



**RAPPER LOGIC TO  
RETIRE FROM MUSIC  
AFTER RELEASE OF NEW  
ALBUM NO PRESSURE'**  
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**MANDELA WAS A FLAWED ICON.  
BUT WITHOUT HIM SOUTH AFRICA  
WOULD BE A SADDER PLACE**  
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**CHANDAN ROY SANYAL  
BEGINS SHOOTING FOR HIS  
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# SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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Pages 8 | ₹ 5

## Apni Party demands restoration of statehood to J-K

**SRINAGAR, JUL 18 (PTI):**

The Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party (JKAP) led by former finance minister Syed Altaf Bukhari on Saturday demanded the restoration of statehood for the union territory and domicile rights over land and jobs for its people.

A party delegation led by Bukhari, who is the JKAP president, called on Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Girish Chandra Murmu here to highlight socio-political and economic issues faced by the people of J-K, a spokesman of the party said.

He said the JKAP leaders held detailed discussions on various issues confronting the people, especially after the implementation of the J-K Reorganization Act, 2019.

The meeting was held in an amicable atmosphere and the Lt Governor gave a patient hearing to the delegation and assured all possible support from the government to redress the issues confronting people of Jammu and Kashmir, the spokesman said.

A memorandum highlighting some of the important political and socio-economic issues faced by the people of J-K was submitted to the Lt Governor, he said.

The party leaders demanded restoration of statehood to Jammu and Kashmir, saying an early announcement in this regard would further solidify the idea of pluralism and respectful coexistence in the region.

It is more than essential that restoration of statehood to J-K is considered as an immediate requirement for keeping up the spirit of coexistence and allowing a pluralistic blend to continue to shine in this part of the country. We take this opportunity to remind the government of India through your good office about its promise on restoration of statehood including establishment of a Legislative Council and in providing thereto reservation of seats for socially and economically backward classes, art culture, languages, literature and sports, read the memorandum.

The spokesman said the party also demanded domicile rights over land and jobs for the people of J-K.

While our party has been vehemently demanding domicile rights on land and jobs for the people of Jammu and Kashmir, the recent domicile order issued by the union government vis-à-vis the rights of residents of J-K on jobs reflects a casual approach.

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# COVID arrives simultaneously in Gangtok and Singtam

**WITH 19 NEW CASES AND TWO PATIENTS MAKING FULL RECOVERIES, SIKKIM NOW HAS 183 ACTIVE CASES**

## SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 18 JUL:**

Sikkim's COVID-19 tally reached 273 with 19 new cases being reported on Saturday. With 90 patients, including two on Saturday, having made full recoveries and getting discharged from hospital, the state has 183 active cases – seven lodged at Aayush Hospital in Gyalshing, West Sikkim, and 176 at STNM Hospital here.

The COVID wing at STNM Hospital currently has a capacity of 200 beds including the Triage facility. The pressure for beds is now being felt and there have been instances when doctors and health-workers on COVID duty have had to struggle with moving beds and making space wearing their cumbersome and uncomfortable PPEs.

This situation has now convinced the concerned authorities to

lodge asymptomatic patients at dedicated quarantine centres established elsewhere with arrangement for regular doctor visits and ambulances on standby to ferry passengers to hospitals if they develop symptoms requiring medical attention.

Meanwhile, in his daily health bulletin on Saturday, Health Department DG-cum-Secretary, Dr Pempa T Bhutia, informed that 12 of the 19 new cases were detected from 285 samples tested through RT-PCR at the VRD Lab at STNM Hospital on Friday.

The seven remaining

cases were through Rapid Antigen Testing of 481 samples, he informed.

While providing details of the new cases, Dr Bhutia informed that six persons tested positive during Rapid Antigen Testing in Rongli area – an SSB personnel from Lingtam, three fam-

ily members of positive patients from GREF and two secondary contacts.

They have all been shifted to the isolation ward at STNM Hospital.

He further informed that an employee of Agriculture Department also tested positive when she was taken to the flu clinic on Friday.

He mentioned that seven officials and staffs of the department were also sent for testing along with three primary contacts of the patient and results are awaited.

On the same, he added that if these direct contacts return positive, testing of other line contacts will begin. The Secretary in-

formed that during testing of eleven contacts of the Agriculture Department employee at Rangpo, one tested positive.

"We are conducting tests of three others who travelled in the same vehicle as the Agri Deptt employee and around 16 TNA staff who had also attended the funeral for which she had travelled to Rangpo. Our teams are working in Rangpo and Gangtok for contact tracing and all will be taken for the testing," he said. He mentioned even if they test negative, repeat testing will be conducted after seven days.

He informed that three village police personnel from Singtam police station have also tested positive and the police station has been contained and Health Department teams were conducting contact tracing at Rangpo and Singtam.



## Krishi Bhawan shut down after employee tests positive

### SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 18 JUL:**

The Agriculture Department has been shut till further orders and officers have been directed to work from home.

The department has directed its employees to remain under strict home quarantine till further notice and report for COVID-19 tests if necessary. They have been asked to report to the Additional Secretary if

they have come in contact with the positive person.

This move was necessitated after an Agriculture Department employee from the PMKSY cell tested positive for Novel Coronavirus today after having developed a fever on 14 July.

Krishi Bhawan, which houses the Agriculture and Horticulture Departments, as well as the Animal Husbandry Department have been ordered shut and sanitisation drives have begun there.

## KV NHPC Singtam makes history, tops Kolkata region



### SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 18 JUL:**

Kendriya Vidyalaya, NHPC, Balutar, made history by achieving 100% results with 82.93 Performance Index (PI), the highest among the 60 KVs of Kolkata Region.

In CBSE Class X results declared recently, 13 of the 29 students scored 90% and above.

Ashutosh Ranjan, s/o Jyoti Ranjan Kumar, Deputy Manager (IT), NHPC, topped the class with 96.6% marks.

The performance of students of KV NHPC Singtam in CBSE Class XII was also strong with 97.62% results.

Out of 42 students, 41 passed.

Harsh Jain, s/o Suren-der Jain, Singtam, topped the school in Commerce section with 94.4%, Khushboo Khatun, d/o Md Jubair of Singtam scored 89.8% in Science section and Aastha Giri, d/o Ram Parvesh Giri also of Singtam, scored 81.8% in Humanities section.

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## State Task Force reviews COVID situation, contains some areas, opens some others

### SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 18 JUL:**

Saturday was a tense day, especially for Gangtokians, with COVID reports coming from the resident population of the capital for the first time. With as many as 11 places declared containment zones, a flurry of official notifications, decisions and clarifications issued, anxiety ran high among the public.

The day began with the East district administration declared 8 areas as containment zones in East Sikkim.

The GREF camps at Chanmari, Penengla, Burtuk and GREF workshops at Penengla and Martam have been declared containment zones.

ITBP camps at Ling-



dum and Ranka and SSB Head Quarters at 32 Mile Middle Camp along with Golden Cross Pharma at Tarpin, Rorathang, have also been declared containment zones.

Later in the evening, three more places, Singtam police station and two buildings at Rangpo were declared contain-

ment zones.

In the afternoon, news broke of an employee of the Agriculture Department testing positive for COVID-19 following which the entire Krishi Bhawan at Tadong which houses the Agriculture and Horticulture Departments was closed off.

Officers and staff working in Agriculture

and Horticulture Departments have been directed to remain under strict home quarantine till further notice and conduct test, if necessary. The Department will also remain closed till further notice.

Further, employees have been asked to report to the Additional Secretary

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## 34,884 fresh cases push India's COVID-19 tally to 10,38,716; death toll reaches 26,273

**NEW DELHI, JULY 18 (PTI):** With 34,884 people testing positive for coronavirus in the last 24 hours, India's COVID-19 case-load surged to 10,38,716 while 6,53,750 patients have recovered from the disease so far, according to data by the Union Health Ministry.

The death toll due to COVID-19 rose to 26,273 with 671 fatalities reported in a day, the data updated at 8 am on Saturday showed.

At present, there are 3,58,692 active cases in the country, while 6,53,750 people have recovered so far and one has migrated.

"Around 62.94 per cent of



patients have recovered so far," an official said.

The total number of confirmed cases includes foreigners

This is the third consecutive day when the number of

COVID-19 cases increased by more than 30,000.

According to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), a cumulative total of 1,34,33,742 samples have been

tested for COVID-19 up to July 17 with 3,61,024 samples being tested on Friday.

Of the 671 deaths reported in the last 24 hours, 258 are from Maharashtra, 115 from Karnataka, 79 from Tamil Nadu, 42 from Andhra Pradesh, 38 from Uttar Pradesh, 26 each from West Bengal and Delhi, 17 from Gujarat, nine each from Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab, and eight each from Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan.

Telangana has reported seven fatalities followed by Haryana with five deaths, Jharkhand, Bihar and Odisha reported four each, Assam and Puducherry have

**turn to pg 02**



## Special plasma donation drive in Patna division

**PATNA, JUL 18 (PTI):** A special plasma donation drive has been launched in Bihar's Patna division, officials said on Saturday.

AIIMS, Patna has got the nod from the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) to conduct plasma therapy to treat serious COVID-19 patients in the state.

In view of the fast-spreading of Coronavirus cases in the state and low rate of plasma donation, a special plasma donation drive has been launched on Friday at the initiative of Patna, Divisional Commissioner, Sanjay Kumar Agarwal.

Of the nine persons who came forward to donate plasma on the first day of the special drive, three persons were not found fit on the parameters set for donating plasma while six other persons from Nalanda, Khagaria, Buxar and Begusarai districts donated their plasma, Agarwal said in an official release.

Earlier 18 people had donated their plasma before the launch of the special drive.

The official said 20 people have also agreed to donate plasma in next five days.

All the donors will be given 'Thank You Card' and 'Blood Donor Card' by the AIIMS, Patna the Divisional Commissioner said, adding that the card will help them receive one unit of blood whenever required for their family within a year.

All the donors will be honoured with 'Corona Yodha Samman' by the respective district administration very soon, Agarwal said.

The Patna Divisional Commissioner has directed all the district magistrates of Patna division to set up a special plasma donor cell in their respective districts.

The DMs will send plasma donors to AIIMS, Patna and ensure proper arrangements especially that of transportation so that plasma donors do not face any problems in commuting from their home for the purpose.

Patna division has six districts - Patna, Nalanda, Bhojpur, Buxar, Rohtas and Kaimur.

AIIMS, Patna has the facility of extracting plasma of four persons in a day, he said, adding that the capacity may be increased.

People will be counselled and motivated to donate plasma for which necessary steps being taken, Agarwal said.

Doctors say that any person, who has recovered from coronavirus and has been keeping healthy in past four weeks, can donate plasma.

# TN records all-time high of COVID-19 cases, fatalities

**CHENNAI, JUL 18 (PTI):** Tamil Nadu on Saturday reported its highest single day spike in Covid-19 infections as well as the number of daily deaths, with the total infection count crossing 1.65 lakh.

As many as 4,807 new positive cases of Coronavirus were reported from different parts of the state on Saturday, even as over 3,049 people were discharged after recovery.

The state saw 88 fatalities, the highest single day toll so far, pushing the death toll to 2,403, a health department bulletin said.

With the addition of the new COVID-19 cases, the infection count has gone up to 1,65,714.

Today's recoveries of 3,049 pushed those discharged after treatment to 1,13,856, the bulletin



said. Active cases stood at 49,452.

Due to ramped up testing, as many as 48,195 samples were examined, pushing the cumulative tally to 18,79,499, the bulletin said.

Chennai reported 1,219 fresh Covid-19 in-

fections. Its overall numbers clocked 84,598 as of Saturday.

According to the bulletin, six of the 88 deceased were persons with "no comorbidities" and the victims included

a 31-year-old man from the city who died of 'acute respiratory fail-

ure'. Among comorbid cases was a 29-year-old woman from Salem, suffering from systemic hypertension, and she died due to respiratory failure, the bulletin said.

As many as 15 octogenarians were among those who succumbed to the virus.

Besides Chennai's 1,219 new infections on Saturday, Tiruvallur (370) and Chengalpattu with 323 new cases too reported significantly high numbers.

Vellore recorded 191, Madurai 185, Thanjavur 181, Virudhunagar 179, Sivaganga 170, Tuticorin 160, Tirunelveli 155, Kanyakumari and Theni 144 each, Tiruchirappalli 124, Coimbatore 118, Ranipet 109 cases and Dindigul 104.

Among the new COVID-19 cases reported today, 76 had returned from various domestic and overseas locations.

A government run and a private laboratory each have received approval to conduct testing of samples, taking the number of facilities operating in the state to 111, the bulletin said.

## Nepal's ruling communist party's top decision-making body meets to end Oli-Prachanda infighting

**KATHMANDU, JUL 18 (PTI):** Nepal's ruling communist party's top decision-making body met on Saturday to try and end the tussle for power between Prime Minister K P Sharma Oli and former premier Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda'. The meeting of the nine-member Central Secretariat started at around 3.15 pm at the official residence of the prime minister at Baluwatar, according to Oli's press advisor Surya Thapa.

The highest body of the party is expected to discuss the agenda to be presented during Sunday's Standing Committee meeting, which has been postponed five times in recent weeks.

The Standing Committee meeting was postponed until Sunday to give more time to Oli and the rival faction led by Prachanda, the executive chairman of the Nepal Communist Party (NCP) to have more talks to end the intra-party infighting.

Prime Minister Oli, Prachanda, senior leader Madhav Kumar Nepal and Jhalanath Khanal among others are participating in the Central Secretariat meeting.

The meeting will also discuss ways to settle the current dispute surfacing in the party's leadership.

The NCP called a secretariat meeting after the two top leaders agreed to call a conclave of the highest body of the party ahead of the 45-member Standing Committee meeting on Sunday in a bid to strike a power-sharing deal by sorting out their differences.

During previous meetings, Oli has refused to resign or give up his position as chairman of the NCP as demanded by the faction led by Prachanda.

Sunday's Standing Committee meeting is expected to fix the date for the CWC meeting, which will ultimately decide the future of Prime Minister Oli, Ganesh Shah, a Standing Committee member, said.

Oli and Prachanda have held at least eight meetings in recent weeks to sort out the differences between them. But, as the Prime Minister did not accept the condition of a one-man-one-post, the talks failed, party sources said. Top NCP leaders, including 'Prachanda', have been demanding Prime Minister Oli's resignation, saying his recent anti-India remarks were "neither politically correct nor diplomatically appropriate." They are also against Oli's autocratic style of functioning.

The differences grew further after Oli alleged that some of the ruling party leaders are aligning with the southern neighbour to remove him from power after his government issued a new political map incorporating three Indian territories of Kalapani, Lipulekh and Limpiyadhura.

The differences between the two factions of the NCP, one led by Oli and the other led by Prachanda on the issue of power-sharing, intensified after the prime minister unilaterally decided to prorogue the budget session of Parliament.

## Chit fund probe panel office closed



**CUTTACK, JUL 18 (PTI):** The Justice M M Das Commission of Enquiry, which was probing into the chit fund scam in Odisha for nearly six years, has now suspended its functioning after closing its office here on Saturday, an official said.

"The office of the commission was closed following 'no response' from the state government with regard to the extension of its tenure, which had ended in February this year", an official of the Commission said.

Even the state government was yet to respond to the commission's letter with regard to taking possession of

the official documents and accessories, he said.

After its seventh interim report and eighth extension, the tenure of the Commission of Enquiry was not extended.

Following which, the commission had written to the state government last month to take possession of the documents and accessories by July 17. "When no response came till yesterday (Friday), we locked the office from today", he said.

The commission was set up in July 2013 with Justice RK Patra as its head. Justice Das headed the panel in February 2015 following the death of Patra. The commission

had received affidavits from around 15 lakh investors, who had invested their money in about 500 chit fund companies with a combined amount of Rs 3,000 crore.

The state government had set up a corpus fund of Rs 300 crore in 2016 to pay the 'small' investors, who had invested less than Rs 10,000 in various chit fund companies.

Following the recommendation of the commission, at least 2,000 small investors have got back their invested amount.

Sources said around 8 lakh affidavits from the investors have not been attended to yet.

## No entry for devotees from outside MP in Mahakal temple

**UJJAIN, JUL 18 (PTI):** Devotees from outside Madhya Pradesh will not be allowed to enter the Mahakal temple campus here from July 20 in view of the rising number of COVID-19 cases, an official said on Saturday.

This decision has been taken by the management committee of the temple due to fear that infection might spread if devotees from outside the state are al-

lowed, said temple administrator Sujan Singh Rawat. 'Mahakal' temple is one of the 12 "jyotirlingas" of Lord Shiva which attracts lakhs of devotees every year.

"Amid rising number of cases in Madhya Pradesh, a decision has been taken to ban the entry of devotees coming from other states from Monday," said Rawat.

Ujjain contributed 942 COVID-19 cases in

the state's tally of 21,082 cases as on July 17, as per the health department.

Lakhs of devotees from various parts of the country visit the temple during the holy month of Sawan.

"Nowadays, 8,000 devotees are being given entry inside the temple every day through the online booking system," he said, adding that facility of online darshan has also been made available.

## 268 new COVID-19 cases in Surat, highest in Gujarat

**SURAT, JUL 18 (PTI):** Surat district reported 268 new coronavirus cases on Saturday, taking its case tally to 9,973, the Gujarat health department said in a release here.

As in the last several days, the district again reported the highest number of new coronavirus patients in Gujarat. Overall rise in cases in the state was 960 on Saturday.

With ten fatalities, the COVID-19 death toll in the district rose to 426, the health department said.

337 patients were discharged from hospitals after recovery. The number of recovered patients in the district is now 6,315.

Of 268 new cases, 203 were found in Surat city,

which also accounted for seven out of ten deaths.

Katargam in Surat city reported 30 cases, the highest among city zones. The area has reported 2,008 coronavirus cases so far.

The local administration said that it has carried out a health survey of 11.34 lakh people so far.

Amid rising number of cases, some diamond and textile units in the city have temporarily suspended operations voluntarily, while other diamond units were sealed by the authorities after new cases were reported among their employees.

Several diamond units in Umarwada and Varachha localities remain closed.

### Apni Party...

Being a government-issued order and not a law made by Parliament, the new gazette notification regarding domicile rule for J-K residents is not immune to any judicial review, the spokesman said.

Our demand is that those residents of J-K who have already a valid Permanent Resident Certificate should not be asked for domicile certificates both for possession of land and immovable property or for applying to any government jobs, he said.

The party leaders also demanded security for political activists, the release of detainees, withdrawal of cases against the youth, ensuring J-K Bank's autonomy, support for industry and the manufacturing sector, revival of tourism and restoration of high-speed 4G internet in the UT.

The delegation was assured that a few of the demands mentioned in the memorandum which are exclusively within the jurisdiction of the union government would be forwarded to the concerned quarters with specific recommendations from the J-K government, the spokesman said.

### ANTHYESTI KRIYA

The Anthyesti Kriya of our beloved father, Lt DB Shrestha who left for his heavenly abode on 10 July falls on 22 Jul, 2020 (Wednesday).

We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to all our friends, relatives and well wishers who have stood by us during our time of bereavement and request all to pray for the departed soul of our beloved father.

The Anthyesti Kriya will be held at Shrestha Building (our residence), Below Janta Bhawan, DPH Area, Gangtok.

**Shanti Shrestha**

**Dr Kaushilya & Neeraj Pradhan: 9933922696**

**Sushila & Saroj Pradhan**

**Naresh & Varsha Shrestha: 9433169663.**



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### LAND FOR SALE

A land measuring an area for 50x32 1/2 at Roadside 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.

### GENERAL LAND FOR SALE

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

### 34,884 fresh...

registered three each, Chhattisgarh and Goa reported two each while Kerala and Uttarakhand have registered a fatality each

Of the total 26,273 deaths reported so far, Maharashtra accounted for the highest 11,452 fatalities followed by Delhi with 3,571 deaths, Tamil Nadu 2,315, Gujarat 2,106, Karnataka 1,147, Uttar Pradesh 1,084, West Bengal 1,049, Madhya Pradesh 697 and Rajasthan 546

So far 534 people have died of COVID-19 in Andhra Pradesh, 403 in Telangana, 327 in Haryana, 239 in Punjab, 231 in Jammu and Kashmir, 201 in Bihar, 83 in Odisha, 51 in Uttarakhand

and Assam each, 46 in Jharkhand and 38 in Kerala

Puducherry has registered 25 deaths, Chhattisgarh 23, Goa 21, Himachal Pradesh and Chandigarh 11 each, Arunachal Pradesh and Tripura three each, Meghalaya and Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu two each while Ladakh has reported one fatality

The Health Ministry stressed that more than 70 per cent of the deaths occurred due to comorbidities

Maharashtra has reported the highest number of cases at 2,92,589 followed by Tamil Nadu at 1,60,907, Delhi at 1,20,107, Karnataka at 55,115, Gujarat at 46,430, Uttar Pradesh at 45,163

and Telangana at 42,496

The number of COVID-19 cases has gone up to 40,646 in Andhra Pradesh, 38,011 in West Bengal, 27,789 in Rajasthan, 24,797 in Haryana, 23,589 in Bihar and 21,081 in Madhya Pradesh.

Assam has instances of 20,646 infections, Odisha 16,110 and Jammu and Kashmir 12,757 cases. Kerala has reported 11,066 novel coronavirus infections so far, while Punjab has 9,442 cases

A total of 4,964 have been infected by the virus in Chhattisgarh, 4,921 in Jharkhand, 4,102 in Uttarakhand, 3,304 in Goa, 2,366 in Tripura, 1,832 in Puducherry, 1,800 in Manipur, 1,417 in

Himachal Pradesh and 1,151 in Ladakh. Nagaland has recorded 956 COVID-19 cases, Chandigarh 660, Arunachal Pradesh 609 and Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu together have reported 585 cases

Meghalaya has reported 403 cases, Mizoram 282, Sikkim has registered 266 infections so far, while Andaman and Nicobar Islands has recorded 194 cases

"Our figures are being reconciled with the ICMR," the ministry said, adding that 163 cases are being reassigned to states

State-wise distribution is subject to further verification and reconciliation, it added.



# AIIMS panel nod to human clinical trial of Covaxin

**NEW DELHI, JUL 18 (PTI):**

The AIIMS Ethics Committee on Saturday gave its nod for a human clinical trial of the indigenously developed COVID-19 vaccine candidate Covaxin following which the premier hospital is likely to begin the exercise by enrolling healthy volunteers from Monday.

AIIMS-Delhi is among the 12 sites selected by the Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR) for conducting phase I and II human trials of Covaxin. In phase I, the vaccine would be tested on 375 volunteers and the maximum of 100 of them would be from AIIMS.

"The AIIMS Ethics Committee gave its approval for starting the human clinical trial of the indigenously developed Covaxin today.



Healthy volunteers having no comorbid conditions and without a history of COVID-19, aged more than 18 years and less than 55 years, would be eligible to participate in the randomised, double-blind, placebo-controlled clinical trial," Dr Sanjay Rai, Professor at the Centre for Community Medicine at AIIMS said.

"Few volunteers have already registered for the trial. We would start the screening of the individ-

uals and evaluate their health condition from Monday onwards before vaccinating them," Rai, who is also the principal investigator of the study, said.

Anybody willing to participate in the trial can send an email to Ctaaiims.covid19@gmail.com or an SMS to or call on 7428847499, he said. The institute may also put up these contact details on its website.

According to Rai, the Ethics Committee had

raised few concerns in the protocol submitted for carrying out of the trial. "Those concerns were addressed to following which the EC gave its approval to begin the trial by the premier institute," he said.

COVID-19 vaccine candidate Covaxin, developed by the Hyderabad-based Bharat Biotech in collaboration with the ICMR and the National Institute of Virology (NIV), had recently got the nod for human

clinical trials from the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI).

Noting that this was the first indigenous vaccine being developed by India, ICMR Director General Dr Balram Bhargava in a letter to principal investigators of the 12 sites recently had asked them to fast-track the human clinical trial approvals stating it is one of the "top priority projects which is being monitored at the top-most level of the government".

The trials have so far started in AIIMS, Patna and some more sites.

The DCGI has permitted two vaccines -- one developed by the Bharat Biotech International Limited in collaboration with the ICMR and another one by Zydus Cadila Healthcare Ltd to go in for phase I and II human

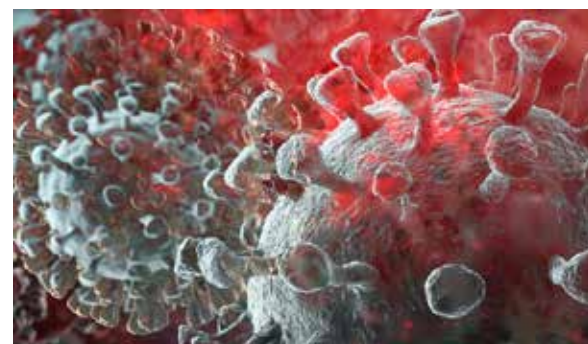
clinical trials.

Bhargava had said these two vaccine candidates have undergone successful toxicity studies in rats, mice and rabbits and these data was submitted to DCGI following which both got clearance to start the early phase human trials early this month.

They have got their sites ready and approximately 1,000 human volunteers would be participating in the exercise for each of the two indigenously developed vaccine candidates, he had said.

Since India is one of the largest vaccine producers in the world, it is the country's "moral responsibility" to fast-track vaccine development process to break the chain of coronavirus transmission, he had said.

## Kannada actor Hulivana Gangadhar dies due to COVID-19



**BENGALURU, JUL 18 (PTI):**

Veteran Kannada film actor Hulvana Gangadharaiah has died due to COVID-19 in a private hospital, hospital sources said on Saturday.

The 70-year-old actor was admitted to the hospital with severe respiratory problems and died

last night. A stage artiste par excellence, Gangadharaiah had participated in over 1,500 shows and acted in about 120 movies.

He is remembered for his remarkable performance in movies like 'Neer Dose', 'Kurigalu Sir Kurigalu' and Shabdavedi.

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Interested candidates should send their application in a proper format through e-mail latest by 15th August 2020. Regular Online / Offline classes will be held from 1st September 2020.

Application form may be downloaded from official website of the Institute.

PRINCIPAL

### State Task Force...

if they have come in contact with the positive person. Employees have also been asked to work from home. Good luck with that.

The Working Women's Hostel in Deorali, where the employee was staying, has also been declared a containment zone.

With COVID numbers rising, the Chief Minister chaired a high-level review meeting of the State Task Force on Saturday. Following the meeting, a joint press conference on the decisions taken during the meeting was held which was addressed by Secretary IPR Department, Namrata Thapa, Secretary Coordination, Rinzing Chewang, Secretary Health Department, Dr Pempa T Bhutia, Secretary Transport Department, Raju Basnet and Sikkim Police ADGP [Law & Order], Akshay Sachdeva.

Health Secretary, Dr PT Bhutia informed that the administration is planning to only bring symptomatic patients to the hospital and keep asymptomatic patients in quarantine facilities. This is being done to avoid exposing a large number of health workers to the virus and since asymptomatic patients don't require round-the-clock medical attention.

The pressure for beds in hospitals as the numbers rise is also being felt now and space and resources needed to be conserved for patients requiring medical attention, an eventuality that is bound to arrive now that the numbers are spiking.

Secretary Coordination, Rinzing Chewang, mentioned that gyms and bars were allowed to open even though it went against the National Guidelines but the Ministry of Home Affairs then wrote a letter to the Chief Secretary raising objection to this dilution of the national guidelines. Due to this, the State government has again prohibited the operation of gym and bar in the State. He urged owners of gym and bars to bear with the guidelines for some more time.

Transport Secretary, Raju Basnet said that the main idea of regulating vehicular movement was to discourage movement of people in the present situation. He informed that the movement of essential services is allowed on the production of valid identity card.

Movement of essential good carriers is allowed as usual without odd-even rule but the vehicle has to return on the same day or stay in the transit camp set up by the administration.

He suggested that the management of hardware and pharma companies in the State should not allow driver and helper to come down of the vehicle while unloading goods and in case of any transmission due to violation of protocols, the administration would take stringent action.

Meanwhile, four days after movement of private vehicles was banned in the state, on Saturday the state government allowed private vehicles back on the roads.

In West, South and North Sikkim, since COVID infections there are relatively low, intra-district movement of people and vehicles, both private and taxis, is allowed following the odd-even rule. People can vehicles can move freely within individual districts. Private vehicles also includes two-wheelers.

In East district, where the numbers have jumped, movement of people and vehicles [both private and taxis following odd-even rule] is allowed only within the respective town limits. So for instance, people of Gangtok can move around within the town but cannot go to Rumtek or Singtam. Intra-district restriction on movement of people means that even transshipment to move from one jurisdiction to the other is also not allowed.

The ban on inter-district movement of people and vehicles is still there while movement of goods is allowed unhindered and without the odd-even regulation.

DC South has issued an order directing all BDOs of the district to activate Village Level Monitoring teams to track any person who may have entered their block from Pakyong or Rongli in the last 10 days i.e from 8 July. If found, such persons should be made to undergo 14 day home quarantine and not allowed to mix with local population.

Residents contracting the virus is a new development for Sikkim and has understandably got everyone worried and scared. It is important to bear in mind that if the prescribed precautions like wearing masks, maintaining social distancing and hand hygiene are observed, people can keep safe. Take for instance the fact that the Sangha MLA has also tested negative. He had reportedly met a COVID-positive person from Rongli recently.

## VOICE following three R's: Making mats and eco bricks from plastic wrappers and bottles



### SUMMIT REPORT

**GANGTOK, 18 JUL:**

Following the three R's (Reduce, Reuse and Recycle) the VOICE team at West Sikkim made mats and eco bricks from plastic wrappers and bottles that they scavenged from the streets littered by people.

They also cleaned the

hall at Hee water garden which was remained unused for long time and managed to work there.

One of their active member, Renuka Limboo taking with the correspondent mentions "This is a small gesture from our side to plea to the people to follow the three R's and go sustain-

able. Going sustainably and caring for our environment are the best and the only way forward." Since the formation of VOICE Group they have been working in the fields of cleanliness, presenting innovative ideas and such other type of work that benefits society and the State.



Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation,  
Government of India  
Invites applications for the post of Chief Statistician of India

**Position and responsibility:** The Chief Statistician of India (CSI) is a senior level appointment in the rank of Secretary to the Government of India. CSI besides discharging the functions of the Secretary to Government of India in the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation will be the head of the National Statistical Organisation and Secretary of the National Statistical Commission.

**Qualifications:** The applicants shall be Indian Nationals with proven statistical and managerial experience in a large statistical organization. He or she should not be more than 55 years of age as on the last date for application to the position.

**Conditions of service:** CSI will have a tenure of three years extendable by a further period of two years, i.e. a total of five years or till he / she attains the age of superannuation, whichever is earlier and will be eligible for reappointment. CSI will be entitled to the salary and allowances and other facilities like Government accommodation as admissible to a Secretary to the Government of India.

**Selection procedure:** A Search Committee constituted by the Government of India will recommend a panel of names for filling the vacancy from amongst the applicants. Besides the applicants, the Search Committee may also recommend names of other persons considered suitable for the position. The competent authority also reserves the right to suitably relax the eligibility criteria given above, if considered necessary.

Candidates should send their applications along with their Curriculum Vitae including details of professional experiences and publications to: Director General, NSC Secretariat, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Room No. 305, 3rd Floor, C-Wing, Pushpa Bhawan, Saket, New Delhi-110062 either by post or by E-mail at [nsc-secretariat@nic.in](mailto:nsc-secretariat@nic.in) so as to reach her by 17:30 hours on or before 17th August 2020. Those who are serving in Government or Public Sector undertakings or Autonomous bodies should send their applications through their employer along with character and integrity certificates.

For more details on the terms and conditions of service, please log on to [www.mospi.gov.in](http://www.mospi.gov.in)

Dated the 17 July 2020

davp39101/11/0001/2021

Deputy Director General  
National Statistical Commission Secretariat  
E.No 1/NSC/2020(PLID)

## Sanitiser - a fire HAZARD!

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

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

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

**-Sikkim Fire & Emergency Service-**

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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

### Treatment

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



### Precautions to Prevent nCoV

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

If you seek help, you may call :  
-Toll free no. 104  
District surveillance Officer  
EAST : 7029372100  
WEST : 9593297809  
NORTH : 9641957468  
SOUTH : 7407691463  
New STNM  
AMS : 9434711402

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



## Education to Connect, Not Alienate

*Make space for the traditional  
in modern education*

The generation that grew up in the seventies and eighties, even the sixties, went through an education of alienation from their roots. The generation before them received Western education, but also had a strong sense of purpose in desiring to use their learning and education to help in the nation-building process, or, for the generation of the twenties and thirties, securing a free nation for themselves and a future worth looking forward to. By the time the seventies rolled out, although a nation had been acquired, the idealism of nation-building had been jaded by the business of surviving and nepotism. With nothing left to reconnect them to their roots, this generation was deeply indoctrinated by modern education. They learned the subjects well, but lost the perspective and worse still, because they grew up at school, as against also learning at home like the previous generations, they lost cultural nuances and even developed a bias against everything “desi”. The generations that have come since have tried to reclaim their roots, but the challenge is stiff because we have lost an entire generation to disinterest. The communication gap is now being bridged with shallow nationalism and palpably aggressive identity politics. We see this in varying degrees all over the world, across India and among the various communities which call Sikkim home or have made the neighbouring regions home. But it need not be so. A slight tweaking of how and what we teach in schools could undo the damage wrecked by the superficiality.

Cultural heritage and traditional knowledge and values are best imbibed in the formative years when the pursuit of knowledge becomes instinctive. And yet, the moment a toddler steps into school, we begin the process of getting them to unlearn everything they have inherited at home and replace it with alphabets, words and numbers which they are made to learn by rote. It is ironic that where monolingual societies are trying to get their young conversant in at least two languages because of its obvious benefits, we, with children who grow up in homes where at least two languages are spoken and can pick up a third at school, begin classes by penalizing multilingual skills!

And from there begins the subconscious alienation from their selfs.

With their language somehow made to appear inferior, because speaking in it attracts punishment and fines, the children subconsciously begin believing everything local/ rural/ unlettered as somehow being unworthy. This is not a debate over whether local cultures are superior or whether western models are better. What this is setting out to argue is that sidelining of local references and traditional knowledge base is ill-informed and dangerous because it has been grooming generations which don't fit well anywhere – neither at home nor in the global ranks. As the cliché goes, strengthen their roots, and they will weather through life well. As mentioned earlier, since early childhood education draws most of its influences from Western education and curriculum, it alienates children from their own culture and traditions. The morals, values and life-lessons that the story-reading sessions in schools seek to deliver definitely has many examples in the local languages and cultures. If these were included into the curriculum, children would grow up with a more confident idea of self and less suspicious of outside influences because they will have reference points from their own homes and cultures to distil and explain the world. A good place to begin will be to set aside one section at least every week where local elders are invited to narrate local folktales to children and also explain proverbs from local languages. This will make the elders feel required, make the young appreciate the depth of their cultural heritage, and will also be fun. Over time, these could be worked into the formal curriculum and expanded to cover stories of local places of interest, practices and rituals. One could also consider reworking the school timings so that the students can participate in local economies and practices more meaningfully. The current timings are too strict to allow for this. The school in a village dependent on dairy farming could adjust timings to allow children to help with livestock chores, and elsewhere, timetables could be adjusted to allow for kids to help at paddy fields or with cardamom harvests... and the options could go on. Connect them so and the children will receive an education which connects them better to their roots. Don't do it, and education continues alienating.

Formal education has its benefits and one of its strongest aspects is its adaptability. Unfortunately, in the hands of uninspired school managements, this fluidity of learning is compromised, even sacrificed. Where classrooms should celebrate learning, they end up force-feeding lessons. Where local communities should be invited to participate in how their children are taught and educated, they are made passive recipients of a centrally dictated, Department driven model of education.



## Herd immunity: Why the figure is always a bit vague

ADAM KLECZKOWSKI  
*theconversation.com*

Nearly 100 years ago, two British researchers, William Topley and Graham Wilson, were experimenting with bacterial infections in mice. They noticed that individual survival depended on how many of the mice were vaccinated. So the role of the immunity of an individual needed to be distinguished from the immunity of the entire herd.

Fast forward a century and the concept of “herd immunity” is now widely discussed in government dispatches and newspaper articles. But what does it actually mean?

When a disease such as COVID-19 spreads through the population, it leaves some people immune, at least in the short term. The people who become infected later will increasingly have contact with these immune people and not with the susceptible ones. As a result, the risk of infection is reduced and eventually the disease stops spreading. This might happen even if some people in the population are still susceptible.

Vaccination can be used to protect susceptible people and thereby hasten the decline of the epidemic. It can also be used to stop the virus from spreading in the first place.

### HOW DOES IT WORKS

Imagine a population in which everybody is susceptible. An infected person (the red dot in the chart below) arrives and the virus spreads with the ever-increasing number of new cases. The epidemic continues until most individuals catch the virus and become immune to it or die.

If some people are protected – for example, in the initial stages of a mass vaccination programme – the disease will spread more slowly.

An even more substantial proportion needs to be protected to completely stop the virus, but amazingly it does not need to be the whole population.

In the 1970s, mathematical epidemiologists found out that this proportion depends on how infectious the disease is, with a simple formula relating it to the reproductive number, R. For measles

this critical percentage is 95%, but for influenza, it could be as low as 35%.

Once the population reaches herd immunity, either through vaccination or naturally by recovering from the disease, any new infection chain will quickly die out. In this way, the population is protected from future outbreaks, but only as long as the immunity levels are maintained.

If the immunity level falls below the critical value, the disease can reemerge. Newborn individuals who are susceptible will need to be vaccinated, and those whose resistance to the disease falls over time might need boosters.

### CORONAVIRUS HERD IMMUNITY

The current estimate of R for COVID-19 is around 3, but is perhaps as low as 1.4 and as high as 4. The corresponding herd immunity level is 60% (50% to 75%).

This value is in the absence of any non-pharmaceutical control measures, such as lockdown. Maintaining some levels of social distancing in the long term allows the desired immunity to be lower while keeping the population safe.

A long time might be needed to eventually eradicate the disease, even after the herd immunity level is reached. So the final size of the epidemic, the number of people who have been through infection when the virus is finally eradicated, can be much higher.

### ARE WE THERE YET?

It is not easy to determine how close we are to the herd immunity level or whether we will ever reach this stage.

First, the critical assumption is that the coronavirus infection results in a lasting and uniform resistance to future outbreaks. This is far from certain, and if people can catch the SARS-CoV-2 virus more than once, as is the case for the common cold, it will make herd immunity disappear. From large studies to estimate the population immunity, we know that the numbers are currently between 5% and 25%.

Second, the reproductive number, R, varies with location, and so does the herd immunity level needed to stop the disease.

Third, studies suggest that some people have a

much higher resistance to COVID-19, perhaps because they suffered from another similar disease in the past or were vaccinated against other diseases.

Finally, there is a large variability in people's response to the virus and in the length of time for which someone preserves the levels of antibodies they use to fight the infection. The immunity might not be equally distributed among those who have been ill with COVID-19.

People who suffer most might come from the areas that are also most at risk. Such diversity might significantly lower the herd immunity levels needed to stop the disease by targeting only these parts of the society where it is needed most. This phenomenon resembles the ring vaccination strategy that was successfully used to combat such diseases as smallpox.

### INDIVIDUALS OR THE HERD

The concept of herd immunity, although useful for planning a response to the pandemic, is not without controversy. In a campaign to achieve it, many people are exposed to an increased individual risk to protect the rest of the population.

Not imposing strict lockdown measures or relaxing too early might lead to people becoming immune to COVID-19 sooner, reaching herd immunity earlier. But this also leads to excess deaths of vulnerable people who would have survived otherwise.

Herd immunity needs to be maintained. The level required to stop the disease depends on disease transmission, which in turn depends on human behaviour. When faced with potentially grim consequences, our behaviour is naturally to prevent the transmission, which lowers the herd immunity requirement.

Once this is reached, other factors (social, economic, risk of vaccine complications) become more important, transmission increases as a result of behaviour change, and herd immunity is lost. In devising successful strategies, governments must take into account both the population and individual risks and benefits.

*[the writer is Professor of Mathematics and Statistics, University of Strathclyde]*

## Mandela was a flawed icon. But without him South Africa would be a sadder place

GAVIN EVANS  
*theconversation.com*

I was one of the thousands who watched Nelson Mandela, the South African liberation struggle hero, leave prison on 11 February 1990, and then mount the podium in front of Cape Town's City Hall, expressing the hope that the apartheid government would agree to negotiations so that there might no longer be the need for armed struggle against apartheid to continue. He said:

Today, the majority of South Africans, black and white, recognise that apartheid has no future. It has to be ended by our decisive mass action ... We have waited too long for our freedom.

He appealed to white South Africans to “join us in the safety of a new South Africa. The freedom movement is a political home for you, too.”

I was thrilled but also, underneath that, felt concern about the forces against him. I worried about the violence the apartheid military and its proxies would unleash.

I fretted about what I'd seen during my decade of membership of the African National Congress (ANC), the leading liberation movement for which he was jailed: the seeping corruption, elbowing for position, the exile old guard's insistence on primacy. And, as he left prison hand in hand with his wife, Winnie, I feared the influence of a woman who'd already been convicted of kidnapping, and accused of so much more.

As I will show, these concerns were borne out. But, three decades on since his release, it still feels that without Mandela South Africa would be a sadder place.

The “Great Man” take on the past so often misses the undercurrents that keep greatness afloat, and yet there are few moments in recent world history where one person made quite such a difference.

Mandela's extraordinary gifts –

his integrity and self-discipline, intelligence and intellectual curiosity, depth of perception, strategic vision and tactical nous, and his steely resolve – set him apart. Towards the end of his 27 years in prison, that meant leading in a direction that felt uncomfortable to some, through conducting secret talks with the government.

### COMPROMISE AND BARGAIN

Throughout this period he kept Oliver Tambo's exile leadership of the ANC informed. But there were misgivings about his role. Mandela later went out of his way to allay these fears.

The example I recall most vividly (because I had to rush around closing secret offices and bank accounts) came six months after his release when the leadership of “Operation Vula” (the ANC and South African Communist Party's underground network) were rounded up.

FW De Klerk, the last apartheid president, used the arrests to demand that the Communist Party leader Joe Slovo be dropped from the ANC's negotiating team. But Mandela, who'd once been a party member, dug in. De Klerk backed down, and eventually indemnified the group.

The four years of negotiations saw more people killed in political violence – mostly from the state and its proxies, with an estimated 14,000 people dying. Mandela could not prevent this mayhem, but his authority and gravitas kept the negotiations to end apartheid afloat. Authority and momentum seeped from De Klerk into Mandela.

Still, he and his team had to make compromises. One was that the apartheid military were molycodded because of the danger they presented. Another was that the ANC had to allow Inkatha, the Zulu-nationalist party led by Mangosuthu Buthelezi, control of KwaZulu-Natal.

In the end, Mandela's team got more than many expected – a

one-person, one-vote election and a progressive constitution with no entrenched rights for racial minorities. Without Mandela none of this would have been certain, or even likely.

### MANDELA'S PRESIDENCY

Mandela's five years as president were more ambiguous. He helped keep the peace through gestures like appointing De Klerk and Buthelezi to his cabinet, wearing Springbok colours in presenting the rugby World Cup trophy to the victorious South African side in 1995 and securing the formation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

There were real changes, including houses for the poor and water supplies for three million, with two million connected to the electricity grid. But job-creation programmes were abandoned and the gap between rich and poor remained even if the ranks of the rich became more racially mixed – and crime rates remained disturbingly high.

It is sometimes said that the corruption that engulfed the country started during Thabo Mbeki's presidency (June 1999 to September 2008) and became endemic under Jacob Zuma (May 2009 to February 2018). But the seeds were sown earlier, and Mandela did little to curb its growth within the ANC while leader.

He also neglected the HIV/AIDS pandemic while president. When I discussed this with Edwin Cameron, the Constitutional Court judge and HIV/AIDS activist, in an interview published in South Africa's Sunday Independent in 2001, he shook his head sadly.

Of all the leaders of the 20th century who might have had an impact, Mandela was the one who could have done the most – without doubt this was one of the grievous omissions of his presidency... He did 199 things that contributed to our nation's salvation but the one thing he didn't do as president was take a lead on AIDS –

and it's not because he wasn't begged to. We tried in every single way, but he didn't take it up and it was a tragedy. Mandela's talent for reading the political runes was not always matched by his ability to read people. Internal political leaders who'd publicly criticised Winnie were sidelined but his patrician's hope that he could have a benign influence on her evaporated. They separated in 1992 and divorced in 1995.

### SECURE LEGACY

Mandela's tendency to defer to the exile leadership came at a cost. He appointed several dud former exiles to his cabinet, including the dozy Alfred Nzo as foreign affairs minister and the corrupt Joe Modise as defence minister.

He also conceded to pressure from exile leaders to appoint Mbeki rather than Cyril Ramaphosa as deputy president, despite having earlier swapped them as negotiations head, regarding Mbeki as thin-skinned and inflexible, according to his official biographer, Anthony Sampson. Yet Mandela increasingly delegated power to his dauphin, who displayed the paranoia and obduracy he'd feared.

Mandela left at the right time in 1999, when the country still seemed in a healthy state, after which he consolidated his international reputation, while throwing himself into the HIV/AIDS campaign on learning that his son, Makgatho, was HIV-positive. He described it as a war that had killed more than “all previous wars”.

This 18th of July marks what would have been his 102nd birthday. His legacy is secure, the rough edges smoothed – a figure of reconciliation more than a guerrilla leader, a statesman, not a former communist, an icon solidified in sculptor's stone rather than a magnificent, flawed and complex human being.

*[the writer is Lecturer, Culture and Media department, Birkbeck, University of London]*



# Another Bihar legislator tests positive for COVID-19

**PATNA, JUL 18 (PTI):** A ruling JD(U) legislator in Bihar has tested positive for novel coronavirus which is on the rise in the state.

JD(U) Legislative Council member Khalid Anwar on Saturday said that he tested positive and is now under home quarantine in Patna.

"I was suffering from fever for the past 3-4 days after which I decided to undergo the coronavirus test.

"I underwent a rapid test at a private hospital here on Friday and the result came within 10 minutes. I have kept myself in home quarantine on doctors' advice," Anwar told PTI.

COVID-19 has been spreading sharply in Bihar and ministers, legislators and top-ranking officials have also fallen prey to it.

Two members of Nit-



ish Kumar cabinet, Vinod Kumar Singh and Shailesh Kumar, tested positive for it. Legislative Council Acting Chairman Awadhesh Narayan Singh and his family members had earlier tested positive and they were presently in home quarantine.

Chief Minister Nitish

Kumar, his deputy Sushil Kumar Modi and Legislative Assembly Speaker Vijay Kumar Choudhary and others who attended an oath-taking function of newly elected MLCs with Singh on July 1, had given their sample for COVID-19 test which came out to be negative. One of the new-

ly elected MLCs, Gulam Gaus of the JD(U), was also found to be infected.

Earlier, MLAs Jibesh Kumar Mishra (BJP), Anand Shankar Singh (Congress) and Shahnawaz Alam (RJD) tested positive for the virus. In the state BJP headquarters, over two dozen

functionaries tested positive for the virus early this week. Sanjay Jaiswal, the Lok Sabha chief whip of BJP at the Centre and also its Bihar unit president, who attended a series of interactions with party workers ahead of the polls also tested positive along with some members of his family.

Former union minister and senior RJD leader Raghubansh Prasad Singh was admitted to AIIMS, Patna, after testing positive. He has been cured of the disease and discharged.

A large number of senior bureaucrats including Additional Chief Secretary for Home Amir Subhani have tested positive for COVID-19.

As per the latest health bulletin, Bihar's tally of confirmed cases has risen to 23,300. A total of 174 people have died due to the virus in the state so far.

## Top brass of Bhagalpur admin hit COVID-19



**BHAGALPUR (BIHAR), JUL 18 (PTI):** A number of senior administrative officials in Bhagalpur have tested positive for the coronavirus, crippling the day-to-day government work in the district, sources said.

Deputy Superintendent of the state-run Jawaharlal Nehru Medical College and Hospital (JLNMCH) Gaurav Kumar said Saturday that Bhagalpur Divisional Commissioner Vandana Kini is the latest to test positive for the virus on Friday, following which she has gone into self-quarantine.

She joins a long list of the infected officials, including District Magistrate Pranav Kumar, Deputy Development Commissioner Sunil Kumar Singh and Additional District Magistrate Rajesh Kumar Jha.

Other senior officials like District Education Officer Sanjay Kumar Singh and District Project Manager (Health) Mohammad Faiyaz Alam, and Superintendent of JLNMCH Dr Ashok Bhagat besides half-a-dozen other doctors of

the medical college have been found infected.

The situation is a little better in the police department.

Though Superintendent of Police Ashish Bharti is safe, his four security guards have tested positive following which he has been working from his residential office, sources in the police department said.

Gaurav Kumar, who is looking after the affairs of JLNMCH in the absence of the Superintendent, said Kini is among 901 people found positive for the virus on Friday.

The divisional commissioner and other senior officers of the district administration who have been infected by COVID-19 have been keeping themselves in isolation at their respective homes.

Bhagalpur, known for its unique silk fabrics called "Tussah or Tusser", stands second to Patna in terms of number of COVID cases across Bihar.

Bhagalpur has a caseload of 1,455 cases while Patna has 3,245, accord-

ing to a health department bulletin.

As per the bulletin, the total number of positive cases has reached 24,997 in the state.

District Magistrate Pranav Kumar, whose wife and children too have been infected, is being treated in Patna.

The DM had tested positive on July 11 at JLNMCH, after which he handed over the charge to ADM Rajesh Kumar Jha who along with DDC and other officials also tested positive two days later (on July 13).

The absence of the senior district civil administration officers has hit even the daily routine work, official sources said. District Public Grievance Redressal Officer Arun Kumar Singh, who is holding the charge of District Magistrate, Bhagalpur, said he has been disposing of daily work.

But the financial work has been hampered as there is no one equivalent to the rank of DM available presently in the district to take the charge.

## Assam floods: Rahul appeals to Cong workers to provide help to those affected

**NEW DELHI, JUL 18 (PTI):** Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Saturday said the entire country is with Assam, which is facing a grim flood situation, and expressed confidence that the people of the state will overcome the natural disaster.

Over 35 lakh people across 28 of the state's 33 districts are now affected due to flooding, an official bulletin said on Friday.

"The whole country is with Assam. People of Assam are battling this

problem with their courageous nature and will overcome this disaster," Gandhi said in a tweet in Hindi. He also appealed to Congress workers to extend all possible help to those affected by the deluge.

The total number of people losing their lives in this year's flood and landslides in the state has gone up to 102. While 76 people died in flood-related incidents, 26 were killed in landslides, the official bulletin had said.

## IIT-KGP develops weather forecast system to help farmers



**KOLKATA, JUL 18 (PTI):** Researchers at IIT Kharagpur have developed an advanced weather forecast system to help farmers in agricultural activities and reduce climatic risks, an official said on Saturday.

The institute in collaboration with the India Meteorological Department started offering an agro-advisory to cultivators to improve their production in different weather conditions, the IIT-KGP spokesperson said.

Sponsored by the Ministry of Earth Sciences, two projects - 'Gramin Krishi Mausam Sewa' and 'Forecasting Agricultural output using Space, Agrometeorology and Land-based observations' - provide weather

information to farmers to improve their economic return, the official said.

"The agro-advisory offers crop selection, planting time, land preparation, input management and yield. It is based on future weather and land characteristics of a specific location," agricultural and food engineering department's professor Dilip Kumar Swain said.

Farmers get awareness on managing inputs such as fertiliser, irrigation and pesticide every week throughout the cropping season.

"Based on a five-day weather forecast, the agro-advisory is prepared on Tuesday and Friday every week and sent to farmers' cell phones, he said. The ad-

visory is being sent in Bengali to about three lakh farmers of West Medinipur, Jhargram, Bankura, Birbhum, and Purulia in West Bengal.

Using the advisory, they can protect their crop from extreme weather events and reduce production cost by need-based irrigation, fertiliser and pesticide applications, the professor said.

IIT Kharagpur director professor Virendra Kumar Tewari said, "Besides sending the agro-advisory, we also conduct training and awareness programmes regularly in villages on organic and integrated farming and advanced production technology for sustainable agricultural growth.

## Top Manipur police officer shoots self



**IMPHAL, JUL 18 (PTI):** A top officer of Manipur police department allegedly shot himself in his office Saturday afternoon, officials said.

The officer, Additional Director General of Police (Law and Order) Arvind Kumar, was taken to a hospital following the incident.

Top brass of the state

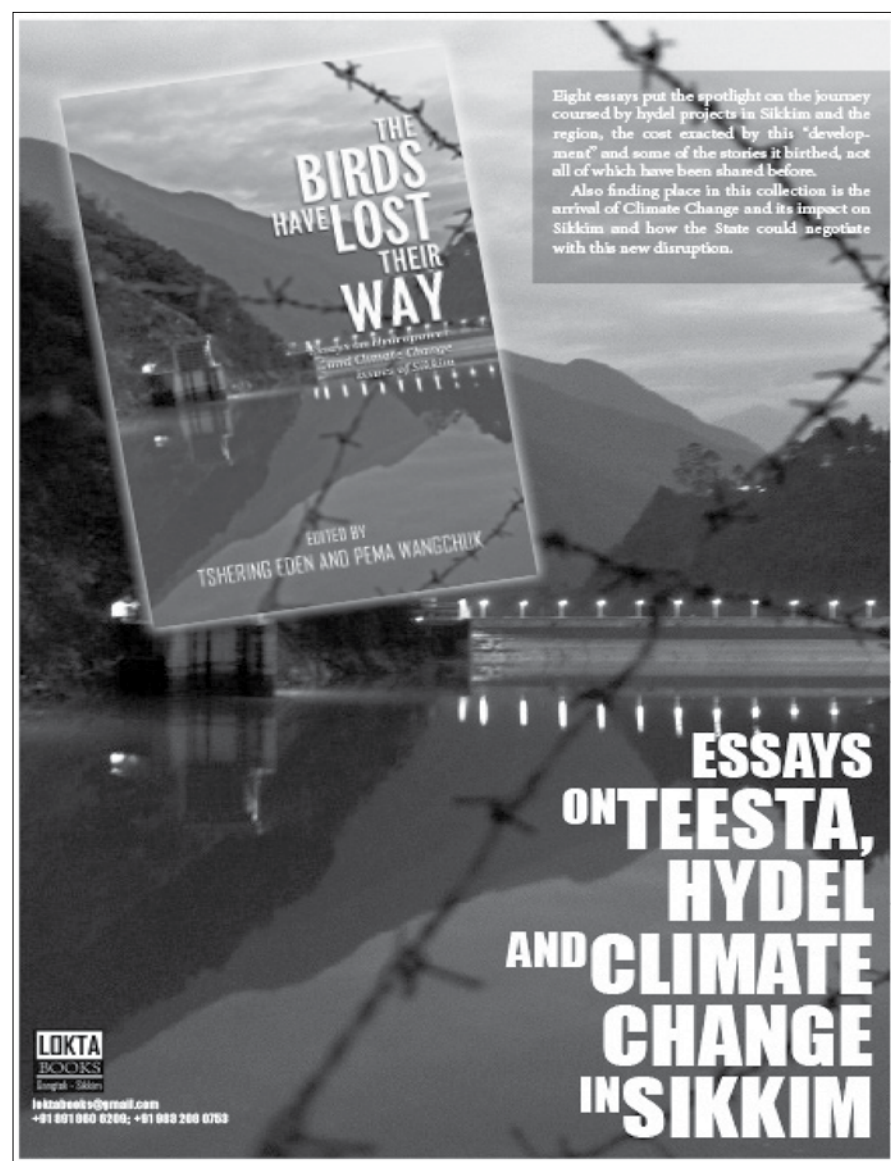
police and officials, including Chief Secretary J Suresh Babu, were at Raj Medicity where Kumar was being treated. The chief secretary said Kumar's condition is serious but he is responding to the treatment and has also spoken to the doctors.

"He will be sent to Delhi, once his condition improves," Babu added.

Kumar, a 1992-batch IPS officer of the Manipur cadre, shot himself with his service revolver in his office in Manipur Rifles Compound, said a senior police officer. It is being probed why he took the step, he said.

Kumar was sent back to his home cadre around a year ago, the officer added.

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*Pep Guardiola sees Arsenal FA Cup semi-final as mental test for Real Madrid*

**JAMIE JACKSON**  
**LONDON, 18 JUL [THEGUARDIAN]:** Pep Guardiola believes Manchester City's FA Cup semi-final against Arsenal will provide an essential mental test before facing Real Madrid next month.

City have secured second place in the league so their defence of the Cup ensures Guardiola's side can retain a competitive edge. On 7 August they host the La Liga winners in the Champions League last-16 second leg, holding a 2-1 advantage.

Guardiola said of Saturday's semi-final: "These games are about the mentality, not the tactics. It will be a good test to see if we are ready to play against Madrid. But it's now a semi-final and there are a lot of factors: concentration, set pieces, throw-ins, the minimal details, how strong you are in your head, how you are in the bad moments. How you overcome the bad situations that are going to happen, how you never give up."

City beat Arsenal 3-0 last month in the league, having won December's away game by the same scoreline. Yet Guardiola insisted those wins and City's 2-1 extra-time defeat by Arsenal in the 2017 semi-final will have no effect on the Wembley meeting.

"With what we've done in the last seasons, people will think we're favourites but I've never won a game before because I was the favourite or lost a game because I was not the favourite," he said. "We lost that day [in 2017], it was a tight game, but this period was just the beginning [of my time at City] and we were still getting to know each other."

Guardiola did point to his record in semi-finals as a manager as a concern. At City, Bayern Munich and Barcelona he has lost seven of 21 semi-finals. He has managed in 17 finals (European Super Cups do not have semis) and won 16.

"I struggle a lot in my career in the semi-finals," Guardiola said. "It was easier the finals. I handled them much better. I've lost many more semis than finals. It's more difficult."

The FA Cup was Guardiola's first experience of English football. "Because hundreds of teams can start in this competition, that's what makes it special. And it's just one game, not two legs. The tradition of the FA Cup, it's great."

Claudio Bravo, who usually starts in domestic cup matches, is injured so Ederson will start in goal.

# Fans allowed back into English sports events from next week

**LONDON, JUL 18 (AP):** Spectators will be allowed back into some sports events in England from next week as coronavirus prevention measures are tested ahead of a planned wider reopening of stadiums in October.

Domestic cricket on July 26-27 is set to be the first sport that fans are allowed to watch in person since March.

Some spectators will also be allowed into the world snooker championship in Sheffield from July 31, and the Glorious Goodwood horse racing festival on Aug. 1 is also part of a government scheme piloting the return of fans.

From October we intend to bring back audiences in stadia ... in a COVID-secure way subject to the successful outcome of pilots, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said in Downing Street on Friday.

Prof. Susan Michie, who advises the government on the pandemic response, fears reopening sports to fans particularly indoor venues could lead to a rise in virus cases and another lockdown.

We've gone too far, too fast already, Michie said in an interview.

I think the data will begin to show that. I don't think we should have opened indoor pubs, much as I like pubs. And I think to begin opening up mass sporting events is



not a good idea.

Stadium capacities will still be restricted, and staggered entry times, social distancing measures and one-way systems will be required. Barriers or screens will have to be installed where social distancing cannot be maintained when buying food and merchandise or betting. Fans will be told not to attend if they could have been exposed to COVID-19.

With the excitement of sport, where people are standing up," Michie said, "I

don't think social distancing would happen."

Announcing a further easing of lockdown restrictions, Johnson said the measures could be reversed if coronavirus infection rates begin to climb again with concerns about a new coronavirus spike this winter.

The U.K.'s official pandemic death toll, which stood at more than 45,000 as of Friday, has for several weeks been the highest in Europe and the third highest in the world behind the United States and Brazil.

ed States and Brazil.

Sports Minister Nigel Huddleston cautioned that it will remain some time before stadiums can be full again. The Premier League will finish the season without fans at games, and there will be no spectators at the 90,000-capacity Wembley Stadium for the FA Cup semifinals this weekend.

For months millions of us have felt the void of being unable to go to the match to support our team or attend a top-class sporting event," Huddleston said.

"So I am pleased that we are now able to move forward with a plan to help venues safely reopen their doors to fans.

I recognize that not every sport, team or club has the benefit of huge commercial revenue, and it is often their dedicated fans that are the lifeblood which helps keep them going. By working closely with sports and medical experts, these pilots will help ensure the safe return of fans to stadia."

The English Football Asso-

ciation last month announced it was cutting 82 jobs to cover an anticipated deficit of 300 million pounds (370 million) due to the pandemic restricting crowds at games and more events being canceled, including NFL regular season games.

The Community Shield, contested by the Premier League and FA Cup winners, has been floated as a potential test event.

Supporters are the lifeblood of our national game, and that has been underlined by how much their absence has been felt at matches over the last month, the FA said.

We will continue to work closely with the relevant authorities on how we can bring them back in a safe and secure manner, including any help we can provide to the proposed pilot events.

English Rugby Football Union chief executive Bill Sweeney said in May that 85% of the governing body's revenue comes from hosting men's international games at Twickenham.

England has been working on the assumption its Six Nations campaign and quartet of autumn test matches can be played across October and November as the RFU seeks to avoid losses of more than 100 million caused by the pandemic.

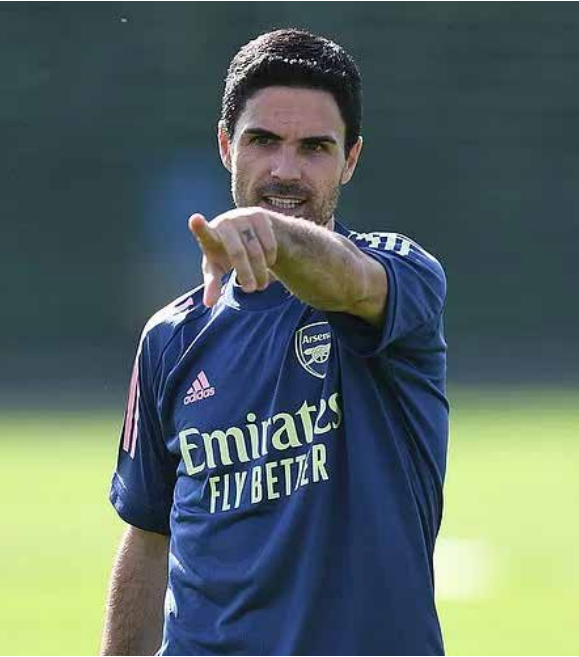
## Mikel Arteta says Arsenal matching Manchester City impossible after break

**NICK AMES**

**LONDON, 18 JUL [THEGUARDIAN]:** When Mikel Arteta looks over the Wembley turf on Saturday night, what will he see? Part of the answer is simple: at certain points he will have to watch Manchester City whirling into gear and rendering his players virtual onlookers, regardless of the outcome. But the sight of his former team in full flow may be interpreted in different ways. Is it a vision of what he expects to replicate in the process of making Arsenal fully relevant again? Or will it be a maddening 90-minute confirmation of exactly how far his plans are from being realised?

Anyone dismissing Arteta's chances of leading Arsenal to the FA Cup final should exercise caution, particularly after they punished slackness in a manifestly superior Liverpool on Wednesday and dug out a potentially crucial win. He knows that kind of firefighting display is no long-term route to success. It may be required again, though, and the idea does not sit easily. Arteta was asked whether Arsenal's transition to his preferred style had been slower than expected and the bristling in his reply was unmistakable.

"No," he said. "You are asking me if I wanted to play, after a two-month break, like City right now? Look back on the issues we had with a lot of players, with all the injuries, with suspensions, with players out. It is impossible. I need to adapt, I need to win games and I need to find ways to do that. My task, my long-term situation, in how we want to play is very



clear." Mental gymnastics are not required in order to see how the aggressive pressing Arsenal's forwards use to hound opponents into errors could, with better players elsewhere and if channelled more consistently, become the basis for something formidable. Finding those reinforcements, though, remains the biggest problem and Arteta is understandably twitchy.

His media appearances in midweek were spent pushing the view that, if Arsenal desire a return to the Champions League, investment is imperative. He was careful to say on Friday that those statements should not have been interpreted as a challenge to the hierarchy, emphasising he can make such contentions to the Kroenkes at any time. But he thinks Arsenal remain stuck between transfer market scenarios, even though the most obviously transformative of them sailed away with their top-four chances, and are bound by variables partly out of their control.

"There are many different aspects," he said.

"Obviously the financial one, depending on where we finish, is one. Depending on the future of a few players and obviously depending on the transfer market. We don't know the type of market we are going to find. It is something unique, it never happened and there are a lot of question marks around that.

"We cannot stick to something that maybe is not possible to do, so we have to be flexible and creative ... but to have clear ideas of what we need to do and how we are going to do it."

Reaching the Europa League would help and, while the semi-final has been billed as do or die, six points from their games against Aston Villa and Watford would stand a good chance of squeezing Arsenal in. But the £15m they might earn from a strong group stage performance is unlikely to make the difference between budgetary plans. Their ability to find takers for Matteo Guendouzi, Ainsley Maitland-Niles and a host of other squad players stands more chance of being relevant.

## Kapil's advice helped me to explore options before opting for India A coach's job: Dravid

**NEW DELHI, JUL 18 (PTI):** Batting great Rahul Dravid says legendary all-rounder Kapil Dev's advice helped him to explore options after his retirement before eventually taking up the coaching job of India A and Under-19 sides.

Dravid said he was also "a little fortunate" that at the back end of his career, he was already in a captain-cum-coach role of IPL side Rajasthan Royals.

"After I finished (playing), there were quite a few options and I was not sure what to do. It was Kapil Dev who gave me this advice actually when I was coming to the end of my career," Dravid told India women's team coach WV Raman on his Youtube channel 'Inside Out'.

"I bumped into him somewhere and he said 'Rahul, don't commit to doing anything straightaway, go out and spend a few years just exploring and doing different things and see what you really like'. I thought it was good advice."

The former captain said initially he liked doing commentary, but later found "a little disconnect" from the game.

"...the thing that gave me the most satisfaction was really being involved in the game and being connected with the boys. I really liked the coaching side of things

and I got sort of involved in that when the opportunity came up to do some coaching with India A and Under-19," Dravid said.

"I thought it was a good place to start and took it up and I've really enjoyed it since. I just feel a lot more satisfying to be involved in the coaching side of things," said the legendary batsman, who piled up 13288 runs from 164 Tests between 1996 and 2012.

"Especially the developmental side of coaching, whether India A, Under-19 or the NCA. It's really given me the opportunity to work with a lot of the players without having to worry about the immediate results which I think is a really nice space for me to work in."

He backed the BCCI's decision to restrict U-19 players to one World Cup only.

"Instead of just 15-20 players, we were able to give 45 to 50 players exposure to the facilities at NCA, good coaches, good physios, good trainers, so it broadens the pool," said Dravid, who is Head of Cricket at the National Cricket Academy in Bengaluru.

He said that India A players now felt secured as every one gets a chance to play.

Dravid also revealed that he doubted himself as an ODI player when he was dropped from

the Indian team in 1998 mainly due to his strike rate. "There have been phases in my international career (when I felt insecure). I was dropped from the ODI team in 1998. I had to fight my way back in, was away from the Indian team for a year," he said.

"There were certain insecurities than about whether I'm a good enough one-day player or not because I always wanted to be a Test player, was coached to be a Test player, hit the ball on the ground, don't hit the ball in the air, coaching like that. You sort of worry whether you had the skills to be able to do it (in an ODI)."

Dravid made a comeback to the ODI side ahead of the 1999 World Cup in England and ended up as the highest scorer (461) of the tournament though India failed to make it to the semi-finals. The right-hander later played in the 2003 World Cup and also captained the side in the 2007 World Cup. He scored 10889 runs from 344 ODIs.

Talking about choosing cricket over academics, he said, "Growing up as a young cricketer in India is not easy. In the time that I grew up there was only Ranji Trophy and revenue was so poor. I had to forgo a CA or MBA to pursue cricket so there was insecurity."

## Indian teen Anika Varma to tee off next month at US Women's Amateur golf

**NEW DELHI, JUL 18 (PTI):** India's rising amateur golfer, Anika Varma will participate at the 120th US Women's Amateur Championship, scheduled to be held at Woodmont Country Club's North Course in Rockville from August 6 to 9.

With the organisers being forced to put off the qualifying tournaments due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this will be the first all-exempt championship in recent history.

After two rounds of stroke play on August 3 and 4, the top 64 players will advance to the

match-play portion of the championship.

The 16-year-old Varma, who is currently in the United States and chose to stay on during the COVID-19 crisis, said, "The USGA reached out to the players based on the exemption category related to the Women's World Amateur Golf Ranking (WGAR), the top 75 ranked players as on June 24, 2020 have been provided an exemption into the Championship."

"From there we were all asked to file an entry and today they contacted me to inform me that I have

earned an exemption into the tournament." Varma is a high school student at the Granite Bay School in Roseville in the US.

"As a 16-year-old during the pandemic I haven't been able to do much in high school as well as golf. COVID-19 has definitely affected my golf season this year. The year started with Women's Amateur Asia Pacific being postponed to October. During the shelter-in-place my regular school shifted to online schooling," she said.

"My other tournaments such as Thunder-

bird, USGA qualifiers, IMG Junior and the World Amateur Championship got cancelled similar to the case of Hero Women's Indian Open.

"Although my season was cut short I am grateful to be given the opportunity to understand my shortcomings and improve them. I was given the chance to play the Cactus Tour because the government of Arizona State allowed the golf courses to stay open as long as social distancing rules are strictly followed and precautions are being taken."

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# EU tells US: Stop threatening our companies with sanctions

**BRUSSELS, JUL 18 (AP):** The European Union is warning the Trump administration to hold off threatening trade sanctions against EU companies involved in the completion of new German-Russian and Turkish-Russian natural gas pipelines and instead discuss differences as allies.

This week, the Trump administration warned companies involved in the projects they will be subject to US penalties unless they halt their work. The move has further increased tension in already fraught US-European ties.

I am deeply concerned at the growing use of sanctions, or the threat of sanctions, by the United States against European companies and interests," EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said in a statement, adding similar attempts had already been made in cases involving Iran, Cuba and the Interna-



tional Criminal Court.

Where policy differences exist, the European Union is always open to dialogue. But this cannot take place against the threat of sanctions," Borrell said. European policies should be determined here in Europe, not by third countries."

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announced this week the administration is ending grandfather clauses that had spared firms previously involved in the pipelines' construction from sanctions authorized by the Countering America's Adversaries Through

Sanctions Act, a 2017 law aimed at punishing Russia, in particular, for interference in U.S. elections and other matters.

The move opens the door for U.S. economic and financial penalties to be imposed on any European or other foreign company over

the Nord Stream 2 and TurkStream pipelines, including those that had been working on the projects before the passage of the act and had been previously exempted from the penalties.

Borrell said that as a matter of principle the European Union opposes the use of sanctions by third countries on European companies carrying out legitimate business."

The Trump administration has lobbied Europe, particularly Germany, to abandon the pipelines, which it believes put Europe under greater influence from Russia, which has used its energy exports as political leverage.

Pompeo called the pipeline projects the the Kremlin's key tools to exploit and expand European dependence on Russian energy supplies, which he said ultimately undermine trans-Atlantic security.

## Iran estimates it has 25 million coronavirus infections



**TEHRAN, JUL 18 (AP):** Iran's president on Saturday estimated as many as 25 million Iranians could have been infected with the coronavirus since the outbreak's beginning, as he urged the public to take the pandemic seriously, the state-run IRNA news agency reported Saturday.

Hassan Rouhani cited a new Iranian Health Ministry study in offering the unprecedentedly high numbers.

Rouhani also said about 30 to 35 million will be infected to the virus in the coming months.

We have to estimate that 30 to 35 million people will be exposed to the virus, which is very important, Rouhani added.

Iranians officials have not explained on what the report's estimates are based. The study has so far not been made publicly available.

Referring to the report, Rouhani said it also predicts that the number of hospitalisations will soon be "twice as many as we have seen in the last 150 days. Iran has seen the worst outbreak in the Middle East, with more than 270,000 confirmed cases and at least 13,979 deaths.

That includes 2,166 new cases and 188 deaths in the last 24 hours, according to the Health Ministry.

Authorities in the capital of Tehran are imposing new restrictions

from Saturday, amid the severe increase in cases in recent weeks, closing some public spaces like coffee shops, zoos, and indoor swimming pools.

Rouhani's most recent remarks show that questions remain over the country's official figures from the outbreak, even after officials have publicly acknowledged its importance.

Before Iran reported its first cases of the virus in February, authorities denied it had reached the country for days, allowing the virus time to spread as the nation marked the 41st anniversary of the Islamic Revolution with mass demonstrations and then held a parliamentary election in which authorities desperately sought to boost turnout.

A parliamentary report in April said Iran's death toll is likely nearly double the officially reported figures. Given insufficient testing, the report said the number of people infected at the time was probably eight to 10 times higher than the reported figures.

Even today, Iranian death tolls remain based on those who died in coronavirus wards in hospitals. However, it's believed that many more died at home, and some families have reportedly asked doctors not to mention their loved ones died of the virus to avoid the stigma associated with COVID-19, the illness caused by the virus.

## John Lewis, lion of civil rights and Congress, dies at 80

**ATLANTA, JUL 18 (AP):** John Lewis, a lion of the civil rights movement whose bloody beating by Alabama state troopers in 1965 helped galvanize opposition to racial segregation, and who went on to a long and celebrated career in Congress, died. He was 80.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi confirmed Lewis' passing late Friday night, calling him one of the greatest heroes of American history. All of us were humbled to call Congressman Lewis a colleague, and are heartbroken by his passing, Pelosi said. May his memory be an inspiration that moves us all to, in the face of injustice, make 'good trouble, necessary trouble.'

Lewis's announcement in late December 2019 that he had been diagnosed with advanced pancreatic cancer I have never faced a fight quite like the one I have now, he said inspired tributes from both sides of the aisle, and an unstated accord that the likely passing of this Atlanta Democrat would represent the end of an era.

Lewis was the youngest and last survivor of the Big Six civil rights activists, a group led by the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. that had the greatest impact on the movement. He was best known for leading some 600 protesters in the Bloody Sunday march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma.

At age 25 walking at the head of the march with his hands tucked in the pockets of his tan overcoat Lewis was knocked to the ground and beaten by police. His skull was fractured, and nationally televised images of the brutality forced the country's attention on racial oppression in the South.

Within days, King led more marches in the state, and President Lyndon Johnson soon was pressing Congress to pass the Voting Rights Act. The bill became law later that year, removing barriers that had barred Blacks from voting.

John is an American hero who helped lead a movement and risked his life for our most fundamental rights; he bears scars that attest to his indefatigable spirit and persistence, House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer said after Lewis announced his cancer diagnosis.

Lewis joined King and four other civil rights leaders in organizing the 1963 March on Washington. He spoke to the vast crowd just before King delivered his epochal I Have a Dream speech.

A 23-year-old firebrand, Lewis toned down his intended remarks at the insistence of others, dropping a reference to a scorched earth march through the South and scaling back criticisms of President John Kennedy. It was a potent speech nonetheless, in which he vowed: By the forces of our demands, our determination and our numbers, we shall splinter the segregated South into a thousand pieces and put them together in an image of God and democracy.

It was almost immediately, and forever, overshadowed by the words of

King, the man who had inspired him to activism. Lewis was born on Feb. 21, 1940, outside the town of Troy, in Pike County, Alabama. He grew up on his family's farm and attended segregated public schools.

As a boy, he wanted to be a minister, and practiced his oratory on the family chickens. Denied a library card because of the color of his skin, he became an avid reader, and could cite obscure historical dates and details even in his later years. He was a teenager when he first heard King preaching on the radio. They met when Lewis was seeking support to become the first Black student at Alabama's segregated Troy State University.

He ultimately attended the American Baptist Theological Seminary and Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee. He began organizing sit-in demonstrations at whites-only lunch counters and volunteering as a Freedom Rider, enduring beatings and arrests while traveling around the South to challenge segregation. Lewis helped found the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and was named its chairman in 1963, making him one of the Big Six at a tender age. The others, in addition to King, were Whitney Young of the National Urban League; A. Philip Randolph of the Negro American Labor Council; James L. Farmer Jr., of the Congress of Racial Equality; and Roy Wilkins of the NAACP. All six met at the Roosevelt Hotel in New York to plan and announce the March on Washington.

The huge demonstration galvanized the movement, but success didn't come quickly. After extensive training in non-violent protest, Lewis and the Rev. Hosea Williams led demonstrators on a planned march of more than 50 miles from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama's capital, on March 7, 1965. A phalanx of police blocked their exit from the Selma bridge. Authorities shoved, then swung their truncheons, fired tear gas and charged on horseback, sending many to the hospital and horrifying much of the nation. King returned with thousands, completing the march to Montgomery before the end of the month.

Lewis turned to politics in 1981, when he was elected to the Atlanta City Council. He won his seat in Congress in 1986 and spent much of his career in the minority. After Democrats won control of the House in 2006, Lewis became his party's senior deputy whip, a behind-the-scenes leadership post in which he helped keep the party unified.

In an early setback for Barack Obama's 2008 Democratic primary campaign, Lewis endorsed Hillary Rodham Clinton for the nomination.

Lewis switched when it became clear Obama had overwhelming Black support. Obama later honored Lewis with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, and they marched hand in hand in Selma on the 50th anniversary of the Bloody Sunday attack.

## Floods kill 14 in China as water peaks at Three Gorges Dam



**BEIJING, JUL 18 (AP):** At least 14 people have died in the latest round of seasonal rains and flooding in southern China, as soldiers and workers built makeshift barriers with sandbags and rocks Saturday to keep the Yangtze River and its tributaries at bay.

Three floodgates of the Three Gorges Dam that spans the Yangtze were opened as the water level behind the massive dam rose more than 15 meters (50 feet) above flood level, the official Xinhua News Agency reported.

The dam was holding back about 45% of the water, Xinhua said, citing China Three Gorges Corp.

Upstream, 11 people had been killed in Chongqing as of Saturday morning, China National Emergency Broadcasting said in an online report, citing the municipal emergency agency. More than 20,000 people had been evacuated and 1,031 homes destroyed.

Three landslides in Dunhao town in a mountainous part of Chongqing left six dead, the city's

Emergency Management Bureau said. The bodies had been found by Friday evening after more than 200 people were dispatched for a search and rescue operation. Rainfall in the town of Dunhao totaled 39 centimeters (15 inches), the bureau said.

Three more people died in neighbouring Hubei province, the emergency management department said in a social media post.

State broadcaster CCTV showed people cleaning up still wet, muddy streets and shops in the city of Enshi after severe flooding Friday.

Rescue workers used inflatable rafts to rescue more than 1,900 people trapped in their homes and other buildings.

Downriver, firefighters and others finished filling in a 188-meter (620-foot) break in a dike on Poyang Lake, China's largest freshwater lake, Xinhua said.

The dike gave way nine days ago, flooding 15 villages and agricultural fields in Jiangxi province, the news agen-

cy said. More than 14,000 people were evacuated.

The incoming waters were expected to peak Saturday behind the Three Gorges Dam, but more water is forecast to arrive around Tuesday, Xinhua said. The hydropower dam is used to mitigate catastrophic flooding. Seasonal flooding strikes large parts of China annually, especially in its central and southern regions, but the rainfall has been unusually high this year.

About 1.8 million people have been evacuated and direct losses attributed to flooding are estimated at more than 49 billion yuan (7 billion), according to the Ministry of Emergency Management.

Major cities have been spared so far, but concern has risen over Wuhan and other downstream metropolises that are home to tens of millions of people.

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

## Cases by half in Australia's Victoria state



**MELBOURNE, JUL 18 (AP):** Australia's Victoria state saw a marked drop in new COVID-19 infections -- from Friday's record high of 428 to 217 -- a total that Chief Health Officer Brett Sutton says was a relief after yesterday's numbers.

The Health Department said Saturday that two more Victorians, a man and a woman both aged in their 80s, had died, taking the state's death toll to 34 and Australia's national total to 118.

Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews said the latest numbers were encouraging but warned it

was just one day. He says we'd want to see a pattern where there's stability and then a decrease. He urged residents in metropolitan Melbourne to remain diligent during a six-week lockdown -- being bored is much better than being in intensive care.

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**MOTHER OF DOGS!** The Game of Thrones actress, Emilia Clarke is seen walking her adorable dachshund in London.

## Bollywood star Aishwarya Rai Bachchan taken to hospital with Covid-19

The former Miss World's daughter has also been hospitalised

Bollywood star Aishwarya Rai Bachchan and her eight-year-old daughter have been hospitalised almost a week after they tested positive for Covid-19.

The 46-year-old Indian actress, former Miss World and one of Bollywood's most famous faces, and daughter Aaradhya are being treated at Mumbai's Nanavati Hospital, ANI agency reports.

Aishwarya's actor husband Abhishek and Bollywood superstar father-in-law Amitabh Bachchan, have been in hospital since Saturday. Their condition was described as "mild" at the time.

No further update on their condition has been released, but Amitabh tweeted on Friday: "In happy times, in times of illness, you our near and dear, our well wishers, our fans have ever given us unstinting love."

Prior to Aishwarya and Aaradhya's hospitalisation, Abhishek also tweeted: "My father and I remain in hospital till the doctors decide otherwise. Everyone please remain cautious

and safe. Please follow all rules!" Actress Jaya Bachchan, wife of Amitabh Bachchan, has tested negative for the virus. Fans held prayers and vigils for the family's recovery following the news, which has shocked the country. Until now, Aishwarya and Aaradhya



had been isolating at home. It was reported last week that India recorded a record 35,000 new cases of coronavirus cases in 24 hours, surpassing the one million mark.

Aishwarya Bachchan won the Miss World Crown in 1994, and the star is a regular on the red carpet at the Cannes film festival. Her family are often described as Bollywood royalty.

## Rapper Logic to retire from music after release of new album No Pressure'



**LOS ANGELES, JUL 18 (PTI):** Rapper Logic has announced he is taking retirement from music and his upcoming album No Pressure' will be his last.

The rapper, 30, whose real name is Sir Robert Bryson Hall II, said he wants to focus on being a great father to his son with wife Brittney Noell.

Officially announcing my retirement with the release of No Pressure' executive produced by No I.D. July 24th... It's been a great decade. Now it's time to be

a great father, Logic posted on Twitter alongside the album art of No Pressure'.

The rapper released his debut album Under Pressure' in 2014. He followed it up with The Incredible True Story' (2015); Everybody' (2017); YSIV' (2018) and Confessions of a Dangerous Mind' (2019). In his six-years-long career, Logic has collaborated with celebrated artistes such as Eminem, Childish Gambino, Will Smith, Wiz Khalifa and Hailee Steinfeld.

## Keanu Reeves to make his comic book writing debut

**LOS ANGELES, JUL 18 (PTI):** Hollywood star Keanu Reeves is launching his career as a comic book writer with Boom Studios' BRZRKR.

For the upcoming 12-issue limited series, the John Wick actor has collaborated with writer Matt Kindt, artist Alessandro Vitti, colourist Bill Crabtree and letterer Clem Robins.

According to Entertainment Weekly, the action-packed comic book focuses on a warrior who looks a lot like Reeves and has walked a blood-soaked path across the world for centuries. In present day, he does dangerous jobs for the US government in exchange for the truth about his existence.

The print versions of BRZRKR', featuring cover art by Rafael Grampa, will be released in the US in October.

I have loved comics since I was a young kid and they have been a significant influence on me artistically.

To have the chance to create BRZRKR and collaborate with legends in the industry like writer Matt Kindt, artist Alessandro Vitti, colour artist Bill Crabtree, letterer Clem Robins, and conceptual/cover artist Rafael Grampa -- along with the great folks at Boom Studios -- is a dream come true," Reeves said in a statement.

The 55-year-old actor's comic writing debut comes almost a year after he played the character of rocker Johnny Silverhand in 'Cyberpunk 2077'.

On the movie front, Reeves will next be seen in Bill and Ted Face the Music. He is also working on the fourth installment in the Matrix franchise.

## Chandan Roy Sanyal begins shooting for his next film in Banaras

**MUMBAI, JUL 18 (PTI):** Actor Chandan Roy Sanyal on Saturday said he has started shooting for his next film titled "Woh Teen Din" in Banaras, with all the necessary precautions.

The actor flew to Banaras two days before the commencement of the shoot on July 7.

According to a press release issued on Sanyal's behalf, the actor will be filming his portion for the next few days in Chunar, a small town in the district of Mirzapur in Uttar Pradesh.

He said the entire team of "Woh Teen Din" are taking necessary safety precautions during the shoot.

"I'm shooting outdoors after four months approximately. I feel like a beginner and I'm happy and relieved that the makers of the film are handling the safety of the cast and crew so wonderfully. It is amazing to be working with Sanjay Mishra for a film that has such a unique story," Sanyal said in a statement.

The 40-year-old actor said the unit consists of 30 people and everyone is following social distancing and taking other preventive measures. "Social dis-

tancing is maintained thoroughly on the sets even when I rehearse or do a scene with my co-actor Sanjay Mishra. Luckily in this film, the scenes are on-one-one



and with me and Sanjay Mishra. There is not much touching and physical body interaction, fortunately it has worked for us," he added.

Directed by Raj Ashoo, the film is a slice-of-life story about hilarious conversations between a passenger and a rickshaw puller.

Sanyal and Mishra will be essaying the roles of passenger and rickshaw puller respectively.

The actor's upcoming project also includes Prakash Jha's "Ashram".

## Disney Plus delays 'Falcon & the Winter Soldier' release

**LOS ANGELES, JUL 18 (PTI)** Falcon & the Winter Soldier, Marvel Studios' first project for streaming platform Disney Plus, has been pushed.

The series, featuring actors Anthony Mackie (Falcon) and Sebastian Stan (Winter Soldier) reprising their Marvel Cinematic Universe (MCU) roles, was scheduled to premiere on Disney Plus in August but was not included in the platform's list of releases for the month.

The series picks up the events of 2019's Avengers: Endgame, which saw Chris Evans' Captain America pass his shield to Sam Wilson (Mackie).

According to Variety, the team was about to start the Prague schedule of the series in March, but the production had to be shut down in the wake of coronavirus outbreak leading to several weeks of delay in the making. Disney Plus is expected to announce the new premiere date for the series once the makers get back to the sets.

Marvel Studios has multiple shows in the works for Disney+, including WandaVision with Paul Bettany and Elizabeth Olsen; Tom Hiddleston-starrer Loki and Jeremy Renner's Hawkeye.

## HBO planning to reboot therapy drama 'In Treatment'

**LOS ANGELES, JUL 18 (PTI):** HBO is considering a reboot of its critically-acclaimed drama "In Treatment", which revolved around a psychotherapist and his patients.

The HBO drama that also featured late Indian actor Irrfan Khan as one of the patients in its third season, ran from 2008 to 2010.

The premium cable outlet is exploring a reboot of the series, based on an Israeli show, "BeTipul", and starring Gabriel Byrne as Dr. Paul Weston, according to The Hollywood Reporter. A writer or a showrunner is yet to board the reboot.

HBO also has an ongoing relationship with "In Treatment" executive producer Hagai Levi, having just ordered a limited series based on Ingmar Bergman's "Scenes From a Marriage" from him. Levi also co-created and executive produced "Our Boys" for HBO.

The show centred on Paul meeting with several patients.

Irrfan, Michelle Forbes, Blair Underwood, Melissa George, Mia Wasikowska, Josh Charles, Hope Davis, Alison Pill, Embeth Davidtz, Sherri Saum, Russell Hornsby, Aaron Shaw, John Mahoney, Debra Winger, Amy Ryan, Dane DeHaan and Alex Wolff played patients over the course of the series.

Irrfan, who died after a battle with a rare form of cancer in April this year, played Sunil in the drama, a widower from Kolkata finding it hard to settle in America with his son and his American wife.

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### ARIES:

There are times when the road ahead is illuminated and then there are times when we feel like we're navigating through the darkness. The latter holds true for where you are at this moment, Aries. But don't lose hope just yet. What you're experiencing now is a repeated lesson. So, take a moment to ground yourself in your breath and time travel to the beginning of the eclipse season.

Tip: Remember the soul lessons you were dealing with in the beginning of the eclipse season.

### TAURUS:

Practitioners of the law of attraction believe that the Universe works on the 'ask and you shall receive' principle. In other words, we are capable of creating what we desire by tapping into the subconscious. Understanding your own power will not only reinstate your faith in yourself but also change the game for you—permanently. The real question is: will you settle for a mundane existence or dedicate your life to the pursuit of greatness?

Tip: Tap into the power of the subconscious to create the life of your dreams.

### GEMINI:

It's either all-in or all-out, Gemini. Lukewarm just doesn't cut it for you anymore. You're in the mood to take life by the horns and have a love affair with the unknown. An ascended master once said, "Rejoice in life, in love, in meditation, in the beauties of the world, in the ecstasy of existence—rejoice in everything! Transform the mundane into the sacred. Transform this shore into the other shore, transform the earth into paradise."

Tip: It's time to take life by the horns.

### CANCER:

When Gloria Steinem said 'The truth will set you free, but first it will piss you off', she was definitely talking about your circumstances, Cancer. It's time to see this situation for what it is: a one-sided romance. If they reach out to you only when it's convenient for them (and not when you're seeking company), that's a big red flag.

Tip: It's time for some soul-searching, Cancer.

### LEO:

When you live a life that's full of passion, you always run the risk of having your heart broken. But you wouldn't know any other way, would you now, Leo? Despite how things turned out, you understand that they were happening for you, not to you; that the experiences you attracted helped you awaken to a deeper truth. Today, you're being asked to release the past pain with loving awareness and trust that your heart will expand with love as you do.

Tip: It's time to release past pain.

### VIRGO:

Here's the thing, Virgo: you "always" have a choice. The choice to stay where you are, or the choice to bring forth the energy of change. So, choose what's in alignment with your highest good as you quit playing the blame game. The given situation requires you to tap into your inner warrior and become an embodiment of strength and courage.

Tip: This is a time of endings.

### LIBRA:

The Chinese believe that herbs like Zhi Shi and Shan Zha increase longevity, while Ayurveda promotes Chyawanprash as the fountain of youth. But you understand that elixirs and potions are merely supplements. The secret

to a robust life is inner peace, happiness, trust, and surrender—qualities that are present to you in abundance. Libra, this is the season to engage with life fully and count your blessings as you do.

Tip: Your cup has runneth over.

### SCORPIO:

The weekend sees you shifting your gaze from the material plane of existence to one that is synonymous with inner illumination. The world of mysteries has your attention once again. You are feeling inspired to delve deeper and uncover your psychic/spiritual gifts. The path of self-learning will prove to be rewarding, Scorpio. Somewhat on the fence about the role of magic? Consider reading about Quantum physics and the power of the subconscious.

Tip: The world of mysteries has your attention this weekend.

### SAGITTARIUS:

So you had your heart broken, Sagittarius. Then again, who hasn't? Don't let one minor disappointment be the reason you shut yourself off to love in all forms. Today, the cards are reminding you that it is by letting go of the old story that your heart will expand with love. Some of you could be in a relationship that's based purely on physical attraction. What are the qualities that you desire in your soulmate?

Tip: We are the creators of our own reality. Where do you want to vibrate at?

### CAPRICORN:

As a believer of the law of karma, you understand that every action has a repercussion. Therefore, you believe in living your life as conscientiously as possible. You know in your heart that the seeds of goodness you plant now

will bear magnificent results in the future. Today, you're being asked to keep this Universal law in mind before you make an important decision. Yes, that means choosing the not-so-easy way out of the maze. PS: Spirit has got your back!

Tip: Do the right thing no matter how hard it is.

### AQUARIUS:

Ready for some truth tea, Aquarius? You are not responsible for the well-being of everybody in your life. Stop wearing this burden as a badge of honour. The guilt of not doing enough is starting to drain you in more ways than you can imagine. What you want to do instead is balance out the scales by allowing yourself to receive your own love and care. As such, a woman in your life—a motherly figure—may feel inspired to hold space for you in these testing times. Allow yourself to lean on those who mean well.

Tip: A woman in your life—a motherly figure—is holding space for you at this moment.

### PISCES:

The home is our safe place. A sanctuary away from the noise and the commotion of the outside world. A place where we can take off the masks and be our most authentic selves. How can you transform your house into a haven? Take small steps in the right direction, Pisces. Adding a kitchen garden or nurturing indoor plants is a good way to raise the vibrations. Is there a reiki practitioner at home? Call upon their assistance to help you create a crystal grid for the same purpose. Couples who've been dating for some time now might be overcome by the urge to share space.

Tip: Focus on transforming your home into a haven.