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SummitTIMES

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COVID death toll reaches 51

After 28 days, Rhea Chakraborty steps out of jail

MUMBAI, OCT 7 (PTI): The Bombay High Court on Wednesday granted bail to actor Rhea Chakraborty in a drugs case related to her boyfriend Sushant Singh Rajput's death.

The court rejected the argument that celebrities deserve specially harsh treatment in such cases so as to 'send out a message'.

After spending 28 days in jail, Rhea stepped out of the Byculia women's prison here around 5.30 pm amid a scrum of mediapersons.

While granting her bail on a personal bond of Rs one lakh, the court asked the actor to appear before the Mumbai police for 10 days and before the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB, which had arrested her) once a month for the next six months.

Justice Sarang Kotwal of the HC also granted bail to Rajput's domestic aides Dipesh Sawant and Samuel Miranda, but rejected the bail plea of Rhea's brother Showik Chakraborty.

The court also rejected the bail plea of alleged drug peddler Abdel Basit Parihar.

The HC observed in its order that Rhea did not have any criminal antecedents, and it was unlikely that she would tamper with evidence or affect the probe while out on bail.

Rhea, however, can't leave Mumbai without the NCB's permission and for traveling outside the country, she will need permission from the special NDPS court here, the HC said.

The NCB has charged Rhea under the stringent Section 27-A of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act that pertains to "financing and harbouring illegal drug trafficking". It entails imprisonment up to 10 years in prison and a bar on the grant of bail.

The HC said simply paying for a particular drug transaction does not qualify as financing drug traffic.

"The allegations against the applicant of spending money in procuring drugs for Sushant Singh Rajput will not, therefore, mean that she had financed illicit traffic," the court said.

It also noted that harbouring an offender as described under the Act would mean providing money for that person's drug consumption while also giving him shelter and food.

Rajput, for whom Rhea allegedly procured drugs, had no apprehension of arrest and therefore, the charge of harbouring too could not be applied, it said.

The court also dismissed the argument that Rhea's bail be rejected to 'send out a strong message' to society.

"The learned ASG (additional solicitor general) had argued that celebrities and role models should be treated harshly so that it sets an example for the young generation...

I do not agree," Justice Kotwal said.

"Everybody is equal before law. No celebrity or role model enjoys any special privilege before the court of law.

Similarly, such person also does not incur any special liability when he faces law in the courts," he said. The HC, however, rejected the bail plea of Rhea's brother Showik.

"The applicant (Showik) was facilitating procurement of drugs from one party for supplying them to Sushant Singh Rajput. He was clearly involved in illicit trafficking or illegal trade of drugs," the court said.

"The applicant appears to be an important link in the chain of drug dealers. He was in touch with different dealers.

He had monetary transactions with the," the court said.

Justice Kotwal also held that a detailed interpretation of the NDPS Act and previous judgments of the Supreme Court showed that all offences under the Act were non-bailable. Also, section 27-A can be invoked even if quantity of the drug is not "commercial", the judge said.

However, in Rhea's case, since there was no financing or harbouring (of drugs or its consumers), Section 27-A could not be applied, the HC said.

Granting bail to Miranda and Dipesh Sawant, the court said they had simply procured or collected drugs on directions of Rajput or Rhea.

Rhea's lawyer Satish Maneshinde said that "truth and justice have prevailed". "The hounding and witch-hunt by three central agencies--the CBI, ED and NCB --of Rhea should come to an end. We remain committed to truth," he said.

Rajput, 34, was found hanging at his apartment in suburban Bandra on June 14. After a case of alleged abetment of suicide was registered against Rhea by Rajput's parents, a parallel probe into alleged drug procurement by her also began on the basis of her WhatsApp chats.

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 07 OCT:

The COVID-19 related death toll has crossed the 50-mark in the State and stands at 51 with two deaths reported in Sikkim on Wednesday. A 32-year-old female from Lower Rongong in North Sikkim and a 34-year-old ITBP personnel posted in North Sikkim lost their lives today.

In the daily health bulletin on Wednesday, Health Department State IEC Officer, Sonam G Bhutia mentioned that a 32-year-old female from Lower Rongong in North Sikkim, who had tested positive in RT-PCR on 03 October and was admitted in the COVID ICU of STNM hospital, passed away at around 2 PM this afternoon.

He informed that the patient was undergoing treatment in a nursing home at Siliguri and was also on ventilator. The family had brought her back to Sikkim and she was found positive for COVID-19 in RT-PCR test-



ing. He added that she had comorbid conditions of sepsis, pneumonia with respiratory distress and TB meningitis.

Likewise, Mr Bhutia informed that a 34-year-old ITBP personnel from Maharashtra who was posted in North Sikkim was brought to STNM hospital this morning and was admitted in the

ICU facility but he passed away at around 3:45 PM this afternoon. He mentioned that the patient had COVID induced pneumonia and respiratory distress.

In the meantime, 18 fresh cases of novel coronavirus have been reported in the State in the last 24 hours taking the total number of con-

firmed cases of COVID-19 reported so far to 3234 in Sikkim.

The figure of discharged patients of COVID-19 in the State has improved to 2534 with the discharge of 14 more patients from isolation facilities. At present, there are 570 active cases of novel coronavirus in the State, in which eight

are currently admitted in the ICU facility of STNM hospital.

All 18 new cases of novel coronavirus in the State were found in rapid antigen testing of 48 samples on Tuesday. There was no RT-PCR testing on Tuesday as VRD Lab has been contained, while all eight samples tested by TrueNat reported nega-

tive for COVID-19.

Out of 18 new cases, 17 have been reported in East District and 01 in South District.

While giving details of new cases, Mr Bhutia mentioned that one person from Boomtar Namchi in South District tested positive for COVID-19. He informed that two staff of Singtam District Hospital were also found COVID-19 positive.

He added that samples of a person from above Tamang Gumpa in Development Area, one from near Enchey Monastery in Chandmari, one from opposite SBC on Tadong School road, two from near Puspha Garage in Development Area, two from Daragaon, one from Deorali, one from DPH Area, one from Joredhara and two from Ranipool were also found COVID-19 positive.

Mr Bhutia informed that one person from Rhenock and one from Chujachen also tested positive for COVID-19 in RAT.

COVID-19 cases in India climb to 67,57,131

NEW DELHI, OCT 7 (PTI) India's COVID-19 tally of cases climbed to 67.57 lakh with 72,049 new cases in a day, while 57,44,693 people have recuperated so far pushing the national recovery rate to 85.02 per cent on Wednesday, according to the Union Health Ministry data.

The total coronavirus cases mounted to 67,57,131, while the death toll climbed to 1,04,555 with the novel coronavirus virus claiming 986 lives in a span of 24 hours in the country, the data updated at 8 am showed.

The COVID-19 case fatality rate has further declined to 1.55 per cent.

There are 907883 active cases of coronavirus infection in the country which comprises 13.44 per cent of the total caseload, the data stated.

According to the ICMR, a cumulative total of 8,22,71,654 samples have been tested up to October 6 with 11,99,857 samples being tested on Tuesday.

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 it went past 50 lakh on September 15.

India's COVID-19 cases jumped from 10 lakh to 20 lakh

in 21 days. Then it took 16 more days to race past 30 lakh, 13 days more to cross the 40-lakh mark, 11 days to go past 50 lakh and 12 days to cross 60 lakh.

It took 110 days for the COVID-19 cases in the country to reach one lakh while it had taken 59 days more to go past the 10-lakh post.

Of the 986 fresh deaths, 370 are from Maharashtra, 91 from Karnataka, 71 from Tamil Nadu, 63 from West Bengal, 61 from Uttar Pradesh, 39 from Delhi, 38 from Punjab, 33 from Andhra Pradesh, 25 each from Madhya Pradesh and Kerala, 23 from Chhattisgarh and 18 each from Haryana and Assam.

Sixteen fatalities have been reported each from Odisha and Jammu and Kashmir, 15 from Rajasthan, 10 each from Jharkhand and Gujarat, eight each from Uttarakhand, Telangana and Goa, five from Himachal Pradesh, three each from Sikkim, Puducherry, Manipur and Chandigarh and one each from Meghalaya, Bihar and Arunachal Pradesh.

Of the total 1,04,555 deaths, Maharashtra has reported the maximum at 38,717 followed by 9,917 in Tamil Nadu, 9,461

in Karnataka, 6,153 in Uttar Pradesh, 6,052 in Andhra Pradesh, 5,581 in Delhi, 5,318 in West Bengal, 3,679 in Punjab and 3,519 in Gujarat.

So far, 2488 people have died of COVID-19 in Madhya Pradesh, 1,574 in Rajasthan, 1509 in Haryana, 1268 in Jammu and Kashmir, 1189 from Telangana, 1104 in Chhattisgarh, 940 in Odisha, 925 in Bihar, 884 in Kerala, 778 in Assam, 757 in Jharkhand, and 677 in Uttarakhand.

Puducherry has registered 546 fatalities, Goa 468, Tripura 301, Chandigarh 180, Himachal Pradesh 229, Andaman and Nicobar Islands 54, Manipur 78, Ladakh 61, Meghalaya 60, Arunachal Pradesh 20, Sikkim 49, Nagaland 17 and Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu two.

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

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

AAP demands removal of UP women's commission chief over her silence in Hathras case

NOIDA (UP), OCT 7 (PTI): Aam Aadmi Party workers in Gautam Buddh Nagar have questioned the silence of Uttar Pradesh Women's Commission chief Vimla Batham over the Hathras case and demanded her removal from the post.

Around 50 AAP workers, including district unit president Bhupen-

dra Jaduan, on Tuesday tried to gherao Batham's residence here over the issue but were stopped midway by police, party office-bearers said.

The AAP workers, who had started a march from the ISCKON temple in Sector 33 to her house nearby, submitted to police a memorandum addressed to UP Governor Anandiben Patel,

demanding Batham's removal in the wake of the death of a 19-year-old Dalit woman after an alleged gangrape and over crimes against women in the state.

Cases of rape with women and girls are emerging in the state every day. They are not safe in Uttar Pradesh. The state's women commission chief Vimla Batham

has not spoken a single word on these issues despite serious incidents in Hathras, Balrampur, Bulandshahr, etc, she has not gone to meet the victims' families also, stated the memorandum.

Looking at the inactivity of the women's commission chief, we demand her removal from the post, the memorandum stated.

Col. DN Bhutia appointed Director STNM Hospital

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 07 OCT:

Col. [Rtd] DN Bhutia, Secretary, Rajya Sainik Board, Gangtok has been given additional charge of Director, STNM Hospital, Sochakgang with immediate effect, as per an office order issued by the Department of Personnel today.

He will hold the charge of Director, STNM Hospital till completion

of his tenure as Secretary, Rajya Sainik Board, Gangtok. Col. Bhutia will look after the administrative and financial matters of STNM Hospital, and co-ordinate with Medical Superintendent, STNM Hospital who shall look after the management of Medical Operation.

Both of them will report to Principal Secretary/DG-cum-Secretary, Health Department.

Mainline taxi and bus fare revised, again

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 07 OCT:

The Transport Department has revised the fare for taxis and buses for the third time in the last week.

In an order issued today, the department has revised the fare for mainline taxis [J series] from double the existing rate to 1.8 times the existing rate.

The fare for Stage Carriage [buses] has also been changed from double to 1.8 the existing rate.

However, the fare for local taxis has not been changed and remains 1.3 times the existing rate. The fare for luxury vehicles [Z series] has also not been changed and remains 1.4 times the existing rate.

Services of temporary employees extended till 31 Dec

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 07 OCT:

In an office memorandum issued on Tuesday, the Department of Personnel has said that proposals submitted by Departments relating to extension of service of temporary employees are not in accordance with the guidelines and time frame circulated vide an office memorandum issued on 29 June 2020.

In view of the "hardships" this could cause to temporary employees, the government has extended services of temporary employees till 31 Dec 2020.

However, the memo also states that, "PAOs shall ensure that specific approval

of government for extension of service is obtained before releasing salaries/wages effective from 1st Jan 2021."

Meanwhile, in a circular issued on Tuesday, the DoP has also asked heads of departments to depute any officer or any other designated personnel to follow up the files regarding extension of temporary employees working under their respective departments. The circular also mentions that temporary employees visiting the Department of Personnel for their files regarding extension of temporary services is obstructing staff from performing their duties and leading to crowding in the DoP.

Mumbai adds record 2,848 new COVID-19

cases; 46 die

MUMBAI, OCT 7 (PTI): Mumbai on Wednesday reported the highest single-day spike of 2,848 new COVID-19 cases, taking the total count of infections to 2,19,938, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) said.

With 46 fatalities, the cumulative toll went up to 9,245, it said.

The previous record spike of 2,654 cases in Mumbai was reported on September 30.

The daily number of new cases in the last two days remained below 1,900, after reporting over 2,100 infections for five consecutive days earlier.

Notably, the BMC has also crossed the milestone of conducting 12 lakh tests on Wednesday.

Mumbai's case recovery rate is 83 per cent now, the BMC said, adding that the number of recoveries stood at 1,83,742 with 2,257 people being allowed to go home in the last 24 hours.

The city's average growth rate of cases is 1.04 per cent while the average doubling rate is 67 days. The number of active cases stands at 24,783, it said.

Meghalaya reports 128 new COVID-19 cases, tally 7,165

SHILLONG, OCT 7 (PTI): At least 128 people tested positive for COVID-19 in Meghalaya on Wednesday, pushing the tally to 7,165, a senior health department official said.

East Khasi Hills, of which state capital Shillong is a part, continues to be the worst-affected region with 72 new cases. The district has 1,693 active cases, and recorded 55 of the total 60 coronavirus fatalities in the northeastern state, Health Services director Aman War said.

Ri Bhoi accounted for 33 new cases, followed by West Garo Hills at 11. Four cases were registered in East Garo Hills, two each in West Jaintia Hills and East Jaintia Hills, and one in North Garo Hills.

Altogether 88 patients were found to have been cured of the viral infection on Wednesday, increasing the total number of recoveries to 4,694.

Meghalaya currently has 2,411 cases, War said.

As many as 1.64 lakh samples have been sent for testing so far, he added.

Now, a Jan Andolan for COVID-19 appropriate behaviour

NEW DELHI, 07 OCT [PIB]: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will launch a Campaign tomorrow on 08 October, 2020 by way of a Tweet on Jan Andolan for COVID-19 Appropriate Behaviour.

The campaign will be launched in view of the upcoming festivals and winter season as well as the opening up of the economy.

The campaign will be launched with the aim to encourage People's Participation (Jan Andolan). It endeavours

to be a Low Cost High Intensity Campaign with the Key Messages of 'Wear Mask, Follow Physical Distancing, Maintain Hand Hygiene'

A COVID-19 Pledge will be taken by all. A Concerted Action Plan will be implemented by Central Government Ministries/ Departments and State Governments/ Union Territories with the following highlights:

- Region-specific targeted communication in high case-load districts.
- Simple and easily un-

derstandable messages to reach every citizen

- Dissemination throughout the country using all media platforms
- Banners and Posters at public places; involving Frontline workers and Targeting Beneficiaries of Government Schemes
- Hoardings/ wall paintings/ electronic display boards in government premises
- Involvement of Local and National influenc-

ers to drive home the message

- Running mobile vans for regular awareness generation
- Audio messages; pamphlets/ brochures on awareness
- Seeking support of Local Cable Operators for running COVID messages
- Coordinated media campaign across platforms for effective outreach and impact.

SDF accuses SKM of breaking COVID protocol

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 07 OCT:

Sikkim Democratic Front has alleged that Sikkim Krantikari Morcha conducted a meeting without following social distancing protocol with hundreds of people on Tuesday at Gyalshing in West Sikkim.

The party further alleges that conducting such a meeting with huge crowd is playing with the health of the people of Sikkim when the novel coronavirus infection is

increasing in the State.

In a press release, SDF has strongly criticized and condemned such practice by SKM when 49 persons have already lost their lives to the infection. The release further alleges that such practice reveals weak leadership and indiscipline within the party and its government.

The release has also asked the ruling government to give details about the relief sent by the Centre for the people of Sikkim.

Webinar to discuss "Current Economic Issues in India"



CHENNAI, OCT 7 (PTI): Economic experts will participate in a webinar titled "Current Economic Issues in India," on October 8 and extensively talk on matters including changes in the country's tax norms, the Consulate General of Republic of Korea here said on Wednesday.

The webinar will be chaired by Consul General Young-seup Kwon and around 100 companies will participate in the webinar, an official release said.

"The Consulate General of Republic of Korea is delighted to make an announcement about the upcoming webinar on Current Economic Issues in India in collaboration with Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency

(KOTRA)" on October 8, it said.

"In the webinar, economic experts will present on the current and future economic trends in India and extensive range of topics including changes in Indian tax norms, custom clearance, duty policy and exchange rates after COVID19 pandemic and Tamil Nadu's latest incentive program," it said.

According to Deputy Consul General Hong Yup Lee, the webinar will be "timely and ideal," as many promising Korean investors are looking for possible location for their new factories which are expected to move from China and other countries for various reasons including geo-economic risks.

Union Cabinet approves MoU between ZSI & iBOL

New Delhi, Oct 7 (PTI): The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved a Memorandum of Understanding between India's Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) and Canada's not-for-profit organisation International Barcode of Life (iBOL).

The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi gave its nod to the MoU, which was signed in June, 2020 between ZSI, a subordinate organization under Ministry of Environment, and iBOL, a statement said.

ZSI and iBOL have come together to further efforts in DNA barcoding, a methodology for rapidly and accurately identifying species by sequenc-

ing a short segment of standardized gene regions and comparing individual sequences to a reference database, it said.

iBOL is a research alliance involving nations that have committed both human and financial resources to enable expansion of the global reference database, the development of informatics platforms, and/or the analytical protocols needed to use the reference library to inventory, assess, and describe biodiversity.

The MoU will enable ZSI to participate in global level programmes like Bioscan and Planetary Biodiversity Mission, it added.

Kyrgyzstan annuls parliamentary election results amid unrest

MOSCOW, OCT 7 (AP):

Officials in Kyrgyzstan on Tuesday nullified the results of a weekend parliamentary election after mass protests erupted in the capital of Bishkek and other cities, with opposition supporters seizing government buildings overnight and demanding a new vote.

Hundreds of people were injured, one fatally.

Members of several opposition parties announced plans to oust the president and form a new government in the Central Asian country.

The decision to cancel the results of Sunday's vote was made to prevent tension, Central Election Commission head Nurzhan Shaidabekova told the Interfax news agency.

Protests broke out in Bishkek and elsewhere after authorities announced early returns in favor of two parties, one of which is said be closely aligned with President Sooronbai Jeenbekov and another linked to a former top customs official, amid reports of vote-buying and other election fraud.

The country of 6.5 million, one of the poorest to emerge from the former Soviet Union, is strategically located on the border with China and once was home to a US air base that was used for refueling and logistics for the war in Afghanistan.

Kyrgyzstan also hosts a Russian air base and maintains close ties with Moscow. Supporters of a dozen opposition parties took to the streets Monday, demanding a new election.

Police dispersed crowds with water cannons, tear gas and flash grenades. About 590 people were injured and one person was killed, the Interfax news agency reported, citing Kyrgyzstan's Health Ministry.

The violent crackdown failed to halt the unrest, however, and protesters broke into the government complex that houses both parliament and the president's office.



A fire broke out in the parliament building but was quickly extinguished, and local media reported some offices were looted.

Other protesters went to Kyrgyzstan's State Committee of National Security, demanding to free former President Almazbek Atambayev, who was convicted on corruption charges earlier this year and sentenced to over 11 years in prison.

Security officers freed Atambayev after negotiations with the protesters. Members of several opposition parties announced plans to oust Jeenbekov and form a new government.

We intend to seek the dismissal of Sooronbai Jeenbekov from his post, Maksat Mamytkanov, a member of the Chon Kazat party, told Interfax, adding that opposition parties also insist on adopting a new constitution.

Zhanar Akayev of the Ata Meken opposition party was quoted by the Kyrgyz service of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty as saying that a new prime minister and the people's government need to be appointed," and then a popular election needs to be held.

Lawmakers later announced a candidate for prime minister and parliament speaker, although it was unclear whether the moves were legal under the constitution.

Jeenbekov urged opposition leaders to calm their supporters down and take them away from the streets.

I call on all (political) forces to put the fate of the country above their political ambitions and return to (acting) within the law, he said.

Several opposition

parties formed what they called a coordination council to facilitate a transition of power, while several others refused to recognize the council as a legitimate body representing the opposition.

The mayors of Bishkek and Jalal-Abad, the country's third-largest city, resigned.

The country's Finance Ministry issued a statement on its website, saying that it recognised the power of the people and halted all of its financial operations until further notice from the legitimate authorities.

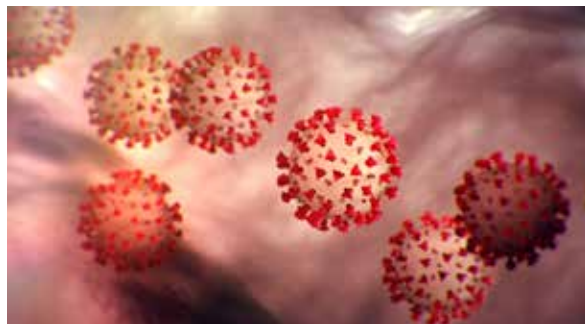
Parliament announced an emergency session to discuss the crisis. Local media reported that lawmakers failed to get a quorum, but a few dozen of them gathered anyway and, with proxy votes from other lawmakers, approved new appointments to some top government posts.

They announced the resignation of Prime Minister Kubatbek Boronov and gave preliminary approval to Sadyr Zhaparov, a former lawmaker released from prison overnight, as his replacement.

They also named Myktybek Abdyldayev as the new speaker of parliament. Abdyldayev later said Zhaparov's candidacy is to be approved by parliament after he presents his proposals for a new cabinet as well as his policies.

Boronov himself hasn't made any statements about resigning yet, and it wasn't immediately clear if the changes by the lawmakers were legal. Jeenbekov also hasn't commented on the moves, saying in an interview released Tuesday evening only that he was ready for talks with the opposition as a legitimate president.

Highest single-day spike of 10,947 cases in Karnataka



BENGALURU, OCT 7 (PTI): Karnataka on Wednesday reported its highest single-day spike of over 10,900 COVID-19 cases and 113 fatalities, taking the total number of infections to 6,68,652 and the toll to 9,574.

The day also saw 9,832 patients getting discharged after recovery and the active cases stood at 1,16,153, the health department said.

The number of samples tested in the state crossed the 55 lakh mark. On Wednesday a total of 1,04,348 tests were done, taking the cumulative to 55,24,302.

Out of the 10,947 cases reported on Wednesday, 5,000 were from Bengaluru Urban alone.

The previous biggest single-day spike was recorded on September 29 with 10,453 cases.

Cumulative 6,68,652 COVID-19 positive cases have been confirmed in the state, which includes 9,574 deaths and 5,42,906 discharges, the department said in its bulletin.

Of the active cases, 1,15,312 patients are stable in isolation at designated hospitals, while 841 are in Intensive Care Units.

Amid a spike in cases, Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa on Thursday

will chair a meeting with Deputy Commissioners, Zilla Panchayat CEOs, Police Superintendents and District Health officers of 10 districts that have high positive cases.

Bengaluru Urban recorded 55 of the total of 113 deaths, followed by Mysuru (9), Dakshina Kannada and Uttara Kannada (7), Hassan and Tumakuru (5), Kolar (4), Bagalkote and Ramanagara (3), Bengaluru Rural, Dharwad, Haveri and Udupi (2), and Belagavi, Bidar, Chamara-janagara, Chikkamagaluru, Kalaburagi, Kodagu and Vijayapura (1).

Most of the deceased were either with a history of Severe Acute Respiratory Infection (SARI) or Influenza-like illness (ILI), the bulletin said.

Among the districts where new cases were reported, Bengaluru Urban accounted for 5,000, Mysuru 979, Hassan 471, Uttara Kannada 462, Dakshina Kannada 447, Ballari 258, Tumakuru 250, Chitradurga 217, Udupi 209, Mandya 207, followed by others.

Bengaluru Urban topped districts in both positive cases and discharges -- 2,62,241 and 2,00,426.

Mysuru has 39,590 positive cases and Ballari, 33,515.

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LAND FOR SALE

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

LAND FOR SALE

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

FOR RENT

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

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

Building for sale

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

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BJP asks Raj guv to review law and order situation

JAIPUR, OCT 7 (PTI): The BJP on Wednesday submitted a memorandum to Rajasthan Governor Kalraj Mishra asking him to take note of the rising crime rate in the state and suggest measures to improve law and order situation.

A delegation, including BJP state president Satish Poonia, Leader of the Opposition Gulab Chand Kataria, Deputy Leader of Opposition Rajendra Rathore, MP Jas-kaur Meena, State General Secretary and MLA Madan Dilawar, met Governor Mishra.

Poonia alleged that in the last 20 months, the state government has completely failed on every front.

"Economic mismanagement, unemployment, not fulfilling promises made with the farmers and the crime also increased," he told

reporters. From December 2018 to August 2020, over 4.35 lakh criminal cases under Indian Penal Code have been registered in various police stations of the state. Of these cases, 11,200 have been filed against Dalits, the BJP state chief said.

According to the report of the National Crime Records Bureau, Rajasthan ranks on top in crimes against women, which is unfortunate for the state, Poonia said.

"This clearly shows the poor law and order management of the Ashok Gehlot government," the BJP leader said.

Leader of Opposition Gulab Chand Kataria said cases of violence against women are increasing all over the state but Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot has still not taken a concrete step to strengthen law and order.

Another Kerala Minister tests positive for COVID-19

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, OCT 7 (PTI): Kerala Power Minister MM Mani tested positive for COVID-19 on Wednesday, becoming the fourth member of the Pinarayi Vijayan cabinet to be affected by the pathogen.

The 75-year old minister, who himself announced the development through a Facebook post, has been admitted to the government Medical College Hospital here. Mani requested all

those who had come in contact with him in the past few days to be on guard.

Earlier, three ministers -- Thomas Isaac (Finance), E P Jayarajan (Industries) and V S Sunil Kumar (Agriculture) -- had tested positive for the coronavirus and all of them have recovered.

Kerala has been witnessing a sharp spike in COVID-cases in recent weeks and its tally stood at 2,40,799 as of Tuesday.

Cabinet approves cyber security pact with Japan



NEW DELHI, OCT 7 (PTI): The union cabinet on Wednesday approved signing of an agreement with Japan that is aimed at enhancing cooperation in emerging technologies, protection of critical infrastructure, cyberspace and to mitigate threats to communication networks, the government said.

It said India and Japan are committed to an "open, interoperable, free, fair, secure and reliable" cyberspace environment and will work towards promoting the Internet as an engine of innovation and economic growth.

"The union cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given its approval for signing a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) in the field of cybersecurity between India and Japan," the government said in a statement.

The approval to the pact by the cabinet comes in the midst of growing concerns over cyber attacks from China, particularly after India banned over 100 mobile apps with Chinese links.

It said the MoC will enhance cooperation in the area of cyberspace

and emerging technologies and provide for protection of critical infrastructure and sharing of information on cyber security threats and malicious cyber activities as well as on best practices to counter them.

"India and Japan commit to an open, interoperable, free, fair, secure and reliable cyberspace environment and to promote the Internet as an engine of innovation, economic growth, and trade and commerce that would be consistent with their respective domestic laws and international obligations, and with their wide-ranging strategic partnership," it said.

It said both sides, through the MoC, affirm cooperation in the international arena including in the United Nations.

The pact will also provide for sharing strategies and best practices to promote the integrity of the supply chain of information and communication technology (ICT) products.

It will also strengthen the security of ICT infrastructure through government-to-government and business-to-business cooperation, the government said.

DGCA issues detailed refund guidelines after SC verdict



NEW DELHI, OCT 7 (PTI): Aviation regulator DGCA issued detailed guidelines on Wednesday regarding a refund of the ticket price for the flights cancelled amid the coronavirus-triggered lockdown.

The guidelines came six days after the Supreme Court directed that a full and immediate refund should be given to passengers for the air tickets cancelled between March 25 and May 24. No domestic passenger flights operated in the country in this period.

The top court had, on October 1, also passed directions about the refund and credit shell formation for the bookings and cancellations done

during the other time periods around the lockdown.

Based on the court order, the DGCA categorised passengers in three categories -- those who booked tickets between March 25 and May 24 for travelling within the same period, those who booked tickets prior to March 25 but the travel period was till May 24, those who booked tickets anytime but for a journey post May 24.

The regulator said the passengers belonging to the first category must be given a full refund by the airline concerned for the tickets cancelled.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) said the airlines should "make all endeavors"

to refund the passengers belonging to the second category within 15 days.

"If on account of financial stress, any airline/airlines are not able to do so, they shall provide a credit shell equal to the amount of fare collected (to the passenger)," it added

The passengers can then use the credit shells to book any ticket by March 31, 2021, the DGCA noted.

Those belonging to the third category will be given a refund in accordance with the existing DGCA rules.

The Indian aviation industry has been hit hard due to the coronavirus pandemic and as a result, all airlines in the

country have opted for cost-cutting measures such as layoffs, leave without pay for the employees etc.

Scheduled domestic passenger flight services resumed in the country after a gap of two months on May 25. Currently, airlines are permitted to operate only up to 60 per cent of their pre-COVID domestic flights.

Scheduled international passenger flights continue to remain suspended in the country since March 23. However, special international passenger flights have been operating under the Vande Bharat mission since May and under air bubble arrangements formed with various countries since July.

Delhi govt allows restaurants to operate round-the-clock

NEW DELHI, OCT 7 (PTI): In a major relief to city restaurants amid COVID-19 outbreak, the Delhi government on Wednesday said they will be allowed to operate round-the-clock and the requirement of tourism licenses will be removed.

Setting an example of Delhi Model' of ease of doing business, the government also announced other measures such as initiation of a process to abolish police licenses and health trade licenses from local bodies for restaurants, an official statement said.

The decisions were taken at a meeting chaired by Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal. The meeting was also attended by restaurants owners of the national capital.

The government said such steps will help the industry generate more employment in the city through higher demand, adding that this will set an example for the Delhi Model of ease of doing business.

"On the request of

restaurateurs to allow 24x7 business, it was agreed that the restaurants will be allowed to operate at all hours subject to the condition that they submit an undertaking that they will take care of the health and security of their entire staff," the statement stated.

The chief minister also instructed that the health trade licenses issued by municipal corporations to the restaurant industries be abolished within 10 days, it said.

During the meeting, the excise department agreed to review the existing policy of a 10 per cent automatic increase in the license fees every year.

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, who also attended the meeting, called for the restaurants to be able to pay their excise by March 31 from the existing deadline of February 28, and for them to make quarterly license fee payments without any interest, the statement added.

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What is Novel Coronavirus - nCoV?

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

Symptoms of nCoV

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

Precautions to Prevent nCoV

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

Treatment

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

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE
GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM

niepvd
Dehradun

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Applications are invited from the eligible candidates for filling up the following contractual posts for Composite Regional Centre For Skill Development, Rehabilitation & Empowerment Of Persons With Disabilities, (CRC), Sikkim, Assam Lingzey P.S. Ranipool, Gangtok, East Sikkim on purely temporary basis. Applications should reach the Director of the Institute at the above address. The Last date for receipt of application is 09.10.2020 in the enclosed format.

"Application of candidate found ineligible in scrutiny of application for the post of Sl.No (2), (3) & (4) need not apply."

- Name of Post** : Asst. Professor (Clinical Psychology) (Consultant) For 11 Months
Emoluments : Rs. 55,000/- P.M. with no other allowances.
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ii. Registration with RCI.
iii. Minimum 5 years of experience in teaching /research in the field of rehabilitation.
Desirable:-
i. Ph.D in related field of rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities.
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Emoluments : Rs. 50,000/- P.M. with no other allowances.
Essential Qualifications :-
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ii. Minimum 3 years of experience in teaching/research in the field of rehabilitation.
Desirable:-
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Emoluments : Rs. 25,000/- P.M. with no other allowances.
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iii. Minimum 2 years of experience in the concerned area.
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Emoluments : Rs. 20,000/- P.M. with no other allowances.
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Reservations – Promoting Lethargy or Improving Access

Before the bouquet is increased, revisit why quotas were need

This section has discussed the issue of quotas and reservations often, but given the near obsessive pursuit with which such “protection” is chased after, talking on this theme is perhaps never too much. So here goes one more. But a qualifier first – this publication believes that protection by way of reservations is still required in our country where gross inequality forced by accidents of birth and offensive prejudice directed against communities and regions still prevail. If anything, such extreme and irrationally hostile mind-sets have seen a resurgence in recent years, reinforcing stereotypes and foisting easy partisanship. That is the reality we live with, but occasionally, as citizens of a free and secular nation, we can occasionally also aspire for more ideal scenarios to eventually arrive into.

This then, is as good a time as ever to delve into the near passionate ambition of all communities to get included in some category or the other. We have in our country, quite a wide range of categories to choose from – there is the Scheduled Tribes list, the Schedule Caste recognition, the OBC, now even MBC and some years ago, Bihar introduced us to the EBC grouping – and one can rest assured that more such segregations will be dreamed up in the coming years as privileged communities which still dominate have someone made political currency out of their imagined persecution. It is that situation where the traditionally privileged, get frightened and feel threatened as more of the under-dogs rise above the conditions of their birth through hard work and some hand-holding. To them, growing equality feels like oppression. Unfortunately, no one tells them otherwise because “reservation” has now become an aspiration that every citizen feels a right to aspire towards and has become an easy springboard to launch political careers from.

So, why the categorizations?

Given the history that India had emerged from in 1947, where caste alienation was extreme and tribals genuinely under-privileged and oppressed, a policy was required to overcome a legacy of injustice and to provide everyone in this country with a broad measure of equal opportunities. Since equal opportunities would not have been willingly granted and communities with centuries of oppression behind them could not be expected to benefit from an equal footing, reservations were eked out. Over the years, the reservations were extended to include more communities and even women. The idea was to provide these communities with the first stepping stone to equality – access. Access to education, to jobs, to positions of power and access to exposure. This target has been met relatively well and as far as access is concerned, a wide sweep has been achieved.

The obvious next step would have been to pull communities which have benefited enough out of the reserved categories and make more room for those communities which still lag behind. This is easier said than done. For one, there is no easily quantifiable way to decide when a community has “developed” enough to make it on its own steam sans reservation, and for the other, there is the vote-bank politics in which saner decisions in genuine public good would be political hara-kiri. So, the nation is left with an ever overflowing baggage of reserved sections and shrinking opportunities.

This is where the whole policy has failed. Instead of making people competitive with improved access, it has made them lazy with increased quotas. Little wonder then that more and more communities want to fit into some category or the other. In fact, in the present times, when jobs are rare and competition even for education tough, it would be foolish for community leaders not to work for a quota for their people. And so the demands keep pouring in.

This is not to belittle the aspirations of any community to find a new grouping for itself, but just a suggestion that maybe it is time the country and Sikkim paused to re-read the principles why reservations and special categories were first drafted, whether its expressed aims are being met or not, and also whether the people who genuinely deserve reservations are actually getting it or not in the first place.

WRITE US:

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

Coronavirus: Is the cure worse than the disease? The most divisive question of 2020

DANNY DORLING
theconversation.com

In 1968, at the height of the last great influenza pandemic, at least a million people worldwide died, including 100,000 Americans. That year A.M.M. Payne, a professor of epidemiology at Yale University, wrote:

“In the conquest of Mount Everest anything less than 100% success is failure, but in most communicable diseases we are not faced with the attainment of such absolute goals, but rather with trying to reduce the problem to tolerable levels, as quickly as possible, within the limits of available resources...”

That message is worth repeating because the schism between those seeking “absolute goals” versus those seeking “tolerable levels” is very much evident in the current pandemic. On September 21, the BMJ reported that opinion among UK scientists is divided as to whether it is better to focus on protecting those most at risk of severe COVID, or imposing lockdown for all.

One group of 40 scientists wrote a letter to the chief medical officers of the UK suggesting that they should aim to “suppress the virus across the entire population”.

In another letter, a group of 28 scientists suggested that “the large variation in risk by age and health status suggests that the harm caused by uniform policies (that apply to all persons) will outweigh the benefits”. Instead, they called for a “targeted and evidence-based approach to the COVID-19 policy response”.

A week later, science writer Stephen Buranyi wrote a piece for the Guardian arguing that the positions in the letter with 28 authors represent those of a small minority of scientists. “The overwhelming scientific consensus still lies with a general lockdown,” he claimed.

A few days later, over 60 doctors wrote another letter saying: “We are concerned due to mounting data and real world experience, that the one-track response threatens more lives and livelihoods than Covid-lives saved.”

This back and forth will undoubtedly continue for some time yet, although those involved will hopefully begin to see opposing scientific views and opinions as a gift and an opportunity to be sceptical and learn, rather than as a “rival camp”.

SCIENTIFIC CONSENSUS TAKES TIME

There are issues, such as global warming, where there is scientific consensus. But consensus takes decades, and COVID-19 is a new disease. Uncontrolled experiments in lockdown are still ongoing, and the long-term costs and benefits are not yet known. I very much doubt that most scientists in the UK have a settled view on whether pub gardens or universities campuses should be closed or not. People I talk to have a range of opinions: from those who accept that the disease is now endemic, to those who wonder if it can still be eradicated.

Some suggest that any epidemiologist who does not toe a particular line is suspect, or has not done enough modelling and that their views should not carry much weight. They go on to dismiss the views of other scientists and non-scientist academics as irrelevant. But science is not a dogma, and views often need to be modified in the light of increasing knowledge and experience. I am a geographer, so I am used to seeing such games of academic hierarchy played above me, but I do worry when people resort to insulting their colleagues rather than admit that knowledge and circumstance have changed and reappraisal is necessary.

A GRIM CALCULUS

Is the cure worse than the disease? This is the question that currently divides us, so it is worth considering how it might be answered. We would have to know how many people would die of other causes, for example, of suicide (including child suicides) that would not have otherwise occurred, or liver disease from the increase in alcohol consumption, from cancers that were not diagnosed or treated, to determine the point at which particular policies were taking more lives than they were saving. And then what value should you put on those lost or damaged lives against the economic consequences?

We do not live in a perfect world with perfect data. For children, for whom the risk of death from COVID is almost zero and the risks of long-term effects are thought to be very low, it is easier to weigh up the negative effects of not going to school or of being trapped in households with rising domestic abuse.

For university students, who are mostly young, a similar set of calculations could be made, including estimating the “cost” of having the infection now, versus the cost of having it later, possibly when the

student is with their older relatives at Christmas. With older people, though, the calculus – even in a perfect world – would become increasingly complex. When you are very old and have very little time left, what risks would you be willing to take? One elderly man famously claimed: “No pleasure is worth giving up for the sake of two more years in a geriatric home in Weston-super-Mare.”

A recent paper, published in Nature, suggests that even in Hong Kong, where compliance with mask-wearing has been over 98% since February, local elimination of COVID is not possible. If it is not possible there, it may not be possible anywhere.

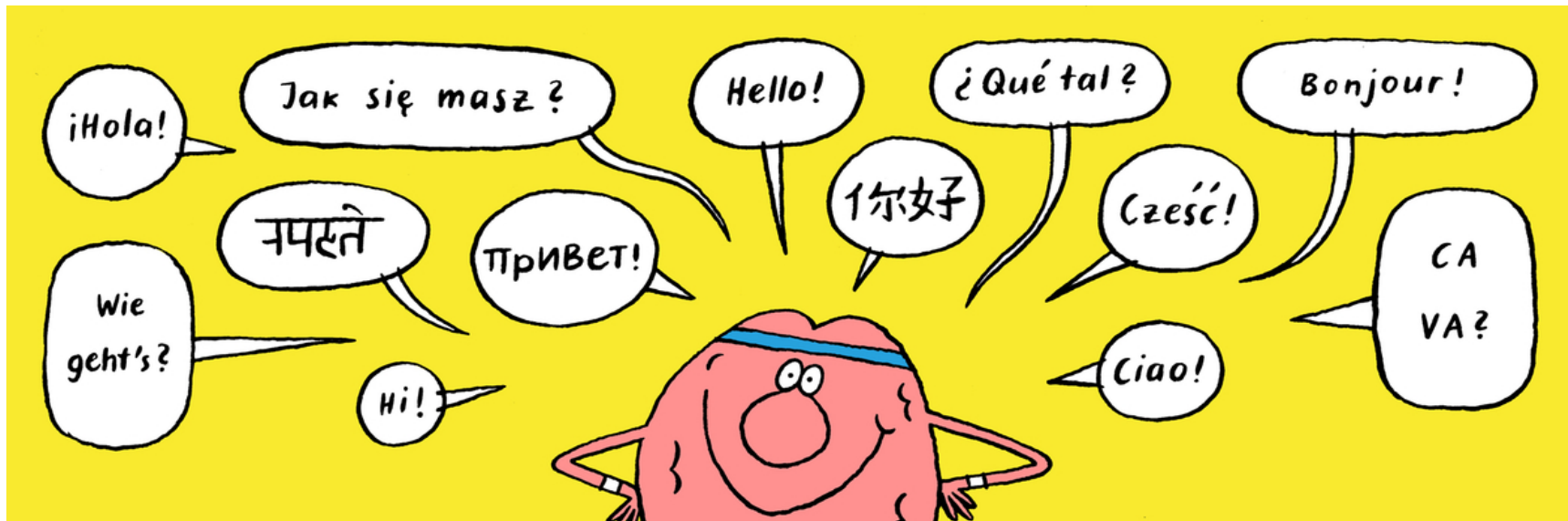
On the brighter side, elsewhere, elderly people have been protected even when transmission rates are high and overall resources are low. In India, a recent study found that “it is plausible that stringent stay-at-home orders for older Indian adults, coupled with delivery of essentials through social welfare programs and regular community health worker interactions, contributed to lower exposure to infection within this age group in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh.”

However, minimising mortality is not the only goal. For those who don’t die, the outcome can still be prolonged and severe debility. That, too, must be taken into account. But unless you are sure that a particular measure for locking down will do more good than harm, in the round, you should not do it. In 1970, shortly before he became dean of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, C.E. Gordon Smith wrote:

“The essential prerequisite of all good public health measures is that careful estimates should be made of their advantages and disadvantages, for both the individual and the community, and that they should be implemented only when there is a significant balance of advantage. In general, this ethic has been a sound basis for decision in most past situations in the developed world although, as we contemplate the control of milder diseases, quite different considerations such as the convenience or productivity of industry are being brought into these assessments.”

Current beliefs of where the balance of advantages and disadvantages lie are changing. The “rival camps” rhetoric needs to end. No individual or small group represents the view of the majority.

[the writer is Halford Mackinder Professor of Geography, University of Oxford]



How does being bilingual affect your brain? It depends on how you use language

VINCENT DELUCA
theconversation.com

Depending on what you read, speaking more than one language may or may not make you smarter. These mixed messages are understandably confusing, and they’re due to the fact that nothing is quite as simple as it’s typically portrayed when it comes to neuroscience.

We can’t give a simple “yes” or “no” to the question of whether being bilingual benefits your brain. Instead, it is becoming increasingly evident that whether and how your brain adapts to using multiple languages depends on what they are and how you use them.

Research suggests that as you learn or regularly use a second language, it becomes constantly “active” alongside your native language in your brain. To enable communication, your brain has to select one language and inhibit the other.

This process takes effort and the brain adapts to do this more effectively. It is altered both structurally (through changes in the size or shape of specific regions, and the integrity of white matter pathways that connect them) and functionally (through changes how much specific regions are used).

These adaptations usually occur in brain regions and pathways that are also used for other cognitive processes known as “executive

functions”. These include things like working memory and attentional control (for example, the ability to ignore competing, irrelevant information and focus on a target).

Researchers measure these cognitive processes with specifically designed tasks. One example of such tests is the flanker task, in which participants have to indicate the direction of a specific arrow that is surrounded by other arrows that face in the same or opposite direction. Being bilingual can potentially improve performance on tasks like these, typically in either faster reaction times or higher accuracy.

MIXED RESULTS?

But not all studies consistently find these performance improvements. In fact, some find that bilinguals and monolinguals perform very similarly.

The degree to which the brain adapts structurally and functionally from bilingualism also varies. Some studies suggest bilinguals and monolinguals use the brain differently to complete an executive function task, even if the performances between the two groups is similar.

Other studies have found differences in brain structure, but how these differences manifest and the brain regions and pathways involved are not always consistent. This variability, especially on executive function tasks, has led some to question whether speaking more than one

language has a robust impact on the brain at all.

However, bilingualism comes in many shapes and forms. For example, some bilinguals learn a second language from birth and others much later. Some bilinguals constantly need to switch between their two languages, while others speak one language at home and another at work.

It would be surprising if this variability in bilingualism did not make a difference to how the brain adapts. So there is a growing case for considering bilingualism as a spectrum of experiences rather than just a binary distinction of bilingual versus monolingual. Several models have been proposed for how different brain adaptations might link to specific bilingual language experiences.

A growing number of studies have also examined specific aspects of bilingual experience, such as how long someone has been using more than one language, the regularity or diversity of use, and the amount they switch between languages. These studies crucially find that different language experiences have distinct effects on brain adaptation and performance on tasks measuring certain executive functions.

What’s more, these adaptations are dynamic, meaning the brain seems to keep adapting with continued and changing experience. For instance, in the early stages of learning and using an additional language, or

if both languages are frequently used in the same setting, the brain adapts regions in frontal areas of the cortex (regions highly used for executive functions) to more effectively handle the increased effort required to select and control the languages.

However, if someone stays actively bilingual for a long time, other brain regions such as the basal ganglia and cerebellum also adapt. These regions are used to more efficiently or automatically complete a task, like your body can as you become more physically fit or gain increased muscle memory. Such adaptations in brain structure indicate a shift towards more efficiently handling of language competition.

The next step is to figure out how much these different experiences and outcomes relate to one another. Recently, my colleagues and I have mapped what we know about the relationships between different bilingual language experiences and the different ways in which the brain might adapt to them.

What about our original question: does bilingualism benefit your brain? Well, it depends. While there is still a lot to learn about how exactly the brain adapts to the bilingual experience, it’s clear that how you use an additional language makes a big difference.

[the writer is Postdoctoral Research Fellow, School of Psychology, University of Birmingham]

Odisha reports 2,673 new COVID-19 cases, 16 fatalities



BHUBANESWAR, OCT 6 (PTI): At least 2,673 more people tested positive for COVID-19 in Odisha on Tuesday, taking the tally to 2,38,003, while 16 fresh fatalities pushed the death toll to 940, a health department official said.

Of the new cases, 1,554 were reported from various quarantine centres and 1,119 were detected during contact tracing, he said.

Khurda district, of which state capital Bhubaneswar is a part, registered the maximum number of new cases at 448, followed by Cuttack

at 214 and Nuapada at 159.

"Regret to inform the demise of sixteen #COVID-19 positive patients while under treatment in hospitals," the Health and Family Welfare Department said on Twitter.

Of the 16 fatalities, four were reported from Balasore, three from Khurda, two from Cuttack and one each from Angul, Boudh, Mayurbhanj, Nawrangpur, Nayagarh, Puri and Subarnapur districts.

Ganjam district alone reported 221 of the 940 deaths in the state, fol-

lowed by Khurda at 154 and Cuttack at 82.

The case fatality ratio (CFR) also remains at 0.39 per cent, the official said.

At least 3,817 patients were cured of the disease during the day, taking the total number of recoveries to 2,10,217, which is 88.32 per cent of the state's caseload, the official said.

The state government on Tuesday issued safety guidelines for the people who have been cured of COVID-19.

"Recovered people must wear masks and maintain social distanc-

ing norms. They should take a balanced diet with rich protein and less carbohydrate," health department's technical advisor Prof Jayanta Panda said.

Odisha currently has 26,793 active cases, which accounted for 11.25 per cent of the state's caseload.

Fifty-three coronavirus patients have died due to comorbidities, according to the official.

As many as 35.24 lakh tests for COVID-19 have been conducted so far, including 41,840 on Monday.

Meanwhile, the Odi-

sha government has allowed the use of Favipiravir tablets by coronavirus patients during home isolation.

Nearly 80 per cent of COVID-19 patients are under home isolation in the state, Panda said.

"New clinical inputs and empirical evidence about the pandemic have proved the effectiveness of Favipiravir tablet as an anti-viral medicine to treat coronavirus patients, Chief Secretary A K Tripathy said after consulting with doctors and health experts.

He also said the medicine needs to be administered with proper advice and precaution.

The chief secretary directed the health department to circulate the standard operating procedure for the use of Favipiravir tablets among doctors.

The rapid response teams (RRTs) of the state government will be trained to assess the condition of the patients in home isolation and whether they can be administered Favipiravir tablets at their residences in consultation with trained doctors.

No free COVID-19 test in Meghalaya from Oct 16



SHILLONG, OCT 7 (PTI): With the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) withdrawing subsidy on testing kits, the Meghalaya government has announced that COVID-19 tests will be charged from next week, Deputy Chief Minister Prestone Tynsong said on Wednesday.

The samples for COVID-19 test will be examined on payment from October 16.

The deputy chief minister also said that plans are afoot to charge inmates at government Corona Care Centres for meals.

The state government has initiated the process for identifying hotels and guest houses where peo-

ple who are currently in institutional quarantine can be lodged, if they are willing to undergo paid isolation.

"Testing, be it RT-PCR, CBNAAT, Truenat or Rapid Antigen Test (RAT), will be done on payment from October 16.

BPL families or beneficiaries under National Food Security Act (NFSA) and high risk contacts are totally exempted," the deputy chief minister told PTI.

The Rapid Antigen Test for COVID-19 will be mandatory for all persons, including visitors, for an amount of Rs 500.

Rs 3,200 has been set as the capping charge for Truenat, CBNAAT and

RT-PCR testing, but people under the BPL category and those carrying certificates of having undergone the tests in the last 72 hours will be exempted, he said.

"We have already created an online facility at www.coronameg.in for those people coming to the state so that they can register for testing before entering Meghalaya," he said.

"Deputy commissioners have been asked to work out on the cost of food items provided to each person per day at government Corona Care Centres. BPL families and those who can get meals from home will be exempted from paying," Tynsong said.

Nagaland's COVID-19 tally rises to 6,715



KOHIMA, OCT 7 (PTI): At least 53 more people tested positive for COVID-19 in Nagaland on Wednesday, pushing the coronavirus caseload in the state to 6,715, an official said.

The new cases were reported from Dimapur (37), Kohima (8), Peren (6) and one each from Mokokchung and Phek districts.

"53 positive cases of COVID-19 were detected Dimapur 37, Kohima 8, Peren 6 and one each in Mokokchung and Phek district," Health and Family Welfare Minister, S Pangnyu Phom said in a tweet.

The minister said 36 COVID-19 patients were discharged on Wednesday as they had recovered from the disease.

"Also, 36 patients have been discharged Di-

mapur 28, Kohima 4, Zunheboto 2 and one each in Mon and Wokha districts," he said in another tweet.

Of the total 6,715 COVID-19 cases in the state, 1,194 are active cases, while 5,444 patients have recovered, said Additional Director of Health Department Dr Denis Hangsing.

So far 23 COVID-19 infected patients have died in the state, he said, adding that only 12 deaths are due to coronavirus, five are due to comorbidities and six are under investigation to find the cause of death.

Altogether 54 COVID-19 patients have migrated to other states till date, he said.

The recovery rate of COVID-19 patients is now at 81.07 per cent, he said. The district-wise

COVID-19 cases are Dimapur (3,535), Kohima (2,133), Mon (394), Peren (282), Zunheboto (123), Tuensang (108), Mokokchung (55), Phek (36), Wokha (26), Kiphire (12) and Longleng (11).

Of the total cases, 3,153 are armed forces personnel, 1,535 are returnees from other states, 1,666 are traced contacts and 361 are frontline workers, he said.

Among the active cases, 41 patients are with mild and moderate symptoms, while four in Dimapur are critical on oxygen and ventilator support, he said, adding that 1,142 patients are asymptomatic.

A total of 83,560 samples have been sent for COVID-19 testing in the state so far, the health official said.

13 new cases push COVID-19 tally of Andamans to 3,912

PORT BLAIR, OCT 7 (PTI): The COVID-19 tally of Andaman and Nicobar Islands rose to 3,912 on Wednesday as 13 more people tested positive for the infection, a health official said.

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

Nineteen more people have been cured of the disease, the official said.

The Union territory now has 180 active coronavirus cases, while 3,678 people have recovered from the disease and 54 patients have succumbed to the infection so far, he said.

The administration has so far sent 63,790 samples for COVID-19 tests, of which 63,767 reports have been received and 23 are awaited, the official added.

Ladakh records 79 new COVID-19 cases; 50 patients cured

LEH, OCT 7 (PTI): The Union Territory of Ladakh reported 79 new coronavirus cases, taking the cumulative figure to 4720, an official bulletin said on Wednesday.

With 50 more patients cured of the disease, the number of active cases in the region stands at 1195 904 in Leh district and 291 in Kargil district, the bulletin released by the directorate of health services said.

It said 72 people tested positive for COVID-19 in Leh and another seven in Kargil district during the past 24 hours.

Ladakh had reported 61 COVID-related deaths, while 3,464 patients have recovered till Tuesday evening.

The bulletin said 27 COVID patients were discharged in Kargil and 23 others in Leh on Tuesday after their successful treatment.

Bengal governor to visit family of Galwan martyr

KOLKATA, OCT 7 (PTI): West Bengal Governor Jagdeep Dhankhar will visit the family of Galwan martyr Havildar Bipul Roy on October 9, Raj Bhavan said here on Wednesday.

Eastern Army Commander Lt General Anil Chauhan will accompany him.

A cheque of Rs 5.5 lakh each will be handed over to the mother and widow of Roy at their residence at Bindipara village in Alipurduar district, Raj Bhavan said in a statement.

Two Indian Army soldiers hailing from West Bengal - Havildar Bipul Roy and Sepoy Rajesh Orang - lost their lives at Galwan Valley in the Ladakh region in a violent face-off with the Chinese Army on June 15.

The two were among 20 Army personnel killed in the clash on that day.

"The Governor has indicated that it is the prime duty of the society to stand by the families of our soldiers who have made this supreme sacrifice for the nation," the statement said.

Dhankhar and the Eastern Army Commander have already visited the family of Orang in Birbhum district and handed over a cheque of Rs 11 lakh to his mother.

Assam former DIG wanted in police examination paper leak scam detained at Indo-Nepal border



GUWAHATI, OCT 06 [PTI]: Retired Assam DIG PK Dutta, who is wanted in connection with the police recruitment examination paper leak scam, has been detained at the Indo- Nepal Border, a police spokesman said on Tuesday.

Dutta was detained by security personnel following the 'look out circular' (LOC) issued

by the Assam CID, the spokesman said.

He has now been handed over to West Bengal Police and a team of Assam Police is on the way to the place to bring him back to the state, Additional Director General of Police (Law and Order) G P Singh told PTI.

Further details are awaited. Dutta was absconding along with an-

other accused, expelled BJP leader Diban Deka who was arrested on October 1.

The state police had announced a reward of Rs one lakh each for information which would lead to their arrest.

So far, 32 people have been apprehended in connection with the paper leak scam. When Dutta is arrested, it will increase to 33.

Negative views of China rise sharply in advanced democracies

TAIPEI, OCT 7 (AP): Negative perceptions of China have increased sharply among people in several advanced democracies, especially in Australia and Britain, according to a survey from the Pew Research Center released Tuesday.

The survey comes as China is engaged in multiple trade and diplomatic disputes with its neighbors and other countries, driven in part by a more aggressive diplomatic approach.

The survey conducted in 14 democratic countries with advanced economies showed a majority of people had an unfavorable view of China. It was conducted from June 10 to Aug 3 among 14,276 adults across the 14 countries via telephone.

In Australia, 81% said they have an unfavorable view of China, according to the survey, a rise of 24 percentage points from last year.

The rise corresponds with higher tensions in the bilateral relationship after Australia led the call for an international investigation into the origins of the coronavirus.

China responded on the trade front, suspending imports of Australian beef,

putting high tariffs on barley from the country and starting an anti-dumping probe into imports of Australian wine.

While the survey showed Australia had the sharpest increase in negative attitudes toward China, other countries also showed an upward trend: Those with an unfavourable view toward China hit 74% in Britain, a rise of 19 percentage points compared to last year; 71% in Germany, a rise of 15 points; and 73% in the U.S., a rise of 13 points.

The 14 countries surveyed were the U.S., Canada, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, the U.K., Australia, Japan and South Korea. The margin of error for the survey ranged from 3.1 percentage points in South Korea to 4.2 percentage points in Belgium.

In most countries surveyed, those with higher income levels were equally likely as those with lower levels of income to hold the negative views. The negative views also held across education levels, as those with a postsecondary degree or more were equally likely to have unfavorable views of China as those with less education.

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Our top order has failed to perform: Rajasthan Royals opener Buttler

ABU DHABI, OCT 7 (PTI): Rajasthan Royals opener Jos Buttler admitted that his side's top order has failed to perform in the last three games that has cost them dear in the Indian Premier League so far.

The Royals suffered a 57 run-loss to defending champions Mumbai Indians -- their third defeat on the trot -- with only Buttler contributing a sizeable score (70) here on Tuesday.

"We have not managed to come off as a top-order in the last three games. We have lost three wickets in the power-play a few times and in T20 cricket you never win too many games from that position," Buttler said at the media conference after the match.

"Of course, the power-play is a time you have to take advantage due to the field restrictions, but as players we have not performed but that can happen in T20 cricket, the Englishman added.

Chasing a big target of 194, the Royals were struggling at 12 for 3 in the third over and they never recovered from there despite a blazing 70 off 44 balls from Buttler. They were eventually bundled out for 136.

"We lost wickets. Mumbai bowled really well and we never got into our innings. As a batsman, you are always vulnerable early on in your innings and as a top order we didn't manage to counteract the opening bowling well enough to get through that period, the 30-year-old wicketkeeper-batsman said.

For Mumbai, Suryakumar Yadav made a blazing unbeaten 79 off 47 balls to post a challenging 193 for 4. Buttler praised Yadav for using angles and his crease to perfection.

"He (Suryakumar) played a fantastic innings. We could not quite tie (him) down. He used the angles and his crease really well and he is a fantastic player. We could not execute our plans to him but full credit to him. He played a very good innings, Butter, himself a T20 specialist, said.

Talking about himself, Buttler said he would take confidence from his good show against Mumbai Indians to the games ahead.

I have not been feeling my best in the middle. It was good for me to spend time in the middle, find a bit of fluency further on in the innings. I struggled initially, but hopefully I can take some confidence from today and use that for the rest of the tournament," the right-handed batsman said.

He also had words of praise for young Karthik Tyagi, who made his IPL debut.

He is a really exciting talent. One thing the IPL always does is unearth fantastic Indian players and he impressed in the nets and worked hard to get his opportunity to make his debut. It was a great moment for him and everyone in the team when he picked up his first wicket," Buttler signed off.

From qualifying to the semis: Podoroska dreams on in Paris

PARIS, OCT 7 (AP): Nadia Podoroska has already won more matches at this French Open eight than it usually takes to raise the trophy.

That's because the 131st-ranked Argentine has come all the way from qualifying rounds to reach the semifinals, becoming the first woman to achieve that feat at Roland Garros in the Open era.

Having never won a main-draw Grand Slam match before last week, Podoroska could hardly believe it after her 6-2, 6-4 quarterfinal victory Tuesday over third-seeded Elina Svitolina on Court Philippe Chatrier.

Asked afterward whether she is pinching herself to make sure it's not a dream, Podoroska replied: No. I don't want to wake up.

Podoroska is only the third female qualifier to get to the semifinals at any major tournament in the Open era, which began in 1968, and the first since Alexandra Stevenson at Wimbledon in 1999.

Another qualifier, Martina Trevisan of Italy, had a chance to join that list later Tuesday but could not quite take the last step. The 159th-ranked Trevisan, who also had not won a main-draw Grand Slam match before this tournament, lost 6-3, 6-1 to unseeded 19-year-old Iga Swiatek of Poland.

I'm sad for the match, but it's an incredible two weeks for me, said Trevisan, who dropped tennis for 4 1/2 years and returned to the



sport in 2014.

"So today I close a very important chapter of my life. Tomorrow, other chapters will begin."

Podoroska, who is from the same city in Argentina as soccer superstar Lionel Messi, said she considered quitting tennis altogether a couple of years ago after too many injuries, including to her right wrist.

It didn't look good: She was off the tour for eight months; her ranking dropped; she didn't have enough money to travel to tournaments; and she split with a coach she'd been working with for a decade.

I didn't know what to do,

Podoroska said.

She stuck with it, though, and now has a new team around her, based in Spain. And she has, by far, the best results of her career.

I have, she said, a lot of confidence.

STRICTLY TENNIS

Danielle Collins, an unseeded American, was in no mood to discuss anything but tennis after she secured a spot in the quarterfinals for the first time at Roland Garros.

Asked about blowing her nose on changeovers and if she had a cold, Collins snapped back to a reporter in her virtual news conference: I don't see the thought process there, and I think it's not a

very good question.

Then came a query about greater restrictions being put in place in Paris to contain the coronavirus pandemic.

One of the best things about sports is that people get to watch sports, Collins responded.

They get to engage in something that's not COVID related, not political. I'm not going to comment any further on anything going on in terms of the bubble or COVID protocols or what's going on in Paris. I think that this event brings a lot of positivity to players' lives. Really, those questions are quite frivolous.

Obviously we're in a pandemic and it's a very serious

situation, Collins added after beating 30th-seeded Ons Jabeur 6-4, 4-6, 6-4. But I think you should be reporting on the tennis.

In Collins' defense, she spent several stressful hours warming up and cooling down on Monday before her match with Jabeur was postponed to Tuesday due to rain.

Last night we were at the courts for eight to 10 hours waiting to go on, she said.

So we're still having to focus on our matches, having to focus on getting warmed up, having to focus on getting treatment, having to do all of the things that we need to do to be able to go out and play matches. Collins did not have

much time to ponder the pandemic before playing again on Wednesday against Australian Open champion Sofia Kenin in an all-American matchup in the quarterfinals.

CAN I KICK IT?

Ons Jabeur drew attention during her fourth-round loss to Danielle Collins as much for her drop shots from all over the court as for a couple of her sumptuous half-volleys with her right foot.

The 30th-seeded Tunisian showed the technique of a soccer player when, after losing a couple of points during her 6-4, 4-6, 6-4 defeat, she booted the ball crisply over the net as if scoring a goal at nearby Parc des Princes. The home of French champion Paris Saint-Germain is located a stone's throw or a Jabeur kick away from Roland Garros. Turns out those sweet half-volleys were no flukes, either.

I've got two brothers, so I played soccer a lot with them. I love soccer in general. I'm a big fan of (Cristiano) Ronaldo, she said.

I'm thinking about joining a team, not necessarily a professional one but amateur. Because it's a sport I love. Even for tennis, it can help me a lot.

As a fan of superstar Ronaldo, who has amassed nearly 750 career goals in a glittering career, no prizes for guessing which position Jabeur would like to play.

I like scoring goals, she said. Surely I'll be a forward and try to really score as much as possible.

Barca start process to reduce salaries due to COVID-19 losses



BARCELONA, 07 OCT (REUTERS): Barcelona have begun a process to reduce the pay of players, coaches and non-sporting staff to adapt to the huge losses suffered due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a club source said on Wednesday.

Staff have been notified by the club of the need to reduce costs after posting a loss of 97 million euros (\$113.98 million) in their annual financial report, released on Monday.

The employees, including players, have been asked to nominate a representative over the next two weeks to represent them in the negotiations over the changes to their salaries, added the source. Barca have been

forced to hold all home matches without spectators since the pandemic began in March, destroying revenue from ticket sales. Income from merchandising and stadium and museum tours has also been badly affected by a huge drop in tourism to the city.

Barca's accounts on Wednesday made for grim reading, showing a 14% drop in revenue from the previous year and the doubling of their net debt to 488 million euros.

The club enacted a temporary pay cut of 70% at the end of March in the height of the pandemic, lasting the duration of Spain's national state of alarm, which ended in June.

Barca's financial troubles also led them to spend the close season lightening the biggest wage bill in European football, offloading Luis Suarez, Ivan Rakitic and Arturo Vidal for next to nothing, while selling Arthur Melo for 72 million euros and Nelson Semedo for 30 million.

They only brought in three players, Miralem Pjanic, Francisco Trincao and Sergino Dest for a combined 112 million euros.

They failed to make any extra additions before the transfer window shut on Monday, despite showing interest in Manchester City defender Eric Garcia and Olympic Lyonnais forward Memphis Depay.

Increasing number of footballers concerned for their mental health

PAUL MACINNES

LONDON, 07 OCT [THEGUARDIAN]: A sharp rise in the number of footballers concerned for their mental health has continued in 2020, according to figures from the counselling body Sporting Chance.

In the year to September, 464 members of the Professional Footballers' Association accessed counselling services, compared with 653 across all of 2019. This maintains a trend in which numbers have quadrupled since 2016, when 160 members accessed the service.

The PFA has 4,000 members, meaning that in only nine months of the year more than 10% have sought some form of support. Of those to have done so, 42% are current players, with 55% former players and 3% family members given access to the services; 95% of the calls were made by male members of the union and 5% by female members.

These figures were released to coincide with Mental Health Awareness week. Of the concerns



cited by PFA members to have accessed counselling, the most common were "low mood" and "anxiety" followed by "addictive disorder – substance" and "addictive disorders – gambling". More traditional union issues, such as the "transition" from a playing career, came below "relationship issues" on the list.

The period covered by the Sporting Chance data includes the Covid-19 pandemic and a highly uncertain time for professional footballers, many of whom lower

down the leagues faced the risk of losing their livelihoods when the virus halted the season.

The issue of mental health in sport, and among men more broadly, has substantially grown in visibility over recent years. Heads Up, a campaign last season run jointly by the Football Association and the charity Heads Together, sought to "change the conversation" over mental health, by recognising it as being on a par with physical health, and encouraging discussion.

Surya's shot-making was perfect: Rohit

Abu Dhabi, Oct 7 (PTI): Mumbai Indians captain Rohit Sharma feels that Suryakumar Yadav's shot selection was perfect during their team's comprehensive win over Rajasthan Royals in an IPL match here.

Yadav was back among the runs with a 47-ball 79, propelling Mumbai Indians to 193 for 4. Then, their bowlers led by Jasprit Bumrah bundled out Rajasthan Royals for 136 to register a 57-run win here on Tuesday.

"It (a big knock) was coming, I spoke to him (Surya) before the game as well. He was batting really well all these games. He got off to a good start and it was just about making sure that the shot making sometimes can be very very important and today his shot-making was perfect," Rohit said after the

match. "We wanted him to bat till the end because of those innovative shots that he has, it was quite handy towards the end."

Rohit said the pitches in the UAE were conducive to the pacers and it was good to see his bowlers exploit the conditions well.

"When we knew that the IPL is going to happen in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, we were not sure how the pitches were going to be, whether the pace battery we have got will be helpful or not. But coming here and looking at the pitches here, it is quite helpful for the seamers.

"Today it was nipping around to start with and towards the end as well, so good to have guys like those (the pacers) in your squad who can exploit the conditions very well, said Rohit.

Royals skipper Steve Smith blamed the top-order for his side's third straight loss.

"Obviously, losing wickets early does not help us. We haven't been able to get off to a good start in the last three games. So outside of Jos (Buttler) and Jofra (Archer) in the end there, we have got to do a bit of work with our batting, I'm sure, Smith said.

"I don't think we need to panic too much. It is just about implementing our plans and playing some good cricket for longer, we have not been able to do that in the last three games and we got to turn that around quickly."

Smith also informed that star England all-rounder Ben Stokes will not be available till October 10. Stokes is currently undergoing a mandatory quarantine.

2 scientists win Nobel chemistry prize for 'gene scissors'

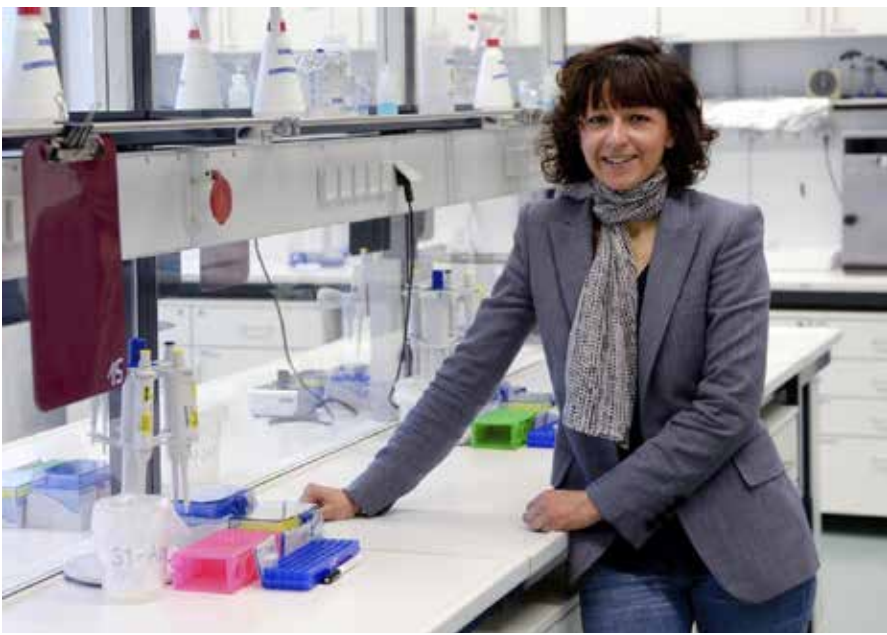
STOCKHOLM (AP): Two scientists won the Nobel Prize in chemistry Wednesday for developing a method of genome editing likened to "molecular scissors" that offer the promise of one day curing inherited diseases and even cancer.

Working on opposite sides of the Atlantic, Frenchwoman Emmanuelle Charpentier and American Jennifer A. Doudna developed a method known as CRISPR/Cas9 that can be used to change the DNA of animals, plants and microorganisms with extremely high precision.

"There is enormous power in this genetic tool, which affects us all," said Claes Gustafsson, chair of the Nobel Committee for Chemistry. "It has not only revolutionized basic science, but also resulted in innovative crops and will lead to groundbreaking new medical treatments."

Gustafsson said that, as a result, any genome can now be edited "to fix genetic damage," adding that the tool "will provide humankind with great opportunities."

But he cautioned that the "enormous power of this technology means we have to use it with



great care." It has already raised serious ethical questions in the scientific community. Most of the world became more aware of CRISPR in 2018, when Chinese scientist Dr. He Jiankui revealed he had helped make the world's first gene-edited babies, to try to engineer resistance to future infection with the AIDS virus. His work was denounced worldwide as unsafe human experimentation because of the risk of causing unintended changes that can pass to future generations, and he's currently in prison.

In September, an international panel of experts issued a report

saying it's still too soon to try to make genetically edited babies because the science isn't advanced enough to ensure safety, but they mapped a pathway for any countries that want to consider it.

"I was very emotional, I have to say," Charpentier, 51, told reporters by phone from Berlin after hearing of the award, announced Wednesday in Stockholm by the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences.

Asked about the fact that it was the first time that two women have won the chemistry Nobel together, Charpentier said that while she con-

siders herself first and foremost a scientist, she hoped it would encourage others.

"I wish that this will provide a positive message to young girls who would like to follow the path of science," she said.

Doudna told The Associated Press about her surprise at receiving the early morning call.

"I literally just found out, I'm in shock," she said. "I was sound asleep." "My greatest hope is that it's used for good, to uncover new mysteries in biology and to benefit humankind," Doudna said.

The Broad Institute at Harvard and MIT have

been in a long court fight over patents on CRISPR technology, and many other scientists did important work on it, but Doudna and Charpentier have been most consistently honored with prizes for turning it into an easily usable tool.

The prestigious award comes with a gold medal and prize money of 10 million kronor (more than \$1.1 million), courtesy of a bequest left more than a century ago by the prize's creator, Swedish inventor Alfred Nobel. The amount was increased recently to adjust for inflation.

On Monday, the Nobel Committee awarded the prize for physiology and medicine to Americans Harvey J. Alter and Charles M. Rice and British-born scientist Michael Houghton for discovering the liver-ravaging hepatitis C virus. Tuesday's prize for physics went to Roger Penrose of Britain, Reinhard Genzel of Germany, and Andrea Ghez of the United States for their breakthroughs in understanding the mysteries of cosmic black holes.

The other prizes are for outstanding work in the fields of literature, peace and economics.

Greek court rules Golden Dawn party criminal organization

ATHENS, GREECE (AP): A Greek court ruled on Wednesday that the far-right Golden Dawn party was operating as a criminal organization, delivering landmark guilty verdicts following a politically charged five-year trial against dozens of defendants.

The court ruled that seven of the 18 former lawmakers, including Nikos Michaloliakos, the head of the party which had become Greece's third largest during the country's financial crisis, were guilty of leading a criminal organization. The others were found guilty of participating in a criminal organization.

As news of the guilty verdicts broke, cheers and celebrations erupted among the crowd of at least 20,000 people gathered in an anti-fascist rally outside the Athens courthouse. A small group threw Molotovs and stones, with police responding with tear gas and water cannon.

The marathon trial had been assessing four cases rolled into one: the 2013 fatal stabbing of Greek rap singer Pavlos Fyssas, physical attacks on Egyptian fishermen in 2012 and on left-wing activists in 2013, and whether Golden Dawn was operating as a criminal organization.

The 68 defendants included the 18 former lawmakers from the party that was founded in the 1980s as a neo-Nazi organization and rose in prominence during the country's decade-long financial crisis.

Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis said the verdict "ends a traumatic cycle" in the country's public life.

"Its political dimension has, fortunately, been judged by the victory of democracy, which expelled the Nazi formation from Parliament (in elections)," he said. "Now, the independent judiciary is giving its own answer."

The three-member panel of judges also

found Giorgos Roupakias guilty of the murder of Fyssas, prompting applause inside the courtroom and among the crowd outside. Roupakias had been accused of being a party supporter who delivered the fatal stab wounds to Fyssas. Another 15 defendants — none of them former lawmakers — were convicted as accomplices.

Leaving the courthouse, Fyssas' mother Magda Fyssas, who had attended nearly every court session over the last five years, raised her arms and shouted: "Pavlos did it. My son!"

All five people accused of attempted murder against the fishermen were also found guilty, while the four accused of attempted murder in the attacks against left-wing activists were found guilty of the lesser charge of causing bodily harm.

Only 11 of the 68 defendants were present, with the rest represented by their lawyers. None of the former Golden Dawn lawmakers were in court.

"The ruling demonstrates that they were just a gang of knife-wielding thugs who took their orders from the top," said Thanassis Kambayiannis, one of the lawyers representing the fishermen.

After the verdicts, defense lawyers began summations ahead of sentencing, a process that could last several days. Those convicted of leading a criminal organization face up to 15 years in prison, while the others face up to 10 years. Roupakias faces a life sentence.

"Today marks a huge victory for justice and respect for Greece and the entire world," Eva Cosse, Greece researcher at Human Rights Watch, told The Associated Press. "It sends a strong message that hate crimes are not and should not be tolerated in a democratic society."

Security was tight at the courthouse, with around 2,000 police,

drones and a police helicopter deployed.

The crowd at the anti-fascist rally waved banners with slogans including "Fyssas lives, crush the Nazis," and chanted "The people demand the Nazis in jail." More than 5,000 people held a similar rally in the northern city of Thessaloniki.

Outside the courthouse, protester George Kounanis, who works as an employment equality campaigner for LGBT workers, said he was relieved by the verdict.

"We have lived under the threat they posed for years. They have beaten, threatened and verbally abused same sex couples. They hate everything that is not Greek and macho," he said. "But we never cowed and never stopped speaking out against them. So it does feel like a vindication. A lot of people supported them, so we cannot be complacent."

Politicians from across the political spectrum, from the governing conservative New Democracy party to Greece's Communist Party and the former governing left-wing Syriza party, also attended.

At the crux of the case was whether the string of violent attacks could be linked to Golden Dawn's leadership. During the trial, the prosecutor recommended the acquittal of many of the party members for lack of evidence.

Golden Dawn denies any direct link to the attacks and described the trial and charges against the party's leadership as an "unprecedented conspiracy" aimed at curbing its rise in popularity.

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Experts call Trump's rosy virus message misguided

WASHINGTON, Oct 7 (AP): Should people fear the coronavirus?

Public health experts say 1 million worldwide deaths are among reasons to be concerned, if not fearful, and to take everyday precautions despite rosy advice from the still-recovering president.

Don't let it dominate you. Don't be afraid of it. You're going to beat it, Donald Trump said in a White House video released after he left the hospital Monday.

In the United States alone, more than 210,000 people weren't able to beat it.

The seven-day rolling average for new U.S. cases has climbed over the past two weeks to almost 42,000 per day. The nation also sees more than 700 COVID-19 deaths each day. COVID-19 also is deadlier than the flu, despite Trump's claim otherwise. Flu has killed 12,000 to 61,000 Americans annually since 2010, according to CDC estimates.

It is true that the vast majority of people who get COVID-19 develop only mild symptoms. But experts can't predict which patients will develop dangerous or deadly infections. And only a small percentage of Americans have been sickened by the coronavirus, meaning the vast majority are still at risk for infection.

It is true, as Trump said in the video, that medicines have been found that can treat the virus, reducing chances for severe illness and death. But there is still no cure for it and no definitive date for when an effective vaccine might become widely available.

Japan seeks to boost catch limits of prized bluefin tuna

MITO, Oct 7 (AP): Japan has proposed raising its catch quotas for Pacific bluefin tuna, a fish so highly prized for sushi and sashimi that its population is at less than 5% of historical levels.

An online meeting of countries that manage the Pacific bluefin that began Tuesday is studying the proposal to raise Japan's catch limits for both smaller and larger bluefin tuna by 20%.

A slight improvement in the spawning population for the fish has raised confidence that it can recover from decades of overfishing. But conservation experts say increasing catch limits too soon could undo progress toward restoring the species.

Increasing harvests of such fish could also drive prices lower, making the industry less profitable in the long run, the Pew Charitable Trusts said in a report issued Tuesday.

The report, Netting Billions 2020: A Global Tuna Valuation, put the market value of seven tuna species including bluefin at 40.8 billion in 2018. Despite increased catches, that was a decrease from 41.6 billion in 2012.

Just because increasing catch is sustainable does not mean it is

always the right thing to do," said Grantly Galland, an officer in Pew's international fisheries team.

Prices for most species of tuna have fallen due to oversupply of caught fish, he said.

The meeting of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission and the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission includes more than two dozen countries that collaborate to manage fisheries on the high seas and curb illegal and unauthorized fishing and other activities that endanger highly migratory species such as the Pacific bluefin.

The countries participating in management of the Pacific bluefin committed in 2017 to reducing their catches to help return the species to 20% of its historic size by 2034.

Japan plays a critical role in the survival of the species not just because of its huge appetite for the fish. The Pacific bluefin spawns almost entirely in seas near Japan and Korea. Japanese fishermen also capture small tuna to be farmed to maturity, although the number of traditional artisanal fishermen has fallen in recent years as younger Japanese choose not to engage in such dangerous

and difficult work.

The latest data show the spawning stock biomass of the Pacific bluefin, an indicator of the fish's ability to reproduce at a sustainable level, rising to about 28,000 metric tons in 2018 from 10,837 metric tons in 2010.

That is still less than half the estimate for 1995 of a spawning stock biomass of 62,784 metric tons. It puts the species at about 4.5% of the baseline level it would be at if there were no fishing at all, up from 4% several years ago.

Demand for bluefin tuna is such that any progress draws pressure for bigger catches. Last week, the Marine Stewardship Council granted certification for a Japanese fishery's Atlantic bluefin, over conservationists' objections that such a move might hinder its long-term recovery.

In 2019, Japan reported a catch of 3,757 tons of smaller tuna and 5,132 of larger tuna, according to documents prepared for the online meeting. To comply with its limits, it transferred 250 tons of its catch quota for smaller Pacific bluefin to its limit for the larger ones, according to documents prepared for this week's online conference.

Jimmy Kimmel, Sammy Hagar react to death of Eddie Van Halen

Reaction to the death of guitar rock god Eddie Van Halen, who passed away Tuesday at age 65 after battling cancer.

"Heartbroken and speechless. My love to the family," tweeted Sammy Hagar.

"Sad to hear Eddie Van Halen has passed away. A guitar innovator with a fierce spirit of musical and technical exploration. Prayers and thoughts with his family and friends," Yusuf/Cat Stevens tweeted.

"Rest in peace guitar legend Eddie Van Halen. Broken heart We will miss you," tweeted Billy Idol.

"Two of the best hours of my life were spent chatting with Eddie Van Halen. A great musician, yes - also a funny and lovely guy who will be missed terribly. Sending love to Janie, Wolf, Alex & all those who loved him," Jimmy Kimmel tweeted.

"My heart is broken. Eddie was not only a Guitar God, but a genuinely beautiful soul. Rest in peace, Eddie!" Gene Simmons tweeted.

"I'm so grateful Wolfie and I were able to hold you in your last moments. I will see you in our next life," Van Halen's ex-wife Valerie Bertinelli wrote on Instagram.

"Crushed. So (expletive) crushed. RIP Eddie Van Halen. You changed our world. You were the Mozart of rock guitar. Travel safe rockstar," tweeted Nikki Sixx.

"Oh NO! Speechless. A trailblazer and someone who always gave everything to his music. A good soul. I remember first seeing him playing at the

Starwood in 1976 and he WAS Eddie Van Halen. So shocked and sad. My condolences to Wolfie and the family," Paul Stanley tweeted.

"I'm just devastated to hear the news of the passing of my dear friend Eddie Van Halen. He fought a long and hard battle with his cancer right to the very

or a day of the week in the year 2020 if we didn't at least get 22 simultaneous pieces of awful every few minutes. RIP #VanHalen," actor Josh Gad tweeted.

"Rest In Peace to a Eddie Van Halen, Rock God. Favorite riff: Eruption. What's yours?," tweeted Papa Roach.

"RIP Eddie Van Halen. Van Halen



PRETTY IN PARIS! American-French actress, Lily-Rose Depp attended the Chanel show during Paris Fashion Week.

Elisabeth Moss to star as former US Congresswoman Katie Hill in new movie

LOS ANGELES, OCT 7 (PTI): Actor Elisabeth Moss will portray former US Congresswoman Katie Hill in an upcoming movie from Blumhouse TV.

According to Variety, the movie is an official adaptation of Hill's memoir "She Will Rise: Becoming a Warrior in the Battle for True Equality".

Blumhouse TV optioned the book, which was released in August, and will produce alongside Michael Seitzman and his banner Maniac Productions, and Moss's production company Love & Squalor Pictures.

Michael Seitzman, who wrote the feature film "North Country", will pen the screenplay for the project.

The book follows Hill as a young woman with no prior political experience whose charm and common sense won over the people in her district and thrust her into the halls of power in Washington.

"While her brash confidence won her powerful allies and infuriated her enemies, it was privately concealing a cycle of domestic abuse she was trapped in at home, infamously culminating in the release of intimate photos and the revelation of her own admitted per-

sonal mistakes that would eventually result in her stunning fall from grace," the official logline read.

Moss said she is honoured to play Hill in the movie and help in telling her story to the world.

"Her strength and work to amplify women's voices is incredibly inspiring to me and



her experiences could not be more important for us to magnify right now. As always, Jason and the Blumhouse team are such incredible partners and Lindsey and I are thrilled to make something powerful with them and Michael," she added.

Hill will serve as an executive producer on the movie alongside Moss, Lindsey McManus and Jeremy Gold.

Netflix sets premiere date for 'Selena: The Series'

LOS ANGELES, OCT 7 (PTI): "Selena: The Series", a biographical drama about Tejano music legend Selena Quintanilla, will start streaming on Netflix from December 4, the streamer has announced.

The project is a coming-of-age story following Selena Quintanilla (played by Christian Serratos) as her dreams come true and all the heart-wrenching and life-changing choices she and her family have to make as they navigate success, family, and music.

The announcement was made on Wednesday via Netflix's Twitter page Con Todo. A teaser trailer and poster art were also released in a tweet with the message "Every legend begins with a dream".

Julio Macias, Jesse Posey, Hunter Reese Pena, and Carlos Alfredo Jr are set as series regulars, with Juan Martinez, Daniela Estrada and Paul Rodriguez Jr in recurring roles. Hiromi Kamata is directing the first part, which consists of six one-hour episodes. Moises Zamora is the writer and executive producer on the series.

Jaime Davila, Rico Martinez, Suzette Quintanilla, actor and sister of Selena Quintanilla, and Simran A Singh are also attached to executive produce. Campanario Entertainment is the production banner behind the series.

Also part of the cast are Gabriel Chavarria, Ricardo Chavira, Noemi Gonzalez, Seidy Lopez, and Madison Taylor Baez.



A 1997 biopic on Selena Quintanilla explored the life story of the singer, which starred Jennifer Lopez in the title role.

One of the most celebrated Mexican-American performers in the late 20th century, Selena Quintanilla earned the title of Queen of Tejano music.

Guitar rock god Eddie Van Halen dies of cancer at 65

NEW YORK, OCT 7 (AP): Eddie Van Halen, the guitar virtuoso whose blinding speed, control and innovation propelled his band Van Halen into one of hard rock's biggest groups, fueled the unmistakable fiery solo in Michael Jackson's hit Beat It and became elevated to the status of rock god, has died.

He was 65 A person close to Van Halen's family confirmed the rocker died Tuesday due to cancer.

The person was not authorized to publicly release details in advance of an official announcement.

With his distinct solos, Eddie Van Halen fueled the ultimate California party band and helped knock disco off the charts starting in the late 1970s with his band's self-titled debut album and then with the blockbuster record 1984, which contains the classics Jump, Panama and Hot for Teacher.

Van Halen is among the top 20 best-selling artists of all time and the band was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2007.

Rolling Stone magazine put Eddie Van Halen at No 8 in its list of the 100 greatest guitarists.

ARIES:

We all have an idea of the life we want to create, and what we need in order to achieve the desired results. However, things don't always go in accordance with our plan, Aries, in which case we are quick to adopt the failure narrative. Today, the cards are urging you to perceive your reality from a different perspective. To make a conscious effort to replace 'rejection' with 'redirection'. You will soon understand why things unfolded the way they did. Tip: Think of this rejection as a redirection.

TAURUS:

Endings are often associated with pain, but in your case they will prove to be liberating in many ways. Word for the wise: let go with loving awareness and know that something better awaits you on the other side of this transition. As such, this is a time of going with the flow; of feeling a sense of oneness with the cosmic currents. Follow the path of least resistance and know that many mysteries will be revealed to you in the process. Tip: A blessed change is on the cards.

GEMINI:

Life does give us second chances—and this is yours, Gemini! Something you may have rejected in the past is finding its way back into your experience. Listen to the voice in your head that's telling you this is worth a shot. Remember, the Universe can only show us an opening. It's what we make of the given opportunities that ultimately defines our future. For some of you, a relocation may be on the cards too. Let go of the need to discuss this offer with other people and trust what you are being guided to do. Tip: A relocation may be on the cards.

CANCER:

The divine arts continue to take centre stage in the Cancer HQ.

You're delving into the world of mysteries like never before and realising that the veil that separates us from the unseen realms is but an illusion. A chance encounter with a mentor or guide from the field will prove to be beneficial. Share your experiences, but also be receptive to what they have to say. Keeping your ego aside is the only way to receive this sacred information. On the downside, your mundane reality may not be half as exciting at the moment.

Tip: The unseen realms is where the magic is at!

LEO:

They say that everything in life is essentially a trade-off, but that doesn't have to be a bad thing. Today, the cards are urging you to weigh your options carefully. What's opening for you looks promising, but it requires you to let go of the past. Examine the attachments that are keeping you tied to where you are. Ask yourself whether they are supporting your growth. Answering in the negative is a good sign that you need to move on, Leo.

Tip: Let go of the attachments that are keeping you tied to your past.

VIRGO:

The day you plant the seed is not the day you eat the fruit. This phase of your life requires you to be patient with your dreams as you tend to your garden with care. You will be rewarded with a magnificent harvest—of this you can be sure. But that doesn't mean your fears regarding the future won't show up. The key is to step into the role of the observer, to trust in your divine wisdom, and take the necessary actions without getting attached to a specific outcome.

Tip: Tend to your garden with care.

LIBRA:

Your birthday month sees you looking back at the trajectory of your

life and assessing the things that have and haven't worked for you. It's been a series of trial and error, but you wouldn't trade your failures for anything. You are who you are today because you gave yourself the permission to trip and fall. However, the next level of your life is about upgrading from rookie to expert—a process that requires you to integrate your past learnings with loving awareness. PS: The best is yet to come, Libra!

Tip: Celebrate who you are today. What a long way you have come!

SCORPIO:

You win some, you lose some—and that's just the way life unfolds. But the trouble is, we tend to give a lot more power to our failures. Could you be looking at the cup as half empty, Scorpio? Redirect your gaze to all that's working out for you, and know that your trust in the divine forces will turn the wheel of fortune around. While you're at it, let go of your weapons "and" your defensiveness. Finding a way to work with, rather than against the team, will help advance your career.

Tip: Readjust your gaze.

SAGITTARIUS:

We're always in a rush to get somewhere or to achieve something. It's safe to say that this goal-oriented approach has killed our mojo and taken us away from the simple pleasures of life. Today, you're being asked to honour and acknowledge your body's need to slow down, and give yourself the love and care you deserve. Remember, we cannot go from action to action. It is by making space for rest and relaxation that we are able to refuel our reserves.

Tip: Rest it out.

CAPRICORN:

Capricorns in the family business will find that this is a time of

growth and expansion. Surprise, surprise! Too many cooks do not spoil the broth. The answer to working together harmoniously, however, lies in handling different aspects of the trade. Domestic bliss will continue to be a big theme for you—and spending time with your family will prove to be rewarding in so many ways. Getting ready to tie the knot? You may feel inspired to forge a deeper connection with your partner's tribe in the coming days.

Tip: Domestic bliss is on the cards.

AQUARIUS:

You're leaving the past and all the turmoil associated with it behind—even though you cannot see it yet. This is a time of transitions, Aquarius. Trust that you're being led towards calmer shores where peace and harmony will be yours to keep. But, before you move on, take a moment to offer a prayer of gratitude to the mysterious forces for the heartache too. As Amy Poehler once said, "Sometimes painful things can teach us lessons we didn't think we needed to know."

Tip: You are being led to a better place.

PISCES:

Not everything works out according to plan, and that can only be a good thing. Consider this rejection as a redirection, Pisces. Look through the eyes of wisdom and you will understand that the Universe is actually supporting your growth. On the upside, both creativity and spirituality are blessed as a result of this cosmic collab. Instead of doing things the way that you have always been, mix them up. The coming together of two seemingly contradicting ideas promises to bring forth magnificent results.

Tip: It's time to mix things up.