be avoided and if made should be authenticated. Incomplete/Conditional tenders shall be rejected forthwith.
10. In case of any discrepancy in rate(s) printed In the Schedule of Rates and Quantities issued with the tender document, rates as per approved Schedule of Rates will be taken as correct. mFor items outside the SOR, the rates shall as per the technically checked/estimate/analysis. Decision of the Addl.Chief Engineer cum Secretary/Head of the Department will be final in this regard.
11. The Work Value, scope and quantum of work are subject to change, the contractor shall execute the work as per the directives of the Department . no claim on this account shall be entertained whatsoever, if any extra claim is made , it shall be as per the agreement rates.
12. Avoidable damages due to negligence of the contractor shall be at his own risk and cost. The department shall not be liable for payment of such damages (if any), including accidents to laborer at site .
13. The offer shall remain valid for a period of 90 days. The work should commence within 15 days from the date of issue of work order.
14. the department reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason thereof.
15. Subletting of contract work is against the norms and if it comes to the notice, the original contract shall be cancelled and appropriate action shall be initiated as per the rules.
16. The Department also reserves the right to increase, decrease, alter or modify the item of works as indicated in the NIT without assigning any reason thereof.
17. The contractor will have to pay all taxes and duties as applicable and notified by the State/Central Government and no claim shall be entertained in this regard whatsoever.
18. The rate quoted shall be inclusive of prevailing taxes.
19. the department reserves the right to reject the incomplete tender without any reasons there-off.
20. The Contractor has to submit the work program / bar Chart in the initial stage.

Sd/-

Assistant Engineer (E)

Social Justice & Welfare Department

Government of Sikkim

R.O. No. 64/IPR/Pub/classi./21-22

Datet. 15.6.2021



GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

COMMERCE AND INDUSTRIES DEPARTMENT

UDYOG BHAWAN, TADONG- 737102, GANGTOK, SIKKIM.

RECRUITMENT NOTICE

Applications are invited from bonafide Sikkimese for engagement as District Resource Persons under Prime Ministers Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprises(PMFME) Scheme.

The details of the eligibility criteria qualifications and application format be referred and downloaded from the official webpage of Commerce & Industries Department www.industries.sikkim.gov.in. The filled up application to be submitted to the office of the Director, MSME, Commerce & Industries Department, Government of Sikkim, Udyog Bhawan, Tadong, Gangtok, East Sikkim. The last date for the receipt of the filled up application is 25.06.2021 by 4.30 PM.

(s/d)

Director (MSME)

Commerce & Industries Department

Government of Sikkim.

R.O. No. 57/IPR/Pub/Classi./21-22

Dt. 09.06.2021

The Steel Frame Has Warped

We have learn to say well done instead of thank you in the rare occasion that babudom delivers

Indian bureaucracy has been rated as the worst in Asia. Okay, that was in a report of some vintage, but if the experience of the current pandemic is any indication of bureaucratic efficacy, then, even though there in position worse than worst, our babus will definitely have scored even more poorly. A health emergency continues to be "managed" by the executive, and while in the hands of more empathetic managers, this would have been an asset for the people who would have benefited from the better administrative and managerial skills one expects "officers" to be trained and experience in, what we received is confusion and bungling at every step. Blame that on the entitlement and privilege that reigns in the babudom which has proven, yet again, that the secretariat does not know how the proletariat lives. Worryingly, it is becoming increasingly obvious that they don't even care.

The rant done with, let's return to the story this piece began with.

A report prepared by the Hong Kong-based Political & Economic Risk Consultancy Ltd had given Indian babus a rating of 9.21 out of 10. The survey primarily had business executives as its respondents and the rating thus is essentially about how easy/ difficult bureaucracies in different Asian countries are when it comes to facilitating enterprise. The top ranks were secured by Singapore, Hong Kong, Thailand, Japan, South Korea and Malaysia, all developed economies. As for us, our bureaucracy fared worse than Vietnam (rated at 8.54 and which has since overtaken us on all development indices and also handled Covid several times better than us without lathicharging its people), Indonesia (8.37), Philippines (7.57) and China (7.11, and this with the caveat that no one, including us, trusts anything coming out of China).

There is a weird irony we live every day. Even as no one in India thinks much of its bureaucracy, cracking the UPSC or landing a government job continues to remain the most coveted pursuits. That said, to learn that our administrators are worse-performers than those in Indonesia or China is depression-inducing. While there would have been no complaints from Indians if the administration was found intransigent towards business houses because of their concern for the lay people, truth is that our babus rank so low because of corruption, inertia and superiority complex. While this would not come as a surprise to anyone who has had to get "official" work done in government departments [even in Sikkim], this need not have been the case if the Steel Frame, as the bureaucracy here sees itself, had been more malleable to accommodate a people-first attitude instead of continuing with the mai-baap fixation carried over from the colonial/ subject-hood days. Even when they make the effort, it is out of pity and not a sense of duty, and that should always be a problematic attitude in a democracy.

The steel frame has warped, and the ugliness was last unveiled in a report from a prestigious organisation. Unfortunately, it is not quoted or invoked too often. What is worrying is that if the bureaucracy at the national level, despite the pressures of public scrutiny and media attention, is so poor, how would the administration here present itself in the face of a similar survey?

It is not as if we did not already know how bad things had become. The Administrative Reforms Commission of the Government of India back in the year 2008 had made some interesting, albeit obvious, recommendations, which, if adopted, would have been path-breaking in, well, reforming administration. Its draft report had suggested that bureaucrats be held responsible for service delivery. Yes, ironically, performance is rated on input-centric indices in our country. Bureaucrats, as also the schemes they oversee, are rated on the basis of money spent, man-hours devoted and manpower deployed. The problem with this approach to evaluation is that because it is "input centric" it makes no demands of the bureaucracy to remain true to its public service epithet. Should this recommendation [on the service delivery yardstick] be adopted, it could end up catalyzing the entire decentralization process. Interestingly, Sikkim's own Administrative Reforms Commission, in its report submitted to the State Government in July 2010, had, among other things, reiterated [it had said that this was of "considerable importance"] the need to draft a Citizen's Charter for departments which deal directly with the general public. One of the biggest hurdles holding up effective decentralization of power, despite devolution of substantial powers to the panchayat level, is that lay people still do not have an important enough say. While they can vote for change, that is about the only control they have on delivery of development. They cannot touch the bureaucrats. And the babus can continue to talk down to them, because when it comes evaluating their performance, it is based on data [on inputs] which they control along with the elected representatives [who become a part of the System once they get elected]. Should the people have a majority say, it will be their assessment of the effectiveness of administration's ability to deliver that will decide which officers stay and who is shown the door. Yes, the Govt of India's ARC draft had recommended that civil servants who continually fail to "perform" are compulsorily retired.

Of course none of these recommendations were implemented.



China and the west: competing traditions make true friendship highly unlikely – here's why

ASTRID HM NORDIN & GRAHAM M SMITH
theconversation.com

At the 2021 summit of the G7, which was held in Cornwall in the west of England, one person figured prominently in conversations but was not part of the gathering: the Chinese president, Xi Jinping. A fair proportion of the group's deliberations concerned developing a shared approach to China – the awkwardly named US-backed spending plan, "Build Back Better World" (B3W), which is designed to rival China's massive "Belt and Road Initiative" (BRI).

There was also agreement on the questions of democracy and human rights, with the meeting's concluding communiqué stipulating: "we will promote our values, including by calling on China to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, especially in relation to Xinjiang and those rights, freedoms and high degree of autonomy for Hong Kong enshrined in the Sino-British Joint Declaration and the Basic Law".

Hot on the G7's heels, Nato leaders have ramped up the rhetoric and named China on a list of security risks, claiming that "China's stated ambitions and assertive behaviour present systemic challenges to the rules-based international order".

As expected, Chinese officials hit back, accusing the G7 of manipulation and NATO of slandering its peaceful development. Yet, in the days before the statements from the G7 and Nato, Xi had been calling for China to "expand" its "circle of friends". Could that circle be made to include those in the G7 and NATO?

DIFFERING UNDERSTANDINGS OF FRIENDSHIP

Xi Jinping's call for friendship gives us an opportunity to examine Chinese politics on both the domestic and international stage. On the face of it, it suggests the possibility of rapprochement between the rich liberal democracies represented by the G7 and the authoritarian Chinese state. However, despite appearances of a call for a closer relationship, there is more than one way of being friends – and Xi's idea might be somewhat different to what many in countries attending the G7 might expect.

ent to what many in countries attending the G7 might expect.

For most countries in the G7, the understanding of what friendship might mean is based on a Euro-American tradition of thought that understands it as a voluntary and reciprocal relationship of equals. Importantly, on this view of friendship, friends remain together despite – or even because of – their differences. Indeed, differences are seen as productive and enhancing of the friendship. This view is exemplified by Plutarch's comment that "I don't need a friend who changes when I change and nods when I nod; my shadow does that much better." Friends disagree in such a way that they remain friends and, if necessary, disagree again in the future.

However, this is probably not how Xi sees friendship. His understanding might instead fall back on a Confucian tradition – as it often does in his "great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation" that includes "friendship" as one of its "core socialist values". In that tradition, good friendship is modelled on the hierarchy of older and younger brother in the traditional family. Here, the younger – or lesser – relation has a chance to grow by emulating the positive example of the more elevated friend.

The importance of the friend as a virtuous example to emulate is so strong that Confucius repeatedly urges in the Analects: "Do not have as a friend anyone who is not as good as you are". In this tradition, the superior party is duty-bound to care for and correct the lesser party in this process of moral growth, and the lesser party is impelled to heed their advice and direction.

This understanding of friendship is reflected in China's internal and external political relations. Internally, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) sits above other societal actors – those who are mistaken are corrected and improved. This can be seen in initiatives ranging from patriotic education campaigns to mass incarceration in camps on China's "new frontier", Xinjiang.

Prominent Chinese intellectuals like Zhao Tingyang argue that the best way for China to "turn enemies into friends" is to lead by example. Xi's call for friendship is simultaneously a call for the Chinese state to be better at portraying China in a positive light. However, this does not mean that hard power methods are out of bounds if push comes to shove, as demonstrated in Xinjiang, Hong Kong, and the South China Sea.

nese state to be better at portraying China in a positive light. However, this does not mean that hard power methods are out of bounds if push comes to shove, as demonstrated in Xinjiang, Hong Kong, and the South China Sea.

CAN CHINA AND LIBERAL DEMOCRACIES BE FRIENDS?

Given these views of friendship, what chance is there for rapprochement and friendship between liberal democracies and authoritarian China? The Chinese model suggests a way of living in harmony with China. Chinese leaders and citizens generally do not see China as being a threat to other countries, but a generous and cultivated friend. Chinese leaders responded to the NATO communiqué by telling NATO to stop "hying" the idea of a "China threat". But for liberal democracies, a friendship where the senior partner directs things and the junior partner must change to be more like them is not the sort of friendship they want – especially when they might be cast as the "junior" partner.

In contrast, the Anglo-European tradition of thinking about friendship emphasises equality and cooperative difference. However, the rhetoric and actions coming from the G7 and NATO appear far from extending friendship based on any such appreciation of a real diversity and difference of culture, approach, and values. As clubs of the like-minded, they see China as a threat precisely because they can only conceive of being in a friendship with "people like us". Friends can be different – but only within liberal democratic parameters.

These differences mean that both China and the liberal democracies could forever be estranged, locked in a contest for superiority. A friendship could be possible between China and liberal democracies. For this to happen, liberal democracies would need to be true to their traditions of equal but different friendship, allowing for genuine difference. Based on its own traditions, China may well find such relationships difficult to accept.

[Professor Astrid H. M. Nordin is Lau Chair of Chinese International Relations, King's College London; Graham M. Smith is Associate Professor in Political Theory, University of Leeds]

Teaching Kids Social Responsibility – Like How to Settle Fights and Ask For Help – Can Reduce School Bullying

JONATHAN B. SANTO & JOSAFÁ DA CUNHA
theconversation.com

Schools that encourage their students to care for their classmates' feelings and to peacefully resolve conflicts with their peers can lower incidents of bullying, according to our peer-reviewed study published in the International Journal of Behavioral Development in June 2021.

We surveyed 1,850 Brazilian schoolchildren ages 7 to 15 and their teachers over a three-month period in 2019 – shortly before the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted in-person instruction. The teachers were working to cultivate these social responsibility skills among their students.

Students who said their teachers encouraged them to care about others and work together to settle disputes, and fostered a classroom environment with clear rules, also said they felt both less aggressive and less victimized by their classmates.

Specifically, there was a 34% decrease at the end of the period in reported incidents of hitting, kicking, pushing, spreading rumors and leaving people out. Students said that a supportive classroom climate was the main reason for the decrease.

WHY IT MATTERS

Around the world, including in the U.S., over half of children and adolescents say they are victimized by their classmates, with at least 10% being bullied repeatedly.

When children help each other out and cooperate to resolve conflicts, they are exercising what psychologists call "social responsibility" by contributing to the greater good of a group.

School can nurture social responsibility by fostering an environment that combines fairness and positive social connections with opportunities for students to learn and model ways to be kind and include others. For example, teachers can encourage students to feel responsible for their

Brazil had registered over 17 million COVID-19 cases, including over 480,000 deaths, as of June 2021 – more than any other country except the U.S. and India. Many Brazilian K-12 schools, as in the U.S., pivoted to remote instruction in early 2020.

The techniques used by teachers

for remote learning, including for children without internet access. We are also deploying program activities through social media and online learning platforms to help children to continue learning these skills and also nurture a sense of connection in their remote schooling activities.



actions, help others and seek assistance when in need.

Additionally, no one knows how the social distancing required by the COVID-19 pandemic will affect the children and teens who are growing up today, in Brazil or anywhere else. But it seems likely that the decline in interactions will take some kind of toll.

We believe it's important that schools focus on children's social and emotional well-being both during and after the pandemic.

WHAT STILL ISN'T KNOWN

in our study might help to cultivate positive connections and foster a resilient response to the pandemic – in Brazil, the U.S. and elsewhere – among children, families, schools and communities. As for how exactly social responsibility can help accelerate this recovery, more evidence-based research is needed.

WHAT'S NEXT

We are conducting rapid-response surveys and interviews with schoolteachers and designing new programs, such as new lesson plans

Our next goal is to study how fostering social responsibility in children contributes to the development of engaged and responsible citizenship as students grow up. We want to understand new ways to create opportunities for children and adolescents to actively engage and contribute to the well-being of their communities.

[Jonathan B. Santo is Professor of Psychology, University of Nebraska Omaha; Josafá da Cunha is Professor of Educational Psychology, Universidade Federal do Paraná (Brazil)]

Near Diesel Power House (DPH)
Gangtok, East Sikkim, 737101

Durant's sensational performance sends Nets to 3-2 lead

NEW YORK (AP): Kevin Durant has always been one of the NBA's most unstoppable scorers.

The Brooklyn Nets needed much more than points Tuesday night, so Durant gave them one of the most spectacular performances in post-season history.

Durant had 49 points, 17 rebounds and 10 assists, sending the Nets back into the lead in the Eastern Conference semifinals with a 114-108 victory over the Milwaukee Bucks in Game 5.

"I know the perception of me is that I can score the basketball well, but any team that I've played on, I've been asked to do pretty much everything from rebounding to defending to initiating to scoring," Durant said. "I might not do it all the time but I do a little bit of everything."

In Game 5, it was a whole lot of everything.

The two-time NBA Finals MVP became the first player to have at least 45 points, 15 rebounds and 10 assists in a playoff game.

"Historic, historic performance," Nets coach Steve Nash said.

With James Harden returning but delivering little offense and Kyrie Irving out, Durant played all 48 minutes and shot 16 for 23 from the field. The four-time scoring champion had 20 points in the fourth quarter, perhaps the biggest shot a 3-pointer with 50 seconds left and the Nets protecting a one-point lead. "The injuries that he's been through, to come back even from the Achilles to the hamstring to get back in this position, the world is witnessing, once again, who is the best player in the world," Nets forward Jeff Green said. No argument from the Bucks.

"He's the best player in the world right now and we've got to beat him as a team," Giannis Antetokounmpo said. "We've got to guard him as a team. We've got to make him make tough shots like tonight. We've just got to keep doing our job and hopefully he's going to miss."

Harden played for the first time since leaving 43 seconds into the series opener with right hamstring tightness. He shot just 1 for 10 and missed all eight 3-pointers, but had eight assists and six rebounds while playing 46 minutes.

"I woke up and was like, 'You know what? Let's go,'" Harden said. "I tried to go out there and do the best I can. Hopefully I gave my teammates some encouragement and some life."

Green made seven 3-pointers and scored 27 points for the Nets, who fell into a 17-point hole in this one after two losses in Milwaukee before Durant carried them back. Blake Griffin added 17 points. Game 6 is Thursday in Milwaukee, where the Bucks are 4-0 against the Nets this season.

Antetokounmpo had 34 points and 12 rebounds, while Khristian Middleton added 25 points.

Dutee expects Olympics spot on basis of world rankings if not through qualification timing

NEW DELHI, JUN 16 (PTI): An Olympic qualifying spot within her grasp, national record-holding sprinter Dutee Chand on Wednesday said her target in the upcoming Tokyo Games is to reach the 100m final with an improved timing.

Dutee is yet to breach the qualification timing of 11.15 seconds but is expected to make it to the Tokyo Games on the basis of world rankings. Out of the 56 athletes to compete, 33 will be those who touch qualification timing and the remaining will be picked on the basis of rankings.

The 25-year-old, who has a personal best of 11.22 sec, is currently 42nd in the World Athletics' Road to Tokyo list, which also includes those who have already qualified on the basis of entry standard timing.

The qualification deadline is June 29 and the final list of entries will be published on July 1.

"I will try my best to touch the 11.15 sec standard during the Indian Grand Prix 4 on June 21 and the National Inter-State Championships



(June 25-29). If not, I am expecting qualification on the basis of rankings," Dutee said in a virtual press conference.

"My aim in Tokyo is to run below 11.10 seconds and qualify for the final round. Olympics is the biggest event, there will be a lot of athletes who run around 11 seconds and below that," said the runner who was roped in as brand ambassador of Senco Gold and Diamonds compa-

ny as part of its initiatives for the LGBTQ community. Dutee

rued missing the World Relay Championships in Poland in May and two competitions in Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan this month due to travel restrictions on the Indians in view of the COVID-19 situation in the country.

"There have been a lot of changes in training competition schedule (due to pandemic). I am disappointed to have

missed the international events but we can't do anything.

"Our (4x100m) relay team could have already qualified for the Olympics had we taken part in the World Relays in Poland. All four of us can run below 11.60 and could have run below 43.05," said Dutee who is currently at the national camp at NIS Patiala.

Sixteen teams will compete in the women's 4x100m relay in the Olympics and the

country occupying the 16th spot in the Road to Tokyo has a timing of 43.05 seconds.

India is currently in 22nd spot with 43.81 achieved during the 2019 Asian Championships.

She said the next one month will be crucial for her in terms of training as she aims to improve her timing.

"Training-wise as well as diet, it is going on perfectly at the NIS. It is minimum six

hours training everyday, besides other workouts at the gym, swimming and lifting of weights. I train between 6 and 10am, rest in the afternoon and then training again from 6-8pm in the evening.

"I started speed training from February, running 60m, 80m and then 100m. Even a 100m run during training is repeated six times. My coach told me my stamina has improved, so I can improve my timing," said Dutee who won a silver each in the 100m and 200m events in the 2018 Asian Games. Asked about the controversy arising out of her relationship with a woman from her village in Odisha, she said, "Is it a crime to love another person? Some may love another person of opposite sex and some may love another person of same sex. Where is the problem?"

"I am being seen by some as somebody who creates controversy. But it is about one's choice. I love my partner who is a woman and she loves me also. I have not forced her. We want to settle down together in life.

Greenpeace apologizes, local police slam Euro 2020 protestor

MUNICH (AP): Greenpeace has apologized and Munich police are investigating after a protestor parachuted into the stadium and injured two people before Germany's game against France at the European Championship.

The protestor used a powered paraglider with a motor attached to his back but lost control and hit overhead camera wires attached to the stadium roof, careening over spectators' heads before he landed on the field ahead of Tuesday's game. Debris fell on the field and main grandstand, narrowly missing France coach Didier Deschamps.

Greenpeace spokesperson Benjamin Stephan apologized for the botched protest and the injuries caused.

"That was never our intention," Stephan said. "The paraglider was to fly over the stadium and drop a latex ball with a message of protest onto the field."

Munich police said Wednesday they were investigating various potential violations of the criminal code and



aviation act. "The pilot injured two men during the landing approach. The injured were given medical care by the emergency services and taken to hospitals for further care," Munich police said in a statement.

The police said none of the injuries were serious and the pilot himself — a 38-year-old man with an address in the southwestern state of Baden Württemberg — was unharmed.

"There is no understanding whatsoever for such irresponsible actions in which a considerable risk to human life is accepted," the po-

lice said. The protestor's parachute had the slogan "KICK OUT OIL!" and "Greenpeace" written on it.

The parachutist managed to land on the field and Germany players Antonio Rüdiger and Robin Gosens were the first to approach him. He was then led away by security stewards.

"Technical difficulties meant the pilot was forced to land in the stadium," Stephan said. "We deeply regret that this put people in danger and apparently injured two persons."

UEFA called the action "reckless and dan-

gerous" and said "law authorities will take the necessary action."

The German soccer federation also condemned the action.

"It could probably have turned out much worse," Germany team spokesman Jens Grittner said.

UEFA and one of its top-tier tournament sponsors, Russian state energy firm Gazprom, have previously been targeted by Greenpeace protests.

In 2013, a Champions League game in Basel was disrupted when Greenpeace activists abseiled from the roof of

the stadium to unfurl a banner protesting Russian oil and Gazprom, which sponsored the visiting team, German club Schalke.

Greenpeace later donated money to a charity supported by Basel, which was fined by UEFA for the security lapse.

UEFA defended its environmental credentials in a statement on Tuesday after the incident.

"UEFA and its partners are fully committed to a sustainable Euro 2020 tournament," UEFA said, "and many initiatives have been implemented to offset carbon emissions."

England Women opt to bat in one-off Test, Shafali debuts for India

BRISTOL, JUN 16 (PTI): England Women won the toss and opted to bat against India in the one-off Test here on Wednesday.

Rising star Shafali Verma will make her India debut, the same for Sophia Dunkley in the England team.

The Test is India's first in nearly seven years.

The Teams:
England: Heather

Knight (c), Lauren Winfield Hill, Tammy Beaumont, Natalie Sciver, Amy Ellen Jones (wk), Sophia Dunkley, Georgia Elwiss, Katherine Brunt, Anya Shrubsole, Sophie Ecclestone, Kate Cross.

India: Mithali Raj (c), Smriti Mandhana, Shafali Verma, Punam Raut, Harmanpreet Kaur, Deepti Sharma, Sneha Rana, Tanaya Bhatia (wk), Jhulan Goswami, Pooja Vastrakar, Shikha Pandey.

I prepare for match by watching videos of opposition batsmen: Rashid Khan

KARACHI, JUN 16 (PTI): Star Afghanistan spinner Rashid Khan has revealed the secret to his success, saying he watches videos of the opposition batsmen to outfox them in the game.

"I take time out to watch videos of all the batsmen I will be bowling to in a match to find out their weaknesses and use that during the match, Rashid said on Cricket Pakistan YouTube channel.

The wily leg-spinner, who is in high demand in T20 leagues around the world, plays for Sunrisers Hyderabad in the Indian Premier League and has been signed up by Lahore Qalandars for the remaining matches of the ongoing Pakistan Super League.

In the matches he has appeared in for Lahore, he has already left a big impact in two of them with ball and bat taking five for 20 in one match.

"I will try to bowl at a good line and length, keep things simple and enjoy the match, said Rashid.

He also talked about how he dealt with bowling to top batsmen especially Virat Kohli, Babar Azam and Kane Williamson.

"Babar is a world-class player but I always assess my strengths first

and bowl accordingly and that is why I make it a point to videos of batsmen, he added.

In my opinion it's quite difficult (to say who the best is) but no doubt, Virat Kohli, Kane Williamson and Babar Azam are world-class players. These are the kind of players who know their limits and shots.

"They have a process to start and finish their innings, which is something I really like about them, the Afghanistan player said.

He avoided making any comparisons between the IPL and PSL pointing out that while he had been playing in the IPL for long, he had only started playing in the PSL.

"I have only played three of four matches (in PSL) as compared to IPL where I have been playing for five years. I will be in a better position to say something when I play more matches of the PSL at different grounds and in the presence of a crowd."

The experienced spinner said he was looking forward to playing a proper bilateral series against Pakistan later this year in the UAE.

"I'm looking forward to that series and hopefully we will see some good cricket, he added.

Murray in tears after beating Paire 6-3, 6-2 at Queen's Club

LONDON, JUN 16 (AP): Former world No. 1 Andy Murray defeated Benoit Paire 6-3, 6-2 at The Queen's Club grass-court tournament, dispatching the Frenchman in 65 minutes for his first match victory in more than a year.

It was Murray's first grass-court match in three years and he felt right at home, converting all three break points and never facing one himself.

Murray hadn't played on grass since Eastbourne in 2018. His last match was a March loss to No. 8 Andrey Rublev of Russia and his last match win came in the first round of the 2020 U.S. Open, where he came back from two sets down to narrowly defeat Yoshihito Nishioka of Japan.

After beating Paire, the of-

ten-injured Murray, who has undergone two hip surgeries, had to pause to gain his composure before speaking.

I love playing tennis, he said, shaking his head as the crowd stood and cheered. Sorry. Obviously, competing is why you put in all the hard work. The last few years I have not got to do that as much as I would have liked. Great that I'm out here and able to compete again.

Murray was sidelined for much of the past two seasons and had not played on the ATP Tour since Rotterdam 14 weeks ago. He had won both of his previous meetings with Paire, including at Wimbledon in 2017.

The popular 34-year-old British star has won this tournament a record five times (2009,

2011, 2013, 2015 and 2016). His victory coupled with ones by Daniel Evans, wild-card entry Jack Draper and Cameron Norrie marks the first time that four British singles players have won a match at Queen's since 2005, the year Murray made his debut. Tim Henman, Jamie Delgado and Greg Rusedski also won that year.

In other matches Tuesday, top-seeded Matteo Berrettini held off fellow Italian Stefano Travaglia 7-6 (5), 7-6 (4) in the Queen's Club debut for both players; second-seeded Denis Shapovalov of Canada eked out a 7-6 (6), 7-6 (6) win over qualifier Aleksandar Vukic of Australia; British No. 1 Daniel Evans topped Australian Alexei Popyrin 6-4, 6-4; Alex de Min-

aur of Australia came back to defeat Laslo Djere of Serbia 3-6, 6-3, 6-4; Alexander Bublik of Kazakhstan rallied past Jeremy Chardy of France 6-4, 3-6, 6-3; American Frances Tiafoe defeated Aljaz Bedene of Slovenia 4-6, 6-3, 6-4; Marin Cilic of Croatia held off Austrian qualifier Sebastian Ofner 6-2, 6-7 (5), 7-6 (4); and Fabio Fognini of Italy defeated Yen-Hsun Lu of Taiwan 6-4, 7-6 (3).

Murray, a two-time champion at Wimbledon, which starts in two weeks, will face Berrettini on Wednesday.

Am I playing tomorrow?" Murray deadpanned.

I was hoping for a day off. It will be a great test for me. I'll need to play one more level up from today if I want to do well.

China says nuclear fuel rods damaged, no radiation leak

BEIJING (AP): A Chinese nuclear power plant near Hong Kong had five broken fuel rods in a reactor but no radioactivity leaked, the government said Wednesday in its first confirmation of the incident that prompted concern over the facility's safety.

Radiation rose inside the No. 1 reactor of the Taishan Nuclear Power Plant in Guangdong province but was contained by barriers that functioned as planned, the Ministry of Ecology and Environment said on its social media account.

The Hong Kong government said it was watching the plant and asking officials in Guangdong for details after its French co-owner on Monday reported increased "noble gases" in the reactor. Experts said that suggested fuel rods broke and leaked radioactive gas produced during nuclear fission.

Noble gases such as xenon and krypton are byproducts of fission along with particles of cesium, strontium and other radioactive elements.

"There is no problem



of radioactive leakage to the environment," the ministry statement said. It said radiation in the reactor coolant increased but was within the "allowable range."

The protective envelope on about five of the reactor's 60,000 fuel rods is damaged, the ministry said. It said such damage was inevitable due to manufacturing and other problems and was well below the level the facility was designed to cope with.

The ministry said reg-

ulators would oversee measures to control radiation levels within the reactor but gave no details.

The Taishan plant, which began commercial operation in December 2018, is owned by China Guangdong Nuclear Power Group and Electricite de France. A second reactor began operating in September 2019.

They are the first of a new type called European Pressurized Reactors designed by Framatome, of which Electricite de France is the majority

owner. Two more are being built in Finland and France. The ministry denied a report by CNN that regulators increased the level of radiation allowed outside the power plant to avoid shutting it down. The ministry said regulators reviewed a report about higher radiation levels in the reactor.

China is one of the biggest users of nuclear power and is building more reactors at a time when few other governments plan new facilities because the cost of solar,

wind and other alternatives is plunging.

Chinese leaders see nuclear power as a way to reduce air pollution and demand for imports of oil and gas, which they deem a security risk.

China has 50 operable reactors and is building 18 more, according to the World Nuclear Association, an industry group. China has constructed reactors based on French, U.S., Russian and Canadian technology. State-owned companies also have developed their own reactor, the Hualong One, and are marketing it abroad.

Hong Kong gets as much as one-third of its power from the Daya Bay nuclear power plant east of the territory in Guangdong. Plans call for Hong Kong to use more mainland nuclear power to allow the closure of coal-fired power plants.

Previously, the Taishan facility leaked a "small amount" of radioactive gas on April 9, the National Nuclear Safety Administration said on its website. It said the event was "Level 0," or "without safety significance."

Iran field narrows as candidates quit on campaign's last day



TEHRAN, IRAN (AP): Iran's presidential contest headed toward a showdown between the country's hard-line judiciary chief and moderate former Central Bank chief on Wednesday, as two candidates dropped out on the last day of campaigning to clear a path for the challengers.

Mohsen Mehralizadeh, the only reformist candidate in the vote, as well as hard-line contender Alireza Zakani withdrew from the race, state media reported, leaving just five candidates in the field. Such dropouts are common in Iranian presidential elections in order to boost the chances of similar candidates.

The departure of 64-year-old Mehralizadeh, who served as governor in two Iranian provinces, aims to boost the chances of top banker Abdolnasser Hemmati, who has been running as a moderate and as a stand-in for President Hassan Rouhani, who is term limited from running again.

Polling and analysts indicate Hemmati lags behind hard-line judiciary chief Ebrahim Raisi, the presumed front-runner long cultivated by Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei.

Zakani, a 55-year-old hard-line lawmaker twice rejected from running for president, also ended his campaign, throwing his support behind Raisi.

"I consider him (Raisi) to be the most qualified," Zakani was quoted as saying by state TV. Other candidates were expected to follow suit later Wednesday. Over 200 lawmakers in parliament, which is dominated by hard-liners, released a statement urging the rest of the conservative candidates to withdraw and back Raisi's presidential bid.

Mehralizadeh, the pro-reform candidate, had previously served as vice president in charge of physical education under reformist President Mohammad Khatami and as a deputy in the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, which runs the country's civilian nuclear program. He came in last place in Iran's 2005 election, but found himself barred from running in 2015.

Zakani, a hard-liner, heads the parliament's research center. As a lawmaker he became known for his outspoken opposition to Tehran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers. Starting in the late 1990s, he served as head of students' Basij organization, affiliated with the powerful Revolutionary Guard.

As the field narrowed Wednesday and Hemmati sought to consolidate the pro-reform vote, he announced he would select current Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif to join his administration as either vice president or foreign minister, embracing the top diplomat who was an architect of Tehran's now-tattered nuclear deal.

"The economic development of Iran is not possible without strong diplomatic engagement abroad," Hemmati wrote on Twitter to explain his choice of Zarif. "My administration is after the removal of sanctions and use of foreign policy to achieve political development"

Zarif, among the best-known political figures in the Rouhani administration, has come under fire from the political establishment in recent weeks after the leak of a contentious audiotape in which he offered a blunt appraisal of power struggles in the Islamic Republic.

There was no immediate word from Zarif on Hemmati's announcement, but the minister has previously indicated a willingness to join the incoming administration.

Within Iran, candidates exist on a political spectrum that broadly includes hard-liners who want to expand Iran's nuclear program and confront the world, moderates who hold onto the status quo and reformists who want to change the theocracy from within.

N Korea's Kim looks much thinner, causing health speculation

SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA (AP): The health of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has long been a source of morbid fascination in rival South Korea, which sits in the shadow of Kim's 1.2-million-strong army and his growing arsenal of nuclear-armed missiles.

Has he gained even more weight? Is he struggling for breath after relatively short walks? What about that cane? Why did he miss that important state anniversary?

Now, the 37-year-old faces fresh speculation in the South about his health again. But this time, it's because he's noticeably slimmer.

Kim's health matters in Seoul, Washington, Tokyo and other world capitals because he hasn't publicly anointed a successor who would control an advancing nuclear program targeting the United States and its allies — if he is incapacitated. North Korea, never open about the internal workings of its leadership, has over the last year shut itself up even tighter to protect against the coronavirus pandemic.

In recent state media images, including those published on Wednesday, Kim appeared to have lost a large amount of weight. The strap on his fancy watch is tighter, and his face thinner. Some observers say Kim — who is about 170 centimeters (5 feet, 8 inches) tall and has previously weighed 140 kilograms (308 pounds) — may have lost about 10-20 kilograms (22-44 pounds).

Kim's apparent weight loss is more likely an attempt to improve his health, rather than a sign of illness, according

to Hong Min, a senior analyst at Seoul's Korea Institute for National Unification.

"If he was experiencing health problems, he wouldn't have come out in public to convene the plenary meeting of the Workers' Party's Central Committee," a major political conference this week that is expected to last two to three days, Hong said.

Kim, known for heavy drinking and smoking, comes from a family with a history of heart problems. His father and grandfather, who ruled North Korea before him, both died of heart issues. Experts have said his weight could increase the possibility of cardiovascular diseases.

South Korea's Unification Ministry said it has no information to share about Kim's health. His slimmer look has been the focus of keen interest in South Korea, with media outlets publishing photos of his previous and current appearances.

Seo Yu-Seok at the Seoul-based Institute of North Korean Studies said the North's recent creation of a first secretary of the ruling Workers' Party, the country's No. 2 job, might have been related to Kim's possible health issues. He said Kim may have allowed the post's establishment at the urging of top officials but still hasn't named anyone to the job because it could loosen his grip on power.

"If Kim faces a real health problem and is in a condition in which he can't express his opinions, though he isn't dead, who will make a decision to name the first secretary?" Seo said.

Spain hopes to jumpstart electric car industry with EU funds

BARCELONA, SPAIN (AP): Daniel Sánchez is one of the luckier electric car owners in Spain. With a free recharging station less than a kilometer from his home just north of Barcelona, he can keep his Tesla ready to roll.

"I cannot imagine stopping at a gas station ever again," the 41-year-old transport company owner said. "We feel like those people who got off a horse-drawn carriage and climbed into a car. There is no going back."

Other Spaniards are considerably less enthusiastic. The dearth of places to plug in, compared to western and northern Europe, and the price of electric cars have left Spain lagging as the continent races to get greener.

Now the government wants to usher the entire country into this new paradigm. The ruling left-wing coalition plans to use a chunk of the 140 billion euros (\$166 billion) Spain is set to receive from the European Union's pandemic recovery plan to kickstart its electric car industry.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen is set to visit Madrid on Wednesday while Spain awaits the approval of its plan by Brussels. She will meet with Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez, who has compared the EU Next Generation funds to a "new Marshall Plan."

Spain's Secretary of State for Industry Raúl Blanco told The Associated Press that the government is aiming at spending around 5 billion euros (\$6 billion) over the next three years on its electric vehicle initiative.

Spain produced 2.2 million cars and trucks in 2020, second only to Germany in Europe. But only 140,000 of these were electric or hybrids, according to ANFAC, the Spanish Association of Automobile and Truck Manufacturers.

"What we are doing is accelerating a change that is already taking place," Blanco said. "This is a unique opportunity. The automakers are on board, and there are resources to carry out the investments."

A leader in highspeed electric trains, Spain wants to put 250,000 more electric vehicles on its roads within two years, adding to the current 96,000.

The push for electric cars should reduce CO2 emissions by 450,000 tons, according to government projections as Spain aims to completely convert to renewable energy by 2050, in line with EU targets.

"Spain can carry out these industrial activities with green energy," Blanco said. "Compared to other countries of

central and eastern Europe that still rely on fossil fuels, or other countries which use nuclear, Spain can rely on renewable energies since it has wind and solar." The environmental group Greenpeace supported the push for electric vehicles but argued that the EU funds should not be used to keep clogging cities with cars.

"It is vital that the aid is prioritized to help rural populations that have poorer access to other modes of alternative transport," the group said.

Spain is counting on its robust car industry, and the deposits of lithium — key to battery production for electric vehicles — that it shares with Portugal. The goal is to establish a supply chain by encouraging private investment to build a battery factory, along with assembly plants and software design, all with the goal of driving more climate-friendly cars off production lines.

The plan's success, however, faces hurdles. Spain has fewer than 2 public plug-in points per 100,000 square kilometers, compared to over 10 in Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands, according to a 2020 report by the European Court of Auditors.

"It is a snake that bites its own tail," said Salvador Ejarque, president of Spain's Association of Electric Car Users, or AUGE. "People don't buy cars because they can't charge them, and those who can invest don't do it quickly enough because the bureaucracy is complex and slow going."

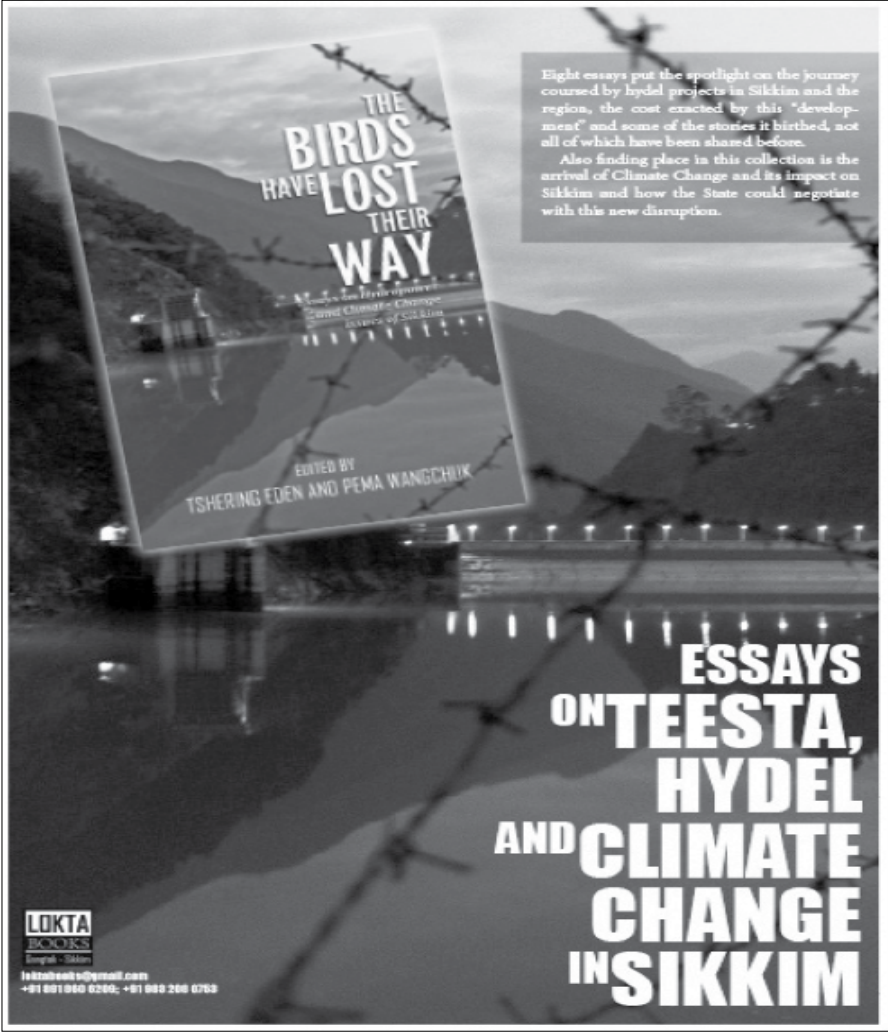
The government wants to boost the total number of recharging points nationwide from 11,500 to 100,000 in three years.

ANFAC, the carmakers' group, said more may be needed.

"We must overcome the 'autonomy anxiety' of drivers by assuring them that charging their car is as easy as filling up with gas," spokesman José López-Tafall told the AP. "It is necessary to set up a calendar with set goals to reach 340,000 charging points by 2030."

Price, too, matters. The average annual income in Spain is 15,000 euros (\$18,100) below the EU mean. Luxury cars are a rare sight in Spanish cities, where economy models and motorbikes reign. So while electric vehicles can lure more affluent Europeans, they give many Spaniards sticker shock.

To overcome this, the government has already dedicated 400 million euros (\$484 million) for rebates of up to 7,000 euros (\$8,400) on purchases of electric and hybrid vehicles.



Veteran actor Chandrashekhar, known for 'Ramayan', dies at 98

MUMBAI, JUN 16 (PTI): Veteran actor Chandrashekhar, best known for featuring in films like "Cha Cha Cha", and "Surang", and playing the role of Arya Sumant on the popular TV serial "Ramayan", passed away on Wednesday due to age related ailments. He was 98.

Chandrashekhar breathed his last around 7 am at his residence here, his son and producer Ashok Shekhar told PTI.

"He passed away in his sleep in the presence of family... the way he wanted. He had no health issues, it was just his age. He lived a good life," Shekhar said.

The veteran actor's last rites will be held at Juhu's Pawan Hans crematorium in the evening, he added.

Born in Hyderabad, Chandrashekhar started out as a junior artiste in the film industry in the early 1950s, before bagging his first film in the leading role with V Shantaram's "Surang" in 1954.

He went on to star in movies including "Kavi", "Mastana", "Basant Bahaar", "Kaali Topi Laal Rumaal", and "Barsaat Ki Raat".

In 1964, he made his production and directorial debut with "Cha Cha Cha", featuring veteran actor Helen in her first leading role.

Chandrashekhar, who appeared in more than 250 movies throughout his career till the early 1990s, also briefly assisted writer-filmmaker Gulzar be-



In 1987, Chandrashekhar starred as Arya Sumant, King Dasharatha's prime minister on the DD mythological show "Ramayan", directed by Rammanand Sagar.

tween 1972-1976 on his directorials like "Parichay", "Koshish", "Achanak", "Aandhi", "Khushboo" and "Mausam".

The veteran actor is survived by three children.

Dane DeHaan joins cast of 'The Staircase' series

LOS ANGELES, JUN 16 (PTI): Actor Dane DeHaan, who currently stars in the Apple TV Plus limited series "Lisey's Story" is the latest addition to the cast of the true crime drama "The Staircase".

The upcoming HBO Max limited series revolves around crime novelist Michael Peterson (Colin Firth), his sprawling North Carolina family and the suspicious death of his wife, Kathleen (Toni Collette).

According to Deadline, DeHaan will play Clayton Peterson, Michael Peterson's son. The eight-part drama comes from "Christine" director Antonio Campos and Maggie Cohn, known for her work on "American Crime Story".

"The Staircase" also stars Juliette Binoche, Rosemarie DeWitt, Parker Posey, Sophie Turner, and Odessa Young.

Showrunners Campos and Cohn also serve as writers and executive producers on the series, which is a co-production between HBO Max and Annapurna TV.

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Jennifer Lopez to star Netflix sci-fi thriller 'Atlas'

LOS ANGELES, JUN 16 (PTI): Actor-pop star Jennifer Lopez will headline Netflix's "Atlas", a sci-fi thriller, which will be directed by Brad Peyton of "Rampage" fame.

Lopez, who recently signed a first-look deal with the streamer, will also produce the project, sources told Deadline.

The film follows Atlas, a woman fighting for humanity in a future where an artificial intelligence (AI) soldier has determined the only way to end war is to end humanity. To outthink this rogue AI, Atlas must work with the one thing she fears most -- another AI.

Aron Eli Coleite is writing the most recent draft of the script based off the original script by Leo Sardarian.

Joby Harold and Tory Tunnell will produce for Safehouse Pictures along with Peyton and Jeff Fierston for ASAP Entertainment as well as Elaine Goldsmith-Thomas and Benny Medina joining Lopez to produce through Nuyorican Productions.

Courtney Baxter will serve as an executive producer with Matt Schwartz co-producing the film.

Previously announced projects under the agreement include "The Mother", directed by Niki Carpo, and "The Cipher", based on the novel by Isabella Maldonado.

Lopez will next be seen in the Universal romantic comedy "Marry Me" and the Lionsgate action comedy "Shotgun Wedding".

Neal McDonough joins 'American Horror Story' season 10

LOS ANGELES, JUN 16 (PTI): "Yellowstone" star is set to join the cast of the tenth season of the acclaimed anthology series "American Horror Story" (AHS).

Sources told Deadline, the actor will play the series regular role of Dwight "Ike" Eisenhower in "American Horror Story: Double Feature".

The name of McDonough's character is same as the 34th U S President, but he is not playing the the late leader. "Double Feature" also stars series regulars Evan Peters, Sarah Paulson, Kathy Bates, Leslie Grossman, Billie Lourd, Adina Porter, Lily Rabe, Angelica Ross, and Finn Wittrock as well as Macaulay Culkin, Frances Conroy, Leslie Grossman, and Billie Lourd.

It will consist of two stories: one by the sea, one by the sand.

In March, Murphy announced "Double Feature" as the title of the upcoming season

of the long-running and popular FX anthology series. Filming on the show was originally scheduled to start in early 2020 but was delayed due to the COVID-19 production shut-



down.

Season 10 premieres August 25 and will be available to stream the next day on FX on Hulu. Disney-owned FX has renewed "AHS" for through season 13.

McDonough recently wrapped filming "Boon", in which he stars as well as executive produces.



MODEL BEHAVIOR! Model Delilah Hamlin rocked a white bikini in Mexico.

Disney Plus greenlights 'Beauty and the Beast' prequel series



LOS ANGELES, JUN 16 (PTI): Streamer Disney Plus has officially ordered a prequel musical series to 2017 hit movie "Beauty and the Beast". The show, which comes from Disney Branded Television and ABC Signature, will focus on the characters of Luke Evans and Josh Gad, the streamer said in a statement.

Evans and Gad will reprise their roles of Gaston and LeFou (Louie), respectively in the eight-episode series, tentatively titled "Beauty and the Beast".

Joining the show's cast is "The Tender Bar" actor Briana Middleton, who will play the role of Tilly, Louie's stepsister.

Set in the iconic kingdom of "Beauty and the Beast" years before the Beast and Belle's epic romance, the story will follow Gaston and

LeFou as they set off with LeFou's step-sister, Tilly, after a surprising revelation from her past comes to light, sending the unlikely trio off on an unexpected journey filled with romance, comedy, and adventure.

While the mysteries of the past are uncovered and the dangers of the present grow, old friends and new enemies reveal that this familiar kingdom harbours many secrets, the official plotline read. Tony Award-nominated director Liesl Tommy will direct the first episode.

The project will feature an original soundtrack from the Award-winning composer Alan Menken, who scored both the 1991 and 2017 "Beauty and the Beast" movies.

Tommy and Menken are also executive producing, with Evans producing.

Aries:
When you look at this situation from a place of judgement, you'll find that there are innumerable problems at hand. When you change your gaze, however, and bring love and light into the equation, you'll be able to move into a space of compassion. Allow yourself to be benevolent, Aries. You are more gracious than you give yourself credit for being. Besides, nothing good can come from holding onto grudges.
Tip: Tap into the power of compassion.

Taurus:
Perfection is overrated. Allow yourself to be raw and vulnerable. As you do, celebrate your flawsomeness. Remember, you have nothing to prove to anybody else. If and when you find yourself worrying about the things you haven't figured out yet, reflect upon where you were a few years ago. The cliché of being a masterpiece and a work-in-progress at the same time holds true for you today.
Tip: It's time to celebrate your flawsomeness.

Gemini:
Isn't it ironic how we are the most calm and composed version of ourselves in front of strangers, while losing our cool in the company of those we love? The eclipse may have passed us by, Gemini, but we're still under its spell. Word for the wise: tread cautiously and be-

come mindful of what your shadows are bringing your attention towards.

Tip: It's time to watch your shadows closely.

Cancer:

Is it love or are you just craving carbs? Something to think about when you find yourself lusting after that emotionally unavailable someone. What the cards want you to remember: the reason why things didn't work out. Yes, this means focusing on the not-so-good memories and letting the so-called pleasant ones fade away into oblivion.

Tip: There is a reason why things didn't work in the first place.

Leo:

Withdrawing into your burrow isn't always easy for a fire sign like yourself. But, you're heavily meditated and thriving in your own company. This is what having your third eye lit looks and feels like, Leo! On your cards today: looking at the stars and exploring the mysteries of what lies beyond. If there is a teacher, guru or practitioner you connect with deeply, now is the time to imbibe their teachings in a way that feels authentic to you.

Tip: You're in the mood to uncover the secrets of the Universe.

Virgo:

Socialising is for rookies. You'd much rather stay indoors, fuss over your favourite crystals, pull oracle cards, call upon your spirit guides, watch the stars, and indulge in elaborate rituals. As such, this is a time of developing your spiritual gifts—of remembering who you are and why you came here in the first place. Looking beyond the illusion of separation will lead to major awakening in the days to come.

Tip: This is a time of developing your spiritual gifts and remembering who you are.

Libra:

Libra, you exist somewhere in between dream and reality, and what a beautiful place that is! The cards are urging you to slow down and be present to this moment. To be present to the inspiration that is coming through from the unseen realms. Here are a few ways to harness that energy: 1. Try your hand at water colours. 2. Record your own podcast. 3. Experiment with ancestral recipes by giving them a modern update. 4. Consider making your own lotions and potions. 5. Read up about astrology and turn to the stars for guidance.

Tip: Be present to the inspiration that's coming through from the unseen realms.

Scorpio:

Sometimes, you have to *allow* things to happen

to you. At other times, you have to play a more proactive role. The latter is required of you, Scorpio. So, tap into that inner go-getter. Make that call. Accept the application. Sign the document. Make big things happen. What you're being offered is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and your life will never look the same.

Tip: Sometimes, all it takes is one phone call to change the course of your life.

Sagittarius:

Coming up: a cup of truth tea, brewed just for you, Sagittarius. You'll always be 'too loud', 'too bossy', 'too ambitious', 'too dominating', 'too alpha' or 'too career-oriented' for some people, and they're certainly not your people. Remember, your job is simply to be yourself. If somebody is feeling threatened by your presence, there's a 100 per cent chance they haven't dealt with their own insecurities to begin with.

Tip: Don't dim to fit in.

Capricorn:

You are not just what you eat, but also what you read, watch and listen to. So, consume mindfully. As you do, eliminate anything that could possibly have an adverse effect on your mind and body. As such, the cards are also bringing your attention to

toxic relationships (and not just the romantic kind). Sometimes, it's better to love somebody from a distance than to invite them into your sacred space.

Tip: It's time to eliminate all that is toxic from your life.

Aquarius:

They like tea, and you like coffee. While they're the practical one, you're known to be all kinds of crazy. But the one thing that does tie the both of you together is the spirit of adventure and insatiable lust for life. Yes, they're the one, Aquarius, and you have known it for a while. PS: Water bearers in lurve could be thinking about adopting a furry friend together.

Tip: Let's raise a toast to the spirit of adventure that brought the two of you together.

Pisces:

They're saying and doing all the right things (for a change!), but there's something that seems out of place here. The cards are reminding you that things are not as they seem. Recognise the situation for what it is before you make any big decision. Remember, it's better to be by yourself than to settle for somebody whose love for you can best be described as 'conditional'.

Tip: Trust what your intuition is telling you.