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SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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CM CHAIRS MEETING WITH EDUCATION DEPT Ad-hoc teacher walk-in interviews from 03 Oct onwards

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 02 SEPT:**

Chief Minister PS Tamang chaired a high-level meeting with the Education Department today at Mintokgang, a press release from the Education Department informs.

The meeting decided to conduct walk-in interviews for Post Graduate, Graduate, Primary, Physical Education & Pre-Primary and Language Teachers on ad-hoc basis from 03 Oct, 2021 onwards.

Ad hoc teachers appointed through a similar process last year have been protesting for the past few months, it may be recalled. The interview has been called and promised several times only to get postponed. These teachers, whose ad hoc terms have expired, are currently demanding that either the interviews be held early or their services extended till the interviews are held and results declared to ensure that students and their own livelihoods are not kept in indefinite limbo.

Meanwhile, at today's meeting, the government also recognised that internet connectivity in several parts of Sikkim were too poor to even allow online submission of applications

for the walk-in interviews.

"During the meeting it was discussed that the Department has received numerous applications from persons who could not fill up the online application for the walk-in interview of adhoc teachers owing to the poor internet connectivity in the far-flung areas," the release states.

The department has said that it has therefore, been decided to open the online application portal for ad-hoc teachers of all categories from 03-15 Sept. The meeting decided to allow applicants to apply offline for the post of teacher on ad-hoc basis in their respective District Education Offices as well.

Further, walk-in-interviews for the posts of Post Graduate, Graduate, Primary, Physical Education & Pre-Primary and Language Teachers on ad-hoc basis are scheduled to be held from 03 Oct onwards and will be taken up by Sikkim State Teachers' Recruitment Board (SSTRB).

The SSTRB will conduct these walk-in-interviews for the appointment all categories of ad-hoc teachers in a phased manner.

It has also been decided that

the walk-in-interview will be conducted centrally at SSTRB conference hall, Syari, Gangtok. The Department has decided that these interviews will be conducted by the SSTRB in order to have smooth and fast results.

Once the teachers are recruited after these interviews, there will be no further interviews for these selected candidates. They will continue working for eight years. Once, they complete the eight-year service, they will be brought under regular establishment after following the "required procedure," the release adds.

Meanwhile, in the event of any vacancy arising due to retirement or any other reasons, the SSTRB will further conduct such interviews on a yearly basis.

The meeting was also attended by Minister for Education, Kunga Nima Lepcha accompanied by the Secretary, Anil Raj Rai, Special Secretary (Administration), Honda Gyaltzen, Secretary (SSTRB and Director Elementary Education), Bhim Thatal, Joint Secretary (Administration), Lakhi D Bhutia and Deputy Controller of Exams (SSTRB), Asha Khatri, the release informs.

CM condoles demise of PT Lucksom

GANGTOK, 02 SEPT [IPR]: Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang has expressed his heartfelt condolences on the sad demise of former Deputy Chief Minister of Sikkim, PT Lucksom, at STNM Hospital, Sochyagang, Gangtok. Further, he has expressed his deepest sympathies and compassion to the family and friends of the deceased in this difficult hour and offered his prayers for the eternal peace of the departed soul.

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Sikkim's Covid count goes past 30K, toll rises to 371

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 02 SEPT:**

Sikkim's tally of the confirmed Covid cases crossed the 30,000-mark today and now stand at 30,025 with 71 new cases being reported in the last 24 hours. These new cases returned positive from the testing of 796 samples on Wednesday giving the state a daily test positivity rate of 8.9%.

Also over the same 24 hours, the state lost one more life to the virus at Central Referral Hospital taking the COVID death toll to 371. This is the second COVID death this week after one COVID death was reported on Monday.

As per the Daily Report of COVID-19 in Sikkim issued by the Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme of Health Department, while 38 people tested positive in RT-PCR testing of 402 samples yesterday, another 33 cases were picked up in rapid antigen testing of 393 samples.

Of the 71 new cases, 36 were registered in East District, 20 in West District, 13 in South District and 02 in North District.

On the other hand, 54 more people were discharged from home and facility isolation on Wednesday after making full recoveries. This is after

a long while that the number of daily recoveries have come in lower than new cases, but this is primarily because infections have been coming down for over a fortnight and since most Covid-positive people are usually required to stay 11 days in isolation, if infections that many days back was lower, so will the number of recoveries now.

The number of overall recovered Covid cases now stands at 28,316.

There are currently 1,055 active Covid cases in the State, of whom only 63 are with symptoms severe enough to require hospitalisation and only seven of the admitted Covid patients are under 18 years of age. In the past 24 hours, five more COVID patients were hospitalised.

Of those in hospital, 10 are currently admitted in ICU facilities at STNM Hospital and CRH.

Meanwhile, 1,028 doses of Covishield were administered in Sikkim yesterday - 480 people receiving their first shot while 548 others completing their vaccine schedule with the second jab.

While 94.86% of the adult population has received at least the first shot of the vaccine, 34.36% of the eligible population in Sikkim is now fully vaccinated.

Naina and Sangeeta become Sikkim's first certified Wushu coaches

**SAGARCHETTRI
GANGTOK, 02 SEPT:**

Two martial artists from Sikkim completed a six-week Certificate Course in Sports Coaching in Wushu from Sports Authority of India's Netaji Subhas National Institute of Sports, Patiala.

National Wushu players, Naina Kala Sharma and Sangeeta Subba have also become the first certified coaches in Wushu from Sikkim after completing this course from the reputed National Institute of Sports, Patiala.

22-year-old, Sangeeta Subba, is from Ben in South District and started practicing Wushu in 2012 and is a silver medalist in North East Championship in 2018. Likewise, 22-year-old, Naina Kala Sharma is from Samdong in East District. She started Wushu in 2011 after watching a wushu demonstration in her school's annual meet. She is a silver medalist in Junior Nationals in 2012 and a gold medalist in North East Champion-



ship.

Speaking to Summit Times, the duo expressed their happiness on completing the certificate courses from the reputed NIS, Patiala and assured to use the knowledge and techniques learned in the course for the development and promotion of wushu and for the betterment of martial artists in the State. They also plan to go for a diploma course in Wushu in the near future. They hope to spot and bring out quality Wushu martial artists from in and around their village.

Both are currently

preparing for the upcoming nationals to be held at the end of this year.

"Our current target is to represent the country in the Asian Games 2022 to be held in China, so in this regard this upcoming national championship is very important for us. We need to secure our place in the national team for Asian Games," they said.

On behalf of Sikkim Amateur Wushu Association [SAWA], chief coach Aron Gurung, who is also the national coach, congratulated both martial artists for successfully completing

the certificate course and becoming the first certified Wushu coaches in the State.

He said that it is also a big moment for SAWA and Wushu fraternity in the State to have two certified coaches since the introduction of the sport in the State in 2004.

"The achievement of these two martial artists would not only motivate young upcoming martial artists to pursue diploma or certificate courses but this would also help in the promotion and development of Wushu especially in technical aspects in the State," he said.

BREAKTHROUGH ACHIEVED AT NEW TOPAKHANI TUNNEL!

The 250 metre tunnel being excavated on NH10 near the Government Fruit Preservation Factory, known among commuters as "Topkhani," has achieved breakthrough, a press release informs. To mark the event, a breakthrough programme as organized by Nagyan Construction Pvt Ltd, the contractors for the tunnel. Sankar Bhowmik, GM-Project, Farukh Khan, Manager Project Engineering and other staff along with Sanjiv Thakur, the Director of Nagyan Construction attended the function along with state government officials, panchayat representatives and residents of the area. If things go as planned, the tunnel will be ready for traffic within three months, it is informed.



"Our Government stands in solidarity with families who lost their earning member due to Covid. Through various schemes, efforts are being made to mitigate financial difficulties that may be faced by them."

Narendra Modi
Prime Minister

A sensitive Government that is with you in difficult times

Relief to dependants of workers affected by Covid

Ensuring financial support and medical facilities to dependant family members of COVID deceased workers insured under ESI Scheme

SALIENT FEATURES

<p>90% of average wages of deceased worker to be paid every month</p>	<p>Relief amount to be credited directly in beneficiary's bank account</p>	<p>Spouse of deceased insured worker eligible for medical care</p>	<p>Covers COVID-19 related deaths occurring within 30 days after recovery from COVID-19</p>
<p>Rs. 15000/- to be paid towards expenses for last rites of deceased insured worker</p>	<p>In case of wage loss due to sickness, 70% of average daily wages to be paid</p>	<p>For claiming relief under the Scheme, please visit ESIC branch office</p>	

For more information on Covid-19 Relief Scheme, please visit www.esic.nic.in or call Toll Free No. 1800 - 11 - 2526

Ministry of Labour & Employment
Government of India

Employees' State Insurance Corporation

dayp 2311171300102122

Lachen-Mangan MLA meets North Sikkim SKM party-workers

WANGCHUK BHUTIA

MANGAN, 02 SEPT:

Minister Roads & Bridges cum MLA Lachen Mangan constituency, Samdup Lepcha convened a meeting with party workers and public at Pakshap under Lachen Mangan constituency in North Sikkim today.

The Minister, while addressing the meeting, urged everyone to work in coordination to strengthen the party and also said that all the pending works will be carried out by the government.



ernment.

He also said that a co-

ordination meeting will be organized every once

in a while for proper planning and transparen-

cy. He further informed that he will be available at the party office on the 15th day of every month to meet the public.

Also present in the meeting was Chairman Welfare Commission, NimTshering Lepcha, Additional Political Secretary to CM [North], Tshering Wangyal Bhutia, CLC president, Lhendup Lepcha and District Youth Convenor, Tashi Norbu Lachungpa, Ward Panchayats of Ringhim-Nampatam GPU and Pakshap.

'PMJDY a big success in Sikkim, 86,000 bank accounts opened'

GANGTOK, 02 SEPT

(PIB): In Sikkim, a total of 86,000 bank accounts have been opened till date under the Pradhan-Mantri Jan Dhan Yojna (PMJDY), Deputy General Manager (Financial Inclusion), Kuhu Ganguli, SBI, LHO, Kolkata informs today.

Addressing a PIB webinar today on the financial inclusion scheme to mark the 7th anniversary of PMJDY, Ms Ganguli said, considering the 6.5 lakh population of the State, this is a stupendous achievement. More than half of the PMJDY accounts in Sikkim belong to women. The average balance in PMJDY accounts in Sikkim is Rs 5500. She also informed that the benefits of PMJDY have reached the remotest and hilly areas in Sikkim, benefitting all.

The State Bank of India is the lead bank in Sikkim.

Addressing the webinar, HoD, Prof SS Mahapatra, Commerce, Sikkim Central University deliberated on financial inclusion and economic development in the country in



reference to PMJDY. He said that within a short span of seven years, India has seen many changes and the financial inclusion ecosystem has become stronger. Now it is capable of delivering financial services to the poorest of the poor. Prof Mahapatra added that during Covid-19 Atmanirbhar package PMJDY has emerged as the main channel of disbursal of relief.

The actual journey of financial inclusion in India started in 2014, when PMJDY and other related schemes were started, said DGM, Shanta Kumar Sahoo,

State Bank of India, Guwahati. Addressing the event, Mr Sahoo said that financial inclusion mainly provides reliable financial solution to the economically weaker section of the society through various financial products relating to credit, investment, insurance and pension. He informed that a record number of bank accounts were opened under PMJDY scheme in Assam.

As on June, 2021 the State has 1 Crore 90 Lakh PMJDY accounts against 50 lakh households, he said. He also highlighted about

the success of other schemes including PM Jeevan Jyoti Beema Yojana and Atal Pension Yojana in his address.

Shri Sahoo requested all the stakeholders like the government functionaries at the different district and block level and also the NGOs to effectively participate in this programme so that if can further reach the lowest section of the people.

Editor Dainik Purvoday, Ravi Shankar Ravi, Guwahati, on this occasion, said that opening a bank account is now not difficult for the lower strata of population

in our country because of PMJDY. Under this scheme the Government has granted access to those who have difficulties opening accounts in banks.

Media and Communication Officer, Gopajit Das, PIB welcomed the participants. Media and Communication Officer, Sucharita Sahoo, PIB, Guwahati moderated. Participants from across the Northeast region, field offices of Press Information Bureau & Regional Outreach Bureau, media persons and students of Sikkim Central University joined the webinar.

Sikkim's BJP MLAs attend legislative workshop



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 02 SEPT:

Bharatiya Janata Party MLAs from Sikkim attended a legislative workshop organised by PRS Legislative Research today, a press release informs. PRS Legislative Research is an independent organisation which was established to make the legislative process more informed and transparent.

The workshop was conducted for the benefit of legislators from all the north-eastern states and the issues discussed included effective legislative engagement, budget and state finance, fund flow to the North-eastern states through central schemes and 15th Finance Commission recommendations. The release mentions.

The workshop also focused on the challenges being faced by the North-eastern states against the backdrop of the pandemic and the future opportunities that the states can utilize.

Recommendations were made regarding the building of a resilient healthcare system in the region.

The key-note address was delivered by Union Minister for Development of North Eastern Region and Minister for Tourism, Kishan Reddy.

In the workshop, Upper Burtuk Legislator, D.R Thapa along with MLAs, K.B Rai, K.S Lepcha, Rajkumari Thapa and Farwanti Tamang highlighted the various difficulties faced by Sikkim due to the pandemic. They spoke about the destruction of tourism and allied industries due to the pandemic which has affected all the stakeholders in the state. To help revive the economy, they requested the Minister for a revival package which would help the tourism industry sustain and recover from the effects of the pandemic. The Minister assured them that they would provide immediate assistance.

Poshan Maah launched in East Sikkim

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 02 SEPT:

A brief District level opening ceremony of Poshan Maah was held at District Administrative Centre, East Sikkim, today.

The Poshanpledge was administered by DC East, Ragul K in the presence of Zilla Adhakshya East, SSBokhim.

The programme was attended by officials and staff of DAC and Zilla Adhakshya Office along with DPO Poshan Abhiyaan, East, CDPO Gangtok, and District Co-or-



inator POSHAN, East Sikkim. The programme

also included a signature campaign.

On boats, Assam health workers take vaccine to river islands amid floods

GUWAHATI, 02 SEPT

[PTI]: The worsening

flood situation in Assam has made the task of health workers carrying out Covid vaccination drive even more challenging. These health workers have to take boat rides to vaccinate thousands who live on chars and chaporis - riverine islands that dot the Brahmaputra river.

NDTV travelled with one such team. The target of this team is Tapobori char - a riverine island - and to vaccinate 600 people living there before the floods completely cut it off. Kamrup district has 55,000 people living on 27 islands

waiting for the jab.

"Now since there is floods the challenge is one level higher; our front line workers have to be always in the flood waters while even vaccinating," said Monika Deka Dutta, the Block Programme Manager (BPM) of National Health Mission (NHM) at Hajo of Assam's Kamrup district, 40 km west of Guwahati.

The vaccination camps are either under the shade of a tree or on the boat itself. Doubly challenging is poor connectivity and vaccine hesitancy among some villagers.

"We are afraid to take the vaccine, some people say we will have fever

for four days. So we are worried," said Motiur Rahman, a resident of the Topabori char.

"Once we open the vial, we need to inject at least 10 people within 4 hours. Sometimes convincing them is difficult. As mobile internet connectivity is patchy on island, the CoWIN registrations take a lot of time," Kabita Phukan, the lead vaccinator of the medical team told NDTV.

There were some encouraging voices too.

"This is a good effort and since the team is here people's fear will also go away," said Abdul Jalil, who took his first vaccine shot.

Minister Sharma meets DoNER MoS

NEW DELHI, 02 SEPT

(IPR): Minister, Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services, Information and Public Relations and Printing and Stationery Departments, Lok Nath Sharma called on the Minister of State (MoS), Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region and Ministry of Cooperation, Government of India, BL Verma at New Delhi on 01 Sept, 2021.

The Minister apprised the Minister of State on the background of the unique existence of a wide range of natural diversity, enormous tourism potential and scope of establishing the state as a shooting destination. He put forth a proposal for the establishment of Eco-Heritage Film City in Sikkim.

The Minister of State, BL Verma assured the provision of support for the accomplishment of the project.

Minister Sharma also extended gratitude to the Minister of State to extend the required support as proposed.



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NYKS-Sikkim to organise Freedom Run 2.0 in Gangtok on 04 Sept

GANGTOK, 02 SEPT

(PIB): As part of the celebration of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav - India@75,

Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, is organizing Fit India Freedom Run 2.0 throughout the country with a view to make people aware about the necessity of physical activity and to include fitness in their daily lives. The theme of the programme is 'Fitness ka dose, aadha ghanta roj'.

This time, Fit India Freedom Runs 2.0 commenced on 13 August 2021 and will conclude on 02 October, 2021. Department of Youth Affairs through Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan is organizing Fit India Freedom Run in 744 districts throughout the country dividing 75 districts in every week and 75 villages in each district till 02 October.

NYKS-Sikkim organized the said programme in association with NSS and other government and non-governmental organizations on 14 & 15 August at Namchi, South Sikkim,

21 August at Gyalshing, West Sikkim, 28 August at Mangan, North Sikkim.

In continuation, Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan - Sikkim is going to organize Fit India Freedom Runs 2.0 at Gangtok

on 04 September. The Fit India Freedom Run will start from MG Marg (Titanic Park), Gangtok at 10AM on 04 September.

Indra Hang Subba, MP, is scheduled to attend as the chief guest.

MISSING

Shri Mukunda Prasad Dhakal (56 years old), resident of Lingmoo Middle Koltang, South Sikkim went missing from his residence since July 24, 2021 at around 12.30 pm. He is wearing white kurta Surwal. If anyone has seen the above person anywhere, please inform either nearest police station or contact in the following phone number.

Contact: 9733134776



ANTHEYESTI KRIYA



The Antheyesti Kriya of Late Pabitra Poudyal, wife of Late Krishna Bir Poudyal, who left for heavenly abode on 25th August 2021 falls on 6th September 2021. All relatives, friends and well-wishers are requested to join us for the last offering prayer to the departed soul at our residence at Tashiding (Thangchung) West Sikkim. We also express our sincere gratitude to all those who stood by us during the time of bereavement.

Rabi Lall Poudyal (son)
Guman Singh Poudyal (son)
Pabitra Devi Poudyal (son-in-law)
Pabi Maya poudyal (son-in-law)
Radhika Poudyal (son-in-law)



What is Novel Coronavirus - nCoV?

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

Symptoms of nCoV

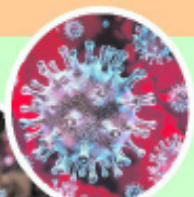
- Fever
- Difficulty in breathing
- Dry Cough
- Severe acute respiratory syndrome
- Pneumonia - like symptoms

Precautions to Prevent nCoV

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

Treatment

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



If you seek help, you may call :

-Toll free no. 104

District surveillance Officer

EAST : 7029372100

WEST : 9583297809

NORTH : 9641957468

SOUTH : 7407691463

New STNM

AMS : 943711402

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE

GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM

SDM visits landslide affected Upper Bongten



RUDRA KAUSHIK

GANGTOK, 02 SEPT:

SDM, Dentam, Nanda Kumar Karki visited Upper Bongten today to take stock of damages incurred in landslide that occurred on 29

Aug that washed away the road connecting Changay with Bongten and other important areas.

He assured all possible help from the government and in-

structed the concerned AE and other officials to take the required action. The road has been made motorable temporarily by the road supervisor and contractor with the help of villagers.

People of Upper Bongten and Changay (Upper Sapung) took this opportunity to thank SDM, Dentam and digital media "Hamro Khabar" for reporting the news of the landslide.

Ministry constitutes Committee to review guidelines of Journalist Welfare Scheme

GANGTOK, 02 SEPT

[PIB]: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has constituted a ten-member Committee headed by Ashok Kumar Tandon, renowned Journalist and Member, PrasarBharati to take a look at the existing guidelines of Journalists Welfare Scheme of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and make appropriate recommendations for changes therein. This decision is considered significant in the light of the several changes that have taken place in the media eco space including the loss of a large number of journalists

due to COVID-19 and the broad basing of the definition of the "Working Journalists".

The Journalists Welfare Scheme which has been in existence for a many years needs a re-look from a futuristic perspective and broad basing the coverage for the benefit of the Journalists of this country. With the enactment of Occupational, Safety, Health and Working Condition Code 2020, the definition of the Working Journalists has been broadened to include within its fold those working in both traditional and digital media. Further, it was also considered neces-

sary to look at the possible parity between accredited and non-accredited journalists from the perspective of welfare and availing of benefits under the scheme.

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has in recent times taken very pro-active steps for grant of ex-gratia payment to the families of journalists who unfortunately died due to COVID-19 and such assistance has been given in over 100 cases @ Rs.5 lakh each.

The Committee is expected to give its report in a time-bound manner within two months. Its recommendations would enable the Gov-

ernment to frame guidelines afresh for the benefit of the journalists. The Committee headed by Ashok Kumar Tandon includes Sachidanand Murthy, Resident Editor, The Week, Shekhar Aiyar, Freelance Journalist, Amitabh Sinha, News 18, Sishir Kumar Sinha, Business Line, Ravinder Kumar, Special Correspondent, Zee News, Hitesh Shankar, Editor, Panchjanya, Smriti Kak Ramachandran, Hindustan Times, Amit Kumar, Times Now, Vasudha Venugopal, Economic Times and Kanchan Prasad, Addl. DG, Press Information Bureau.

Fear of drought as Odisha records highest monsoon deficit this century

BHUBANESWAR, 02 SEPT [PTI]:

Odisha recorded its highest rainfall deficiency this monsoon in over two decades, the weather department has said, amid fears that the dry spell could trigger a drought in the state.

Odisha received only 661.1 mm of rain between June 1 and August 31 this year against a normal of 935.8 mm, a deficiency of 29 per cent, the Meteorological Centre in Bhubaneswar said.

This was the sixth occasion in the last 120 years when the southwest monsoon rain during the period has been deficient by 29 per cent or more, an official release said on Wednesday.

The previous rain-deficient years were 1924 (636.2 mm), 1954 (646.8 mm), 1974 (658.7 mm), 1987 (641.4 mm) and 1998 (657.5 mm), the depart-

ment said.

The seasonal deficit is mainly due to a large deficiency in August. Rainfall over the state during the month was 204.9 mm against a normal of 366.4 mm, recording a deficiency of 44 per cent, it said.

There were only three times in the last 120 years that the August rainfall was less than 204.9 mm -- 1965 (187.3 mm), 1987 (190.3 mm) and 1998 (203.5 mm).

In the three-month period of the current monsoon, only six out of 30 districts in the state were under the normal category and 24 districts under the deficient category. Four districts -- Jajpur, Bhadrak, Bolangir and Angul -- have a deficiency of 40 per cent or more, the weather centre said.

In August, only four districts recorded normal rainfall, while 18 were under the deficient

category. Eight districts - Boudh, Sambalpur, Subarnapur, Angul and Bolangir, Kandhamal, Bargarh and Jajpur - are under the large deficient category, it said.

Apparently, the absence of depression and less number of low-pressure areas - only two observed - over the Bay of Bengal during August caused less amount of rainfall, the weatherman said.

The monsoon trough was also located north of its normal position on most days in August, causing subdued monsoon activities, it said.

The India Meteorological Department has forecast that the state would receive normal rainfall of 226.6 mm rainfall in September.

On Tuesday, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik had directed officials to prepare a contingency crop plan and take measures to mitigate farmers' problems.

4 IAS officers sentenced to jail in contempt case in Andhra

AMARAVATI, SEP 2 (PTI):

The Andhra Pradesh High Court on Thursday sentenced four serving IAS officers and one retired to varying terms of imprisonment holding them guilty of contempt for "wilful disobedience" of the court order of February 10, 2017.

Three other IAS officers, including Chief Secretary Aditya Nath Das, were let off in the case as the charge against them has been dismissed.

The convicted IAS officers include Principal Finance Secretary Shamsheer Singh Rawat, Chief Minister's Additional Secretary Revu Mutyala Raju, SPS Nellore district Collector K V N Chakradhara Babu and former Collector M V Seshagiri Babu.

Mutyala Raju had also previously served as Collector of SPS Nellore district. Retired IAS officer Manmohan Singh, who was the then Principal Secretary (Revenue) in 2017, has also been convicted in the case.

Justice Battu Devanand pronounced the order on a contempt petition filed an agriculturist Tallapaka Savitamma of SPS Nellore district.

Rawat and Singh have been sentenced to one month imprisonment while others have been sentenced to two weeks imprisonment. A fine of Rs 1,000 has also been imposed on each of them.

Justice Devanand, however, ordered suspension of the sentence for a month to enable the convicted to go for

an appeal, according to the petitioner's lawyer C Vani Reddy.

Savitamma filed a writ petition in the High Court in 2017 stating that her land measuring three acres was resumed by the revenue authorities and allotted to the National Institute of Mental Health without any notice or payment of compensation.

In December 2016, the revenue authorities promised to pay compensation to her for the land and that was also reported to the Lokayukta, she said.

Justice A Rajasheker Reddy of the High Court, on February 10, 2017, ruled in favour of the petitioner and directed the revenue authori-

ties concerned to pay compensation to her within three months.

In 2018, Savitamma filed a contempt case in the High Court after the revenue authorities failed to implement the court's order.

In June this year, Justice Devanand, while hearing the contempt case, observed that from the material available on record, the revenue divisional officer had submitted bills to the accounts office on July 6, 2020 but they were not cleared till March 30, 2021.

"In the opinion of this court, nearly eight months delay occurred in the office of the Principal Accounts Officer in clearing the bills and making payment of com-

pensation to the petitioner," he had noted.

In August, the judge heard the arguments of the respondents and reserved judgment.

The verdict was delivered on Thursday.

The judge closed the case against the then Chief Commissioner of Land Administration Anil Chandra Punetha (since retired), then Joint Collector of SPS Nellore district A Md Imtiyaz, the local tahsildar and the deputy director of NIMH.

The case against incumbent Chief Secretary Aditya Nath Das, who became a party to the case only because he held full additional charge of the Principal Finance Secretary post for a few days in February-March this year, was dismissed.

"Improper, uncalled for": Furious Nitish Kumar on university syllabus changes

PATNA, 02 SEPT

[NDTV]: Changes to the MA Political Science syllabus at Bihar's Jai Prakash University - the Chancellor of which is former BJP MLA and current Governor Phagu Chauhan - have triggered a furious response from Nitish Kumar.

Among the changes for the new academic year are the scrapping of chapters on prominent social and political activists 'Lok Nayak' Jai Prakash Narayan (after whom the university is named) and Ram Manohar Lohia, while those on Pandit Deen Dayal Upad-

hyay and others has been included.

A strongly worded statement from the Education Department quoted the Chief Minister as expressing his annoyance over the "improper" and "uncalled for" changes and asking for immediate corrective steps.

He was also quoted as warning other universities in the state to consult education officials before making syllabus changes, and said that in public interest no such steps would be allowed in the future.

The Chief Minister also hit out at the changes, saying that "tradition was not

followed" and that his government could not accept a syllabus that is "against the public mood".

Both Nitish Kumar and RJD veteran Lalu Prasad Yadav hold the teachings of JP Narayan close to their hearts; Lalu Prasad, who set up the university when he was chief minister, tweeted that a "RSS-backed Bihar government and RSS mindset (had) removed thoughts of great socialist leaders".

"I set up JPU 30 years ago in my karmbhoomi. It was named after Jai Prakashji. Now the RSS-backed Bihar government

and RSS mindset has removed the thoughts of great socialist leaders... This cannot be tolerated. The government must take cognisance forthwith," he said in Hindi.

The Vice Chancellor and officials of the university, which is in Chhapra district, were summoned to Patna today, where they were asked to explain why a university named after Jayaprakash Narayan had scrapped scrapped lessons on his popular movement, as well as that of Ram Manohar Lohia.

The issue came to light after the local unit of the

Students' Federation of India raised objections.

"How ironic that it is the JP University and a chapter on Jayaprakash Narayan and Lohia was dropped..." Shailendra Yadav, a SFI leader, commented.

Vice Chancellor Faruque Ali has said the syllabus had been approved by the previous governor (Lalji Tandon, who served from August 2018 to July 2019) and that its implementation had been halted because of a delay in rolling out the CBCS (choice-based credit system).

See Jake Gyllenhaal's awkward Venice run-in with a man dressed as one of his film characters



It's not every day that you bump into someone cosplaying you, as Jake Gyllenhaal experienced at the 2021 Venice Film Festival before documenting it on social media.

Jake Gyllenhaal got a little taste of the familiar while he was far from home.

The 40-year-old Oscar-nominated star posted a carousel of Instagram pics on Wednesday, Sept. 1 that he had taken on the first day of the 2021 Venice International Film Festival at the famed Italian city.

His first photo was a selfie showing someone off in the distance who is standing on a bridge over one of the city's

signature canals. In the second photo, it became clear that the person in the distance was actually an area street performer who happened to be dressed as Mysterio, the comic book villain Jake portrayed in the 2019 blockbuster Spider-Man: Far From Home, which also starred Tom Holland, Zendaya and Marisa Tomei.

"Ran into an old friend in Venezia," Jake humorously captioned the post.

Among those sharing their delight in the comments section at the coincidental run-in was Josh Gad, Jake's co-star in the 2010 drama Love & Other Drugs. "Take. Him.

Out," Josh wrote.

Jake, whose next film, The Guilty, launches on Netflix next month, doesn't have a project of his own to promote at the festival.

However, his older sister, Maggie Gyllenhaal, makes her feature directorial debut with The Lost Daughter, starring Olivia Colman and Dakota Johnson, which debuts at the fest on Friday, Sept. 3 before its Netflix launch later this year.

Meanwhile, this has also been an exciting time for Jake's Spider-Man co-stars Tom and Zendaya. On the same, Tom posted an adorable photo of himself with Zendaya to celebrate his girlfriend's 25th birthday.

No charges for Britney Spears in dispute with housekeeper

THOUSAND OAKS, CALIF. (AP):

Britney Spears will face no charges after an allegation from her housekeeper that Spears slapped a phone out of her hand, prosecutors said Wednesday.

A possible misdemeanor battery charge was declined based on insufficient evidence that a crime had occurred and lack of injury to the housekeeper or of significant damage to the phone, Ventura County District Attorney Erik Nasarenko said in a statement.

The woman had called authorities after the Aug. 16 dispute with Spears over veterinary care of Spears' dog, Nasarenko said.


Spears has a home in Thousand Oaks, California northwest of Los Angeles.

When it was revealed

sheriff's deputies were investigating, Spears attorney Mathew Rosen called the incident "overblown" and "manufactured," saying, "Anyone can make an accusation but this should have been closed immediately."

The district attorney's announcement came a day after Rosen and Spears filed new documents alleging that her father was keeping his role in the conservatorship that has controlled her life and money for 13 years because he was trying to earn some \$2 million more in fees.

James Spears' representatives did not respond to a request for comment, but have repeatedly said that his dealings in the conservatorship have always been upright and in the best interests of his daughter.



No. 18-08/2020- DD-III
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Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan)
5th Floor, Pt. Deendayal Antyodaya Bhawan, CGO Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi - 110003

Inviting applications for financial support under
National Fund for Persons with Disabilities

Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), Government of India is implementing Scheme under National Fund for Persons with Disabilities for empowerment of Divyangjan w.e.f. 28th, August, 2018. The Department invites applications for financial support to Divyangjan and organizations working for the cause of Divyangjan in the following areas: -

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- iii. Support persons with high support needs as recommended by the State Assessment Board on a case to case basis.

2. For details of the eligibility criteria, how to apply etc. as prescribed in the scheme, please visit website of the Department <http://disabilityaffairs.gov.in/upload/uploadfiles/files/FinalGuidelinesSchemesNF.pdf>. Hard copy of application in prescribed proforma may be sent to Director, DEPwD, Antyodaya Bhawan, CGO Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi 110003. One can also email to nfdepwd@gmail.com. Please contact 011-24369054 for any queries.

(Director)

dvdp 38117/11/0020/2122

To Protect and to Promote

To secure the future, think beyond protection and quotas

Local protection is an important issue. It could also be argued that it is of more emotional significance than constructive intervention, but because people and their leaders feel so strongly about the issue, it becomes very important. Even the West, with its enviable unemployment rate despite the economic downturn, is passionately debating the pros and cons of outsourcing which, in its mind is taking jobs away to cheaper human resource destinations even though benefits of such cost cuts benefit cash-strapped consumers at home the most.

So yes, local protection evokes a passionate and emotional response from the people, and governments have to continuously appear to be prioritising it. There are, however, practical and logistic implications that should never be lost sight of and quality never allowed to be compromised. Opportunities that progressive and positive attitudes create should not be allowed to get drowned by the din of rhetoric. In a world growing increasingly 'flat' [to borrow the now dated term from Thomas L. Friedman], digging trenches only manages to keep opportunities out, shrinks the horizon and constricts development. The present times demand competitive edge, and prioritizing protectionism dulls this pre-requisite of making it in the world. Protect, yes, but also trust the inherent skills and potential of the young. The young have proven that they have what it takes to succeed and survive. Take for example the many young entrepreneurs that Sikkim can boast of now. They happened when the easier option of landing employment with the government became scarce and also less appealing. They applied themselves to enterprises, something that the 'local' talent pool was not considered very adept at till even a decade back. But look around now, the youth, who while in school, were being groomed for cushy bureaucracy or technical professions, have grown up quite well as hoteliers, restaurateurs, travel operators, small scale industrialists, respected professionals with national media, sportspersons... achievers.

Such successes probably happened because they grew up before obsessive protectionism invaded the public domain and made the young lazy. This of course does not go to say that job opportunities should not be protected for the people of the land, they should; but the policy makers have to strike the right balance where it is done in a way that does not lull future generations into a false sense of security and stops them from developing skills which make them world beaters. It is not easy, but a good beginning can be made with devising ways which reward healthy business practices. Investors who set up shop in Sikkim should conduct themselves better, encourage and invite more local employment on their own instead of being made to do so by way of legislations. They enjoy tax breaks and many other sops when they opt for Sikkim, not because Sikkim needs more factories, but because it rewards job creation. They have to understand and appreciate this fact. The young on the other hand should be groomed as competitors, not as beneficiaries-in-waiting. In times to come, it should be their skills that attract and retain investments and not lavish industrial policies alone. Various arms of the government will have to collaborate to make this possible. It is possible and the generation controlling the present owes it to the future.

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From vaccination to ventilation: 5 ways to keep kids safe from COVID when schools reopen

C RAINA MACINTYRE, GREG KELLY, HOLLY SEALE & RICHARD HOLDEN
THECONVERSATION.COM

Last week the New South Wales government announced schools are scheduled to re-open in October. While face-to-face learning undoubtedly has benefits for both children and parents, the announcement left unanswered a series of important questions about how this can be done safely.

By the time NSW lifts restrictions (estimated to be around October), only 60-70% of the population in NSW — and possibly less in Australia — who are 16 years and over may be fully vaccinated.

The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) has recommended vaccination for children 12 and over, but most of these children will not be fully vaccinated by October, and children under 12 will remain unvaccinated for now.

In NSW, with well over 1,000 cases a day and rising, there will still be substantial community transmission when schools open. It is unclear when schools in Victoria (where cases are also on the rise) will open, but there may still be some transmission in the state when they do.

So, what do we need to do to make sure kids are as safe as possible at school?

1. VACCINATE THE ADULTS AROUND THEM

In California, a primary school outbreak occurred when an unvaccinated teacher, who came to work despite symptoms, read to students with their mask off. Most kids who became infected were well over 2 metres from the teacher, which confirms the 1-2m distancing rule is not effective for an airborne virus.

Every child and teacher in a classroom or childcare centre with an infected person is at risk. Shared air is the major way SARS-CoV-2 — the virus that causes COVID-19 — spreads.

Children often get the virus from the adults around them, so vaccinating adults in a child's household, and teachers, can help protect them.

Vaccination is now mandatory for teachers in NSW, but around 67% have had one dose. This probably corresponds to less than 40% of the NSW population being fully vaccinated.

One dose of vaccination gives about 31% protection and two doses gives 67% (AstraZeneca) to 88% (Pfizer) protection against the Delta variant. Most kids will still be unvaccinated if schools in the two largest states re-open for the last term of the year. This means it's even more important to ensure the adults are vaccinated.

2. MANDATE MASKS FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

We can mandate masks in schools for teachers and students, and highly recommend mask use for younger children in childcare.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends masks for children two years and up; children over this age can wear masks without much trouble.

As mask use in schools has been more common overseas, there are now numerous toolkits (including translated versions) and recommendations to support children to wear a mask. For example, your child is more likely wear a mask if it has their favourite colour, sports team, character or special interest on it.

Importantly, a DIY cloth mask can be made to fit your child's face and be high quality if key design principles are followed.

It is important to ensure children have choices and understand the reason why they are wearing a mask (for instance: "When we wear a mask, the virus can't jump from person to person.")

3. VENTILATED CLASSROOMS

Classrooms can be ventilated by opening windows (ideally two windows at opposite ends of the room). If there is only one window, a fan can help move the dirty air out. If opening windows is not possible there is fortunately a cheap fix available — portable air purifiers, which dramatically reduce the viral load in classrooms.

There are DIY methods for making air purifiers, too.

4. REDUCE NUMBERS OF PEOPLE INDOORS

Reducing the number of people packed together in a classroom can reduce the risk of COVID. For example, during high epidemic periods, if the decision is made to open schools, a group of kids can come in every second day and learn online on alternate days.

We have shown this approach, when combined with masks, reduces the risk of transmission on university campus.

Use of outdoor spaces for lessons is also a smart move as the weather gets warmer. While Delta can transmit outdoors, the risk is likely much lower.

5. TEST SCHOOL KIDS

Finally, rapid point-of-care testing in schools will help reduce transmission, and self-testing kits (when approved in Australia) can help.

Saliva tests are also a practical way to test children. These tests are now available in official health settings, so governments could make them available to schools.

WHAT ABOUT CHILDCARE CENTRES?

We also need to consider

childcare centres. Contrary to popular narrative, a new study shows kids up to three years old transmit more than older kids. So, vaccinating childcare workers and parents of young kids is also essential.

All the measures above, except masks for 0-2 year olds, can easily be used in childcare settings.

Record numbers of children are being hospitalised with COVID-19 in the USA. It remains unclear whether the high numbers of sick children are due mostly to Delta's increased transmissibility, or whether it also causes more severe disease in children, as it does in adults. Although the risk of severe disease remains much lower in children than adults.

One thing we do know is that as vaccination rates increase in adults, unvaccinated groups, the largest of which is children, will be proportionally more at risk. The 70-80% targets for vaccination of eligible adults for relaxing restrictions corresponds to 56-64% of the whole population, which leaves plenty of room for Delta to spread like wildfire in unvaccinated adults and kids. So there is good reason to protect kids if we open schools.

In addition, the productivity losses from lockdowns are an important component of the estimated A\$220 million daily economic cost in NSW alone. Sick kids make it harder for their parents to work productively, if at all. And they make it more likely parents themselves become sick and are unable to work.

[C Raina MacIntyre is Professor of Global Biosecurity, NHMRC Principal Research Fellow, Head, Biosecurity Program, Kirby Institute, UNSW; Greg Kelly is Senior lecturer, The University of Queensland; Holly Seale is Associate professor, UNSW; Richard Holden is Professor of Economics, UNSW]

Grazing, gorging or skipping: which is better for weight loss?

ADAM COLLINS
THECONVERSATION.COM

When it comes to diet and health, especially losing weight, most of the focus has been on what you eat and how much you're eating. While eating fewer calories than you're taking in is key to weight loss, another important factor is how you eat — such as how many times you eat a day.

In recent years, much attention has been put on meal patterns. While some diets suggest that the key to losing weight is to only eat one meal a day, other popular diets suggest people should eat up to six small meals a day. Many of us have also been brought up to eat three meals per day — so which is best?

Many diet plans also follow a three-square-meals eating pattern. Having such a rigid approach may leave people feeling hungry between meals. This can lead to people snacking between meals, potentially overeating in the process.

But while snacking between meals was long seen as a way to stave off hunger, some early studies showed that eating more meals a day was linked with lower bodyweight. Since then, research has looked at a variety of different eating patterns, ranging from "nibbling" (up to 17 small meals per day) to "gorging" (two to three meals a day).

There is a popular belief that nibbling increases your metabolism, but this is not the case. There is evidence from one study that nibbling causes a less pronounced insulin spike after mealtimes compared to gorging. This indicates better blood-sugar control, which may be indirectly linked to managing weight better by storing less fat. But pending more research, nibbling may not actually burn more calories than gorging.

Subsequent studies which looked at the effect of eating between two and four meals per day have failed to show whether nibbling or gorging is more beneficial to weight loss. Some studies show that eating more frequently helps with weight loss, but this can also increase hunger and impair your ability to clear fat from the blood — an important factor in cardiovascular disease risk.

But the way we eat has changed over many decades, with more of us snacking or following other patterns of eating, such as intermittent fasting, which advocate decreasing the number of meals eaten or leaving more time between meals.



It's thought that such eating patterns will help the body better lose weight.

These diets are based on an understanding of our body's different metabolic states. After we eat, our body goes into the postprandial state. During this state, which can last for several hours, the body stores energy from the food we've just eaten — often as fat. The postabsorptive (or fasted) period is when the body begins to burn through store fuel, which only really begins around ten or more hours after a meal.

When we follow a traditional eating pattern of three meals a day, we tend to spend a large part of our time (12 hours or more) in the postprandial state, with very little time in a truly fasted state. This is exaggerated further with grazing or "nibbling" eating patterns. Intermittent fasting diets are based on the idea that reducing meal frequency will ensure your body spends more time in the fasted state. It's thought that this will improve your ability to manage the fat and carbohydrate in the meal. These diets can give better control over storing and burning fat stores and enhance your metabolic health.

This is also why some people choose to intentionally skip meals, such as breakfast, while still following a normal pattern of eating (as opposed to intermittent fasting, where they may still eat three meals but in a shorter period, such as eight hours). While skipping meals may or may not af-

fect how much we eat, it may have other metabolic benefits that come alongside an extended fast without adversely affecting appetite.

TIME OF DAY

Alongside eating frequency, another factor that might affect your weight is the time of day that we eat. Research has found that eating later is associated with eating more overall, which may hinder weight loss.

The emerging field of chrononutrition has also found that humans are designed to eat during the daylight hours as opposed to later in the evening — similar to our preferred sleeping

schedule. Some research has shown that eating later in the day is associated with higher bodyweight. Research also suggests we're more likely to eat unhealthy foods when we eat outside of our natural circadian rhythm.

Another consideration is the timing of when we eat carbohydrates. How you deal with carbs in one meal can be influenced by whether we've eaten carbs in previous meals — known as the second-meal phenomenon. Carbohydrates are largely responsible for transitioning the body to the postprandial state, releasing insulin and control fat storage. This means that if we eat carbohydrates at every meal, we're more likely to store these as fat. Some research suggests that limiting carbohydrates may help us burn more fat during exercise, and may improve exercise performance.

Different eating strategies may have different benefits for our body, such as better blood sugar control. But when it comes to losing weight, no strategy seems to work better than the other. At the end of the day, the eating strategy that works best for a person will differ. Knowing which strategy will work best for you depends on many factors, such as your goals, your lifestyle, your sleeping pattern and what type of exercise you do.

[the writer is Principal Teaching Fellow, Nutrition, University of Surrey]

Separatist leader Geelani laid to rest in Srinagar

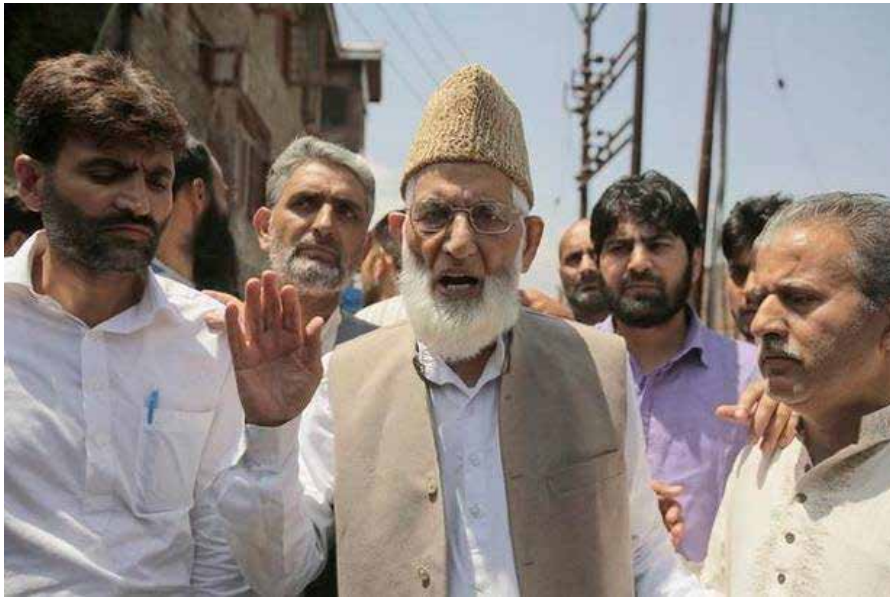
SRINAGAR, SEP 2 (PTI): Pro-Pakistan separatist Syed Ali Shah Geelani was buried here on the intervening night of Wednesday and Thursday in a quiet funeral organised by authorities, amid tight security and restrictions with mobile connectivity by and large snapped in Kashmir.

The 91-year-old was buried at a mosque near his residence according to his wishes, his close aides said.

However, his son Naeem said that they wanted to bury him at the Idgah in downtown Srinagar.

Geelani, who spear-headed separatist politics for over three decades in Jammu and Kashmir, died after a prolonged illness on Wednesday night at his residence in Hyderpora on the outskirts of Srinagar city.

His family was asked to carry out the burial at



night as a precautionary measure as intelligence reports suggested that some anti-national elements may use this to create a law and order situation in the Kashmir Valley.

Officials said that authorities took Geelani's body and buried him according to rituals at the graveyard of the mosque

under heavy police protection. Geelani had expressed desire to be buried at the mosque at Hyderpora, his close aides said.

Strict restrictions were imposed throughout the Valley to prevent people from assembling and there was heavy deployment of security forces to thwart any un-

toward incident.

Mobile phone services, barring post-paid connections of state-run BSNL, and internet were shut down as a precautionary measure to prevent rumours and fake news from circulating.

Barricades had been erected at various places and all vehicles were being thoroughly checked.

71 new cases push Arunachal's COVID-19 tally to 53,102

ITANAGAR, SEP 2 (PTI): Arunachal Pradesh's COVID-19 tally rose to 53,102 on Thursday as 71 more people tested positive for the infection, a senior health official said.

The northeastern state's coronavirus death toll remained unchanged at 260 as no fresh fatality was reported, State Surveillance Officer Dr Lob-sang Jampa said.

The Capital Complex region registered the highest number of new cases at 13, followed by Changlang (10), and Lower Subansiri and Namsai (six each).

The state now has 873 active cases, while 51,969 more people



have been cured of the disease so far, including 61 in the last 24 hours, he said, adding that the recovery rate among the coronavirus patients in the state stood at 97.87 per cent.

The Capital Complex region -- comprising

Itanagar, Naharlagun, Nirjuli and Banderdewa areas -- has the highest number of active cases at 167, followed by Lower Subansiri (84) and West Kameng (62).

The state has so far tested over 10.62 lakh samples for COVID-19,

including 2,849 on Wednesday, Jampa said, adding that the positivity rate stood at 2.49 per cent.

A total of 9.82 lakh people have been inoculated to date, State Immunisation Officer Dr Dimong Padung said.

Case filed after man, transgender slapped, kicked in Madhya Pradesh: Police

The incidents had occurred in the district on August 23 and the police are looking for the accused, an official said.

Bhopal: Videos of three men beating up another man and a transgender person in separate incidents surfaced on social media following which a case has been registered in Madhya Pradesh's Hoshangabad district on Wednesday, the po-

lice said.

The incidents had occurred in the district on August 23 and the police are looking for the accused, an official said.

The accused in the two videos are the same: a man wearing an orange scarf, identified as "Arun Kumar", and two unidentified men.

One video showed a transgender person pleading with the three

men, assuring them that she did not spit on anybody's vehicle, and Arun Kumar slapping and kicking her.

The other video showed Kumar and his associates hitting a man with shoes while asking for money and saying, "Will you go against me while living in this city?"

Hoshangabad Dehat police station in-charge Anup Singh

Nain said the two victims were traced after the videos went viral.

Based on their complaints, a First Information Report (FIR) was registered against Arun Kumar and two others under relevant Sections of the Indian Penal Code for "voluntarily causing hurt for extortion", "obscene act in a public place" and "criminal intimidation", the official said.

Mamata Banerjee condoles death of TMC leader Chandan Mitra

Mamata Banerjee said Chandan Mitra will be remembered for his contribution to the world of journalism and politics.

Kolkata: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday condoled the death of senior TMC leader and eminent journalist Chandan Mitra, saying that the two-time Rajya Sabha MP will be remembered for his contributions to journalism and politics.

He was suffering for a while and died late on Wednesday night, his son Kushan Mitra said.

"Saddened by the demise of Shri Chandan Mitra. He will be remembered for his contribution to the world of journalism and politics. Heartfelt condolences to his family and loved ones," Ms Banerjee



tweeted.

In another statement, she said that 65-year-old Chandan Mitra was the editor-in-chief of The Pioneer, and was earlier associated with other newspapers like The

Statesman, The Times of India, The Sunday Observer and Hindustan Times in different phases of his chequered career.

"As the chronicler of society and news, his death has caused a void

in the world of journalism," the TMC chief said.

Chandan Mitra had joined the TMC in 2018 in the presence of Ms Banerjee during the party's July 21 'Martyrs' Day Rally'.

Mamata requests PM Modi to withdraw LPG price hike

KOLKATA, SEP 2 (PTI): West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday requested Prime Minister Narendra Modi to take steps to withdraw the price hike of LPG cylinders and said rising prices of fuels and domestic cooking gas are "unacceptable".

Claiming that the Centre is taking "anti-people" policies, Banerjee said "unprecedented" hikes in petrol, diesel and cooking gas are taking a toll on common people.

The prices of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) cylinders across all categories, including subsidised ones, were hiked on Wednesday by Rs 25 per cylinder-- the third straight increase in rates in less than two months.

"It pains me deeply to see how apathetic the BJP government is and how anti-people their policies are! We have seen unprecedented hikes in petrol, diesel, cooking gas and cooking oil. This



has taken a heavy toll on our people and their families. This is absolutely unacceptable and unpardonable," Banerjee said on Twitter.

She also said, "I would request the Hon'ble Prime Minister to kindly act upon the concerns

of our people and withdraw such hikes, immediately."

Subsidised and non-subsidised LPG rates were hiked by Rs 25.50 per cylinder on July 1. Non-subsidised LPG rates rose by Rs 25 per cylinder on August 1 and by the same proportion on August 18.

West Bengal appoints 10 IPS officers to assist probe on post-poll violence

The officers have been deployed for north, west and south zones of the state as well as for the Kolkata Police areas.

Kolkata: The West Bengal government has appointed ten IPS officers to assist a special investigating team (SIT) formed by the Calcutta High Court to probe cases of post-poll violence in the state, a senior official said on Thursday.

The officers have been deployed for north, west and south zones of the state as well as for the Kolkata Police areas, he said.

"The services of the IPS officers are hereby



spared, in addition to their normal duties, to assist the SIT constituted by the Hon'ble High Court at Calcutta (sic)," an order issued by the

state home department stated.

A five-judge bench of the Calcutta High Court had on August 19 ordered the constitution of

the SIT comprising IPS officers Soumen Mitra, Suman Bala Sahoo and Ranbir Kumar to look into the incidents of post-poll violence.

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VIDEO NEWS SECTION



Former FIFA official has bribery life ban cut to 20 years

LAUSANNE, SWITZERLAND (AP): Indicted by United States federal prosecutors in the FIFA bribery case, Brazilian soccer official Marco Polo del Nero got his life ban from soccer cut to 20 years by a Swiss court.

The Court of Arbitration for Sport said its judges confirmed FIFA's case against Del Nero "as to the findings on the merits" but ordered a reduced ban for taking bribes.

Del Nero will turn 97 before the ban from involvement in soccer expires in 2038, though he reportedly still has influence on running the Brazilian Football Confederation he once led.

Del Nero was on the FIFA executive committee when he fled Switzerland in May 2015 in the fallout of soccer officials being arrested at luxury hotels in Zurich in early morning raids requested by American

investigators.

He was formally indicted six months later, resigned his \$300,000-a-year FIFA position and has since stayed in Brazil where he has avoided being extradited to the U.S.

American prosecutors allege he took millions of dollars in kickbacks from commercial deals signed for South America's Copa America and Copa Libertadores and the domestic Brazil Cup.

FIFA ethics judges found him guilty in 2018 on charges of bribery and corruption, accepting gifts and conflict of interest. He was also fined 1 million Swiss francs (\$1 million).

Del Nero is among several Brazilian soccer leaders indicted in the American investigation and later banned by FIFA.

Jose Maria Marin was convicted of financial conspiracy changes in Brooklyn federal court in

December 2017 and sentenced to four years.

During the trial, prosecution witness Jose Hawilla, an influential Brazilian sports marketing executive, testified Del Nero and Marin were among top South American soccer officials who had to be bribed to secure media contracts.

Marin, now 89, was released from prison in April 2020 on compassionate grounds soon after the COVID-19 pan-

demic was declared.

Ricardo Teixeira, who joined FIFA in the 1990s as son-in-law of then-president Joao Havelange, has also avoided being extradited from Brazil since being indicted in 2015. Teixeira has also challenged his FIFA life ban at CAS.

Teixeira resigned from the FIFA executive committee in 2012 in fallout from a World Cup kickbacks scandal that also removed Havelange as honorary president.

Australian delegation visits Kalinga stadium



BHUBANESWAR, SEP 2 (PTI): An Australian delegation led by its High Commissioner to India Barry O'Farrell visited the Kalinga Stadium here to oversee the existing sports facilities.

O'Farrell accompanied by Rowan Ainsworth, Australian Consul-General in Kolkata and Amy Keough, First Secretary, Australian High Commission visited the stadium on Wednesday. They were received by Dileep Tirkey, Chairman, Odisha Hockey Promotion Council, R Vineel Krishna, Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs department.

On Tuesday Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik and the Australian High Commissioner to India agreed on better coordination on mining exploration and sports infrastructure development in the state.

The Australian delegation also visited the Odisha Naval Tata Hockey High Performance Centre that trains over 100 boy and girl cadets for the elite level. He interacted with the cadets

and coaches.

O'Farrell also visited the sports science and rehabilitation centre the Odisha Abhinav Bindra Targeting Performance Centre, where Centre Head Pradeep Pillay demonstrated the bio mechanics and the assessment techniques used to assist athletes to better their performance.

Later, they visited the Hockey High Performance Centre and Kalinga Hockey Stadium, which has hosted some of the finest international hockey tournaments including the Men's Hockey World Cup 2018 and will be again hosting the same in 2023.

Interacting with the cadets, the Australian High Commissioner said: Odisha Government has developed remarkable facilities and is investing not only in infrastructure but also in each one of the cadet to develop them into elite players.

Wishing them the very best, he added that he would look forward to seeing each one of them play on the world stage in the future.

Verstappen hopes his fans get a win to remember at Dutch GP

AMSTERDAM (AP): Formula One fans will hope Sunday's Netherlands Grand Prix is a spectacular race to remember rather than a dismal one to forget.

Last weekend's rain-drenched Belgian Grand Prix was called off shortly after it restarted under a safety car for a few slow laps, and more than three hours later than its scheduled time.

Hopeful fans, many stuck in traffic for hours getting in and out of Spa-Francorchamps, had waited soaked to the bone.

All they eventually saw was a measly 10 minutes of drivers crawling behind a safety car and then stopping on Lap 4 as track water sprayed over their helmets. F1 rules still gave Red Bull's Max Verstappen the win because he'd completed two laps, while seven-time F1 champion Lewis Hamilton finished third. The Mercedes driver branded the situation "a farce."

There was widespread criticism of F1 and governing body FIA, who have pledged to review what happened and also look at options for fans who bought tickets.

"The FIA, together with Formula 1 and the teams, will carefully review the regulations to see what can be learned and improved for the future," FIA president Jean Todt said this week.

The botched race saw only half points awarded to the winner, giving Max Verstappen 12.5 points for his sixth win of the season and least memorable of his 16 career victories.

"It's not how you expect to



win a race, but the points are still important and we have to maximize every opportunity," Verstappen said. "I hope we can put on a good show for everyone in the grandstands this weekend."

Victory in Spa trimmed Hamilton's overall lead from eight to three points heading into the Dutch GP, where Hamilton seeks a record-extending 100th win, and at Verstappen's home track.

The undulating 4.3-kilometer (2.7-mile) circuit is located at the seaside resort town of Zandvoort just outside of Amsterdam. Rising and falling through dunes, it is fast flowing with banked turns of up to 18 degrees offering plenty of chances for overtaking.

Zandvoort first hosted a race in 1952 and last did so in 1985. It was set to return last year only to be one of several canceled due to the coronavirus pandemic.

In 1952, Alberto Ascari led a 1-2-3 finish for Ferrari, which has not won an F1 race since Sebastian Vettel's victory at the Singapore GP two years ago.

The '85 edition was an intense duel in the dunes between world champions.

Three-time F1 champion Nelson Piquet took pole position, four-time champion Alain Prost had the fastest lap. Victory went to the late Niki Lauda ahead of Prost and the late Ayrton Senna, both winners of three world titles.

There will be four world

champions on the grid on Sunday.

Hamilton is joined by Vettel, Fernando Alonso and Kimi Raikkonen.

They have a combined seven titles but none of them are remotely close to challenging Hamilton.

Verstappen certainly is and a seventh victory of the season would move him back in the lead in a thrilling title race.

Doing so in front of his legion of devoted fans, who Verstappen calls his "Orange Army" and who follow him in huge numbers, would be especially poignant.

"It will be special to have a race in the Netherlands in front of my home crowd," said Verstappen, who raced here seven years ago in F3. "But also, as a

driver it's a good challenge to go to a new circuit and find the limit. The qualifying laps will be very quick so any mistakes will be really costly."

Saturday's qualifying, with tens of thousands of spectators shouting for Verstappen, may feel intense even for some as experienced as Hamilton. The 36-year-old Brit is F1's record holder with 101 pole positions but he trails Verstappen 6-3 this season and 6-4 for wins.

Hamilton has been pushed harder than at any time since he lost to then-Mercedes teammate Nico Rosberg in 2016.

Now Verstappen wants to take Hamilton's F1 crown and prevent him from becoming F1's first driver to win eight titles.

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Osaka reaches 3rd round of US Open after opponent withdraws



NEW YORK (AP): Defending champion Naomi Osaka returned to the third round of the U.S. Open on Wednesday when her opponent withdrew because of illness.

Osaka had been scheduled to face Olga Danilovic of Serbia in the first match of the day at Arthur Ashe Stadium. Instead, the U.S. Tennis Association moved the match between women's No. 12 seed Simona Halep and Kristina

Kucova into that spot.

That figured to be one of the few matches to start on time on a day when heavy rain was expected in the New York area. Puddles filled the grounds around the Billie Jean King National Tennis Center, though rain had stopped as fans began to enter for the day session.

The outside courts were empty while they were being dried and the USTA said play

would begin on them when they became available.

In the meantime, the only match in progress had two-time Grand Slam champion Garbiñe Muguruza facing Andrea Petkovic at Louis Armstrong Stadium. Ashe and Armstrong both have roofs.

Osaka would have been going for her 17th straight victory in a Grand Slam match. After missing Wimbledon during a mental health

break, she returned to the majors with a 6-4, 6-1 victory over Marie Bouzkova on Monday night.

The two-time U.S. Open champion hasn't lost a Grand Slam match since Coco Gauff beat her at the 2020 Australian Open.

The 17-year-old Gauff was set for one of the featured matches of the day, facing 2017 U.S. Open champion Sloane Stephens under the lights at Ashe.

Afghan athlete Zakia Khudadadi gets her chance in taekwondo

TOKYO (AP): Afghan athlete Zakia Khudadadi got her chance to compete in the Tokyo Paralympics on Thursday.

Khudadadi, one to two Afghans participating in the Paralympics, lost her first-round match in taekwondo in the 44-49-kilogram weight class to Ziyodakhon Isakova of Uzbekistan 17-12.

She also dropped a losers' bracket match against Viktoriia Marchuk of Ukraine 48-34.

Teammate Hossain Rasouli competed on Tuesday in the long jump, where he finished last. Rasouli is a sprinter, but he arrived several days too late to run in the 100-meter race.

The Afghan athletes arrived in Tokyo days after the Paralympics opened, both fleeing Kabul for Paris, and then on to Tokyo.

Neither Khudadadi nor Rasouli have spoken



in public since arriving, and officials have allowed them to skip interviews with reporters to protect their privacy.

International Paralympic Committee spokesman Craig Spence was asked to update the status of the Afghan athletes, but could not offer much.

"We've left them be for the last few days to focus on competition," he said. "We'll now start to have conversations about what happens in

terms of the closing ceremony and where they go next. Those are the conversations we'll be having in the coming days."

The closing ceremony is Sunday.

Several countries, including Australia, have been mentioned as possible destinations.

Also, Belgian wheelchair athlete Jochaim Gerard has been hospitalized after feeling faint on Tuesday evening in the Olympic Village.

Spence said Gerard, ranked No. 3 in wheelchair tennis, had a "cardiac" issue. He was in stable condition and was expected to remain in the hospital for tests, Spence said.

In a statement, the Belgian Paralympic Committee said Gerard "suddenly and unexpectedly felt faint" and was transported to a hospital. It said he regained consciousness in the hospital and could answer questions.

EU pushes for more autonomy amid Afghanistan fallout

BRDO CASTLE, SLOVENIA (AP):

Still reeling from the European Union's shortcomings in Afghanistan, officials from the 27-nation bloc met Thursday to discuss ways to improve their response to future crises and not be so reliant on the U.S. European ministers of defense and foreign affairs gathered in Slovenia for talks also involving NATO and U.N. officials to look at ways to improve the bloc's operational engagement and develop a rapid response force capable of operating in difficult military theaters.

Ministers will discuss plans for the so-called strategic compass, a document aiming at harmonizing crisis management and defining defense ambitions for the bloc that is expected to be drafted before the end of the year.

"It's clear that the need for more European defense has never been as much as evident as today after the events in Afghanistan," EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell said upon his arrival.

"There are events that catalyze the history," he said. "Sometimes something happens that pushes the history, it creates a breakthrough and I think the Afghanistan events of this summer

are one of these cases."

The Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan and the rushed airlift operation out of the country that followed the U.S. decision to pull out from the country have laid bare the EU's dependency on its ally. Without American support, European countries wouldn't have been able to guarantee the safe passage of their citizens or even their troops out of the war-torn country.

"The strategic situation, the geostrategic changes, show that now we need a stronger Europe," said Claudio Graziano, the chairman of the EU military committee. "The situation in Afghanistan, Libya, Middle East, Sahel, show that now it's the time to act starting with the creation of a rapid European entry force able to show the will of the European Union to act as a global strategic partner. When if not now, later would be late."

But finding a consensus among the 27 EU member states to create such a force is a tall order. European countries on the border with Russia often oppose the idea of autonomy, for instance Poland and the Baltic nations. EU heavyweight Germany is also a strong supporter of using NATO for security operations and



keeping the U.S. defense umbrella in Europe.

Slovenian Defense Minister Matej Tonin, whose country currently holds the EU's rotating presidency, however, said he believes a small majority of countries is favorable to the idea.

The EU is already endowed

with rapid reaction teams — so-called battlegroups — made up of about 1,500 personnel. But they have never been used in major crises, and the bloc doesn't deploy EU missions to active conflict zones.

Tonin said defense ministers have started debating how to send soldiers abroad in a quick and ef-

ficient way, even without EU consensus, by lifting the unanimity requirement.

"Maybe the solution is we invent a mechanism where a classical majority will be enough and those who are willing will be able to go," he said. "If a majority within the European Union decides to

send somewhere the troops, they can go in the name of the European Union. And the countries which will participate in these groups will be let's say the willing countries. So that we don't force the countries who don't want be part of that mission."

The situation in Sahel has drawn comparisons with the U.S. departure from Afghanistan since the French are preparing to reduce their military presence in the West Africa region where extremist groups are fighting for control.

In June, French President Emmanuel Macron announced the end of Operation Barkhane, France's seven-year effort fighting extremists linked to al-Qaida and the Islamic State group in Africa's Sahel region. France's more than 5,000 troops will be reduced in the coming months, although no timeframe has been given. Some observers have expressed worries a scaling down of the foreign forces could lead to more instability in the region.

"We learned very important lessons and that we should not repeat the same mistakes in the Sahel," Tonin said. "It's even more important for the European Union than Afghanistan. It can have greater consequences."

Those left in Afghanistan complain of broken US promises

KABUL, AFGHANISTAN (AP):

Even in the final days of Washington's chaotic airlift in Afghanistan, Javed Habibi was getting phone calls from the U.S. government promising that the green card holder from Richmond, Virginia, his wife and their four daughters would not be left behind.

He was told to stay home and not worry, that they would be evacuated.

Late Monday, however, his heart sank as he heard that the final U.S. flights had left Kabul's airport, followed by the blistering staccato sound of Taliban gunfire, celebrating what they saw as their victory over America.

"They lied to us," Habibi said of the U.S. government. He is among hundreds of American citizens and green card holders stranded in the Afghan capital.

Victoria Nuland, undersecretary of state for political affairs, would not address individual cases but said all U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents who could not get evacuation flights or were otherwise stranded had been contacted individually in the past 24 hours and told to expect further information about routes out once those have been arranged.

"We will communicate directly to them personalized instructions on what they should do, when they should do it, and how the United States government feels we are best positioned to help them do that," added State Department spokesman Ned



Price.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken praised the evacuation effort despite the scenes of thousands of people jammed outside the gates at Kabul's airport. He said between 100 and 200 remained in Afghanistan, promising that any American who wants to leave Afghanistan would be taken out.

For some of those who remain, however, the trauma of trying for nearly two weeks to get onto a U.S. plane is still harrowing.

Habibi, an electrician who has lived in Richmond since 2015 on

a special immigration visa, had returned to Afghanistan for a visit on June 22 — the first time his family had been back since 2019. Their return flight was to have been Aug. 31.

About Aug. 18, Habibi said he got an email from the U.S. government saying that his family — all green card holders except for their youngest, who has a U.S. passport — would be evacuated.

Subsequent emails said he should take his family to the airport. He obeyed, but the mad crush of people prevented him from getting near the gate on his first two attempts.

His daughter, Madina, who at 15 has flawless English and serves as the family spokesperson, said she and her younger sister were almost trampled at the airport. The family wrote back, "It's too dangerous. We can't go into the crowd," she said.

The emails kept arriving, saying they should go to the airport, she said.

By Aug. 25, the emails had been replaced by phone calls from Arlington, Virginia, Madina said. The callers, who identified themselves as being from the U.S. Embassy, told the family to stay at home and that the government was aware of

their location, she said, speaking for her father.

Habibi said he still made four or five more attempts, even recruiting friends and relatives to wade into the crowd with the family, forming a kind of protective cordon. The youngest of the four girls, Dunya, is 2 and was born in the U.S. Habibi said that on at least two occasions, he got close enough to the gate that his passport was scanned but was refused entry. He shouted at the U.S. soldiers, waving his documents.

"What does this green card even mean? Nothing. They did nothing," he said.

Madina, who spoke to most of the callers from Virginia, said she told them the family was from Richmond. Even as the evacuations came to an end, Madina said one caller promised, "We are going to get you out. You are not going to get stuck. Don't worry. We know where you are."

Habibi said they even pledged to pick them up in a car.

"They lied. They did nothing," he said.

Habibi says he hasn't been threatened by the Taliban and that no one has bothered him but he is still afraid. News stories and horrifying posts on social media have him convinced that the Taliban will kill him, he said, although he admitted he doesn't know of anyone being targeted.

"I'm just afraid. I follow the news," he said.

He said he knows of many families, some with U.S. green cards,

who remain in Afghanistan.

Madina said Marcia Vigar Perez, a teacher at Dumbarton Elementary, her former school, started a prayer chain for her safe return.

"Every day they call me," she said.

Another Afghan native who asked to be identified only as Ajmal, fearing retribution, said he, his two brothers and their families — 16 people in all — were granted emergency immigrant visas to be evacuated after another brother in Virginia submitted the paperwork.

Ajmal displayed emails from the U.S. government that said "please make your way to the Hamid Karzai International Airport" and use the Camp Sullivan Gate, not the civilian entrance, although he also was warned that the gate could change daily.

He said he and his relatives went to the airport, but heavy gunfire by the Taliban and the crush of thousands of people sent them back home. On one occasion, he said he received an email telling him and his family they would be picked up at a spot near the airport at 3 a.m. He and his family waited on the street until 9 a.m., but no one came, he said.

His brother Wais, a U.S. citizen living in Virginia, said he had petitioned senators and filled out paperwork to get his family to America.

"I am frustrated and angry" at U.S. officials, Wais said. "All the time they say, 'We are working on it, we are working on it,' but then — nothing."

Fighting in Yemen's central Province kills 28 in one day

SANAA, YEMEN (AP):

Fighting has flared up between Yemen's pro-government forces and Houthi rebels in the oil-rich government stronghold of Marib province, with at least 28 fighters killed over the last 24 hours, security officials from both sides and tribal leaders said on Thursday.

Most of the fatalities were among the Iran-backed rebels assaulting the city of Raahbah, said the officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to brief the media.

The rebels have accelerated their push to take Marib in recent months, while escalating cross-border attacks on Saudi Arabia, which leads the mili-

tary coalition opposing them. Thousands of fighters — mostly Houthis — have died in the offensive, with 12 government troops killed on Monday.

Since then, fighting has intensified in Raahbah, which had been under Houthi control for almost two years before falling to government troops in July.

Meanwhile, the Saudi-led coalition has launched dozens of airstrikes on cities in Marib — including Raahbah, Sirwah and Madghel — to back pro-government ground forces, according to the Houthi media center.

Yemen's civil war began in 2014 when the Houthis seized Sanaa and much of the north, forcing the government of President Abed Rabbo Mansour



Hadi to flee.

The Saudi-led coalition, backed at the time by the U.S., entered the war to try to restore Hadi to power. A relentless air campaign and ground fighting has killed more than 130,000 people and spawned the world's worst humanitarian crisis.

It has also created smaller, parallel conflicts, between militants and different factions inside the coun-

try.

On Sunday, a missile and drone attack on a key military base in Yemen's south killed at least 30 troops, a Yemeni military spokesman said. It was one of the deadliest attacks in the country's civil war in recent years. At least 64 people were wounded in the attack on on Al-Anad Air Base in the province of Lahj. No one immediately claimed responsibility for the attack.

Poisoned Afghan boy dies, brother still critically ill

WARSAW, Poland (AP):

Doctors at Poland's main children's hospital said Thursday a 5-year-old Afghan boy, recently evacuated from Kabul, has died and his 6-year-old brother, who has undergone a liver transplant, remains in life-threatening condition after they ate poisonous mushrooms.

The boys and their older sister were hospitalized last week. The family picked and ate highly poisonous death cap mushrooms in the forest around the refugee center where they were staying in Podkowa Lesna, near Warsaw.

Doctors at the Center for Children's Health Institute in Warsaw said the older brother successfully underwent a liver transplant but that the damage to his brain was significant and



life-threatening.

The younger brother was pronounced dead. Doctors said the parents were at the hospital, under psychological care.

The boys' 17-year-old sister has been released in good condition. Some other family members were hospitalized else-

where but are now recovering.

Poland evacuated the family last month at Britain's request after the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan. The father had worked for the British.

In a separate incident at a different center near Warsaw, four Afghan

men were hospitalized after eating poisonous mushrooms, according to the state Office for Foreigners.

Death cap mushrooms, among the most poisonous in the world, closely resemble Poland's popular, edible parasol mushroom.

The Big Pic



READY TO ROLL! Actress Mila Kunis looked sporty while filming *The Luckiest Girl Alive* in New York City.

Greek music great Mikis Theodorakis dies at 96

ATHENS, GREECE (AP): Mikis Theodorakis, the beloved Greek composer whose rousing music and life of political defiance won acclaim abroad and inspired millions at home, died Thursday. He was 96. His death at his home in central Athens was announced on state television and followed multiple hospitalizations in recent years, mostly for heart treatment.

Theodorakis' prolific career that started at age 17 produced a hugely varied body of work that ranged from somber symphonies to popular television and the film scores for "Serpico" and "Zorba the Greek."

But the towering man with trademark worker suits, hoarse voice and wavy hair also is remembered by Greeks for his stubborn opposition to postwar regimes that persecuted him and outlawed his music.

"He lived with passion, a life dedicated to music, the arts, our country and its people, dedicated to the ideas of freedom, justice, equality, social solidarity," Greek President Katerina Sakellaropoulou said in a statement.

"He wrote music that became intertwined with the historical and social developments in Greece in the postwar years, music that provided encouragement, consolation, protest, and support in the darker periods of our recent history."

Born Michail Theodorakis on the eastern Aegean island of Chios on July 29, 1925, he was exposed to music and politics from a young age.

He began writing music and poetry in his teens, just as Greece entered World War II. During the war, he was arrested by the country's Italian and German occupiers for his involvement in left-wing

resistance groups.

Some of those same groups bitterly opposed the government and monarchy that led immediately Greece after the war, leading to a 1946-49 civil war in which the Communist-backed rebels eventually lost.

Theodorakis was jailed and sent to remote Greek islands, including the infamous "re-education" camp on the small island of Makronissos near Athens. As a result of severe beatings and torture, Theodorakis suffered broken limbs, respiratory problems and other injuries that plagued his health for the rest of his life. He suffered tuberculosis, was thrown into a psychiatric hospital, and was subjected to mock executions.

Despite the hardships, he managed to establish himself as a respected musician. He graduated from the Athens Music School in 1950 and continued his studies in Paris on a scholarship in 1954.

TV and film actor Sidharth Shukla dead

MUMBAI, SEP 2 (PTI): Popular television and film actor Sidharth Shukla, best known for his role in the long running TV show *Balika Vadhu*, died on Thursday, an official at the Cooper Hospital here said. He was 40.

Shukla suffered a massive heart attack in the morning it is learnt.

He is survived by his

mother and two sisters.

"He was brought dead to the hospital some time ago," the senior Cooper Hospital official told PTL.

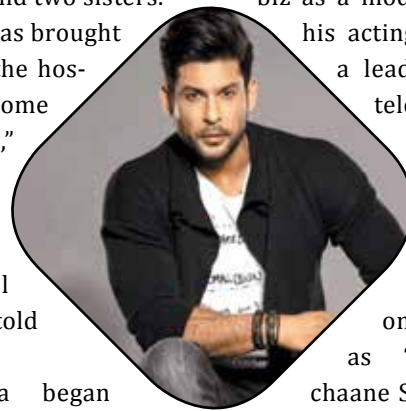
Shukla began his career in show-

biz as a model and made his acting debut with a lead role in the television show "Babul Ka Aangan Chootay Na". He later appeared on shows such as "Jaane Pehchaane Se... Ye Ajabbi", "Love U Zindagi" but

became a household name with "Balika Vadhu".

He also participated in reality shows, including "Jhalak Dikhhla Jaa 6", "Fear Factor: Khatron Ke Khiladi 7" and "Bigg Boss 13".

In 2014, Shukla made his Bollywood debut with the Karan Johar-produced "Humpty Sharma Ki Dulhania" where he had a supporting role.



Drugs case: Actress Charmee appears before ED

HYDERABAD, SEPT 2 (PTI): Actress Charmee Kaur appeared before the Enforcement Directorate (ED) here on Thursday after being summoned as part of a money laundering probe in connection with a high-end drugs racket that was busted in the city in 2017.

The ED had earlier summoned over 10 Tollywood (Telugu film industry) personalities in connection with the sensational racket of supplying high-end narcotics such as LSD and MDMA, that was busted by the Telangana's Prohibition and Excise department.

The drug racket was exposed in July 2017 and several cases related to drug trafficking were registered and over 20 people were arrested including a US citizen, who was a former aerospace engineer and had worked with the NASA, a Dutch national, a South African national besides seven B. Tech degree holders employed with multi-national companies here.

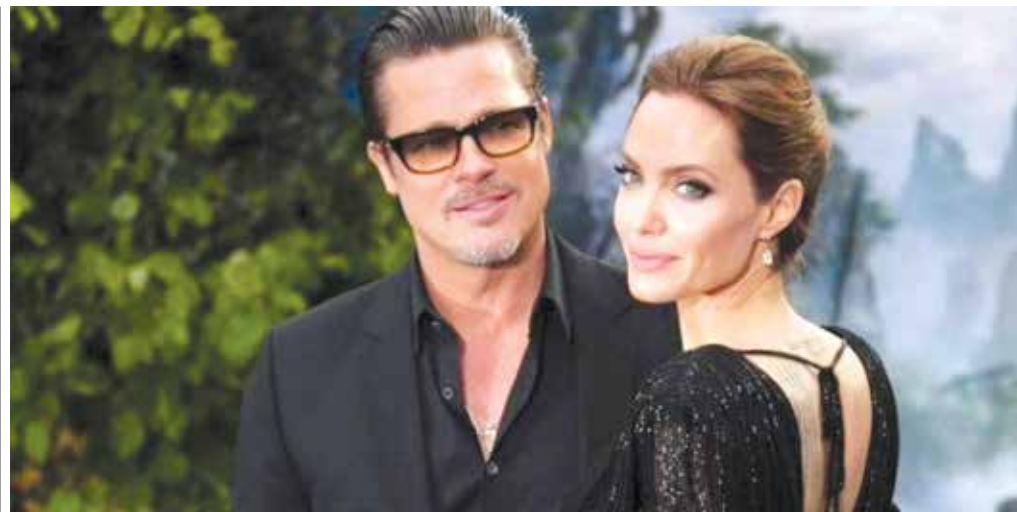
The names of some Tollywood personalities came out during the interrogation of persons arrested in connection with the racket.

A Special Investigation Team (SIT) of Telangana's Prohibition and Excise department, as part of its investigation had also probed the alleged drug-links with Tollywood, and had then questioned 11 people connected to the Telugu film industry including actors and directors besides the driver of one of the actor and had also collected hair and nail samples.

The SIT questioned them to find out if they had any links with the racket as consumers or suppliers or with those arrested.

The ED summoned the Tollywood personalities who were among those questioned by SIT and they were asked to appear before it.

Charmee, who was also questioned by the SIT then, was among those who were summoned by ED to appear before it.



Brad Pitt challenges ruling in custody battle against Angelina Jolie

Brad Pitt's lawyers requested a review of his custody case, after an appeals court effectively revoked his joint custody in July. Angelina Jolie's team said the judge "exhibited bias."

The back-and-forth continues in Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt's heated custody case.

Pitt scored a win in May when he was tentatively granted joint custody of their five minor children. However, the order came from Judge John Ouderkirk, who officiated the couple's wedding seven years ago.

That led Jolie to try to discount the judge's ruling. In July, a California appeals court approved her request to disqualify the judge. According to her legal team, Ouderkirk failed to "disclose multiple professional, business and financial relationships, ongoing during the course of the matter, with Pitt's counsel and their law firms."

As such, Jolie retained full-time custody of their kids, while Pitt maintained visitation rights.

So, the Moneyball actor is now responding in court, filing a petition with the California Supreme Court to review the case, which E! News obtained on Sept. 1.

"The Court of Appeal effectively upended the constitutionally authorized temporary judging system in California and generated widespread confusion, uncertainty, and instability for judges, litigants, and the California judicial system as a whole," it reads.

When it comes to the Oscar winners' custody case, the petition states, "After more than four years of contentious litigation, every day of which has harmed the children and their father, an important and considered custody decision will be entirely undone as a result of an administrative error that is wholly unrelated to the merits of the custody dispute itself."

Pitt's camp accuses Jolie of waiting three and a half years to seek disqualification of

Judge Ouderkirk, even though she was allegedly "made aware of Judge Ouderkirk's significant professional history with Pitt's counsel from the very start."

Pitt's team argues the judge was "improperly disqualified after providing a detailed, fact-based custodial decision," said his lawyer, Theodore J. Broutrous Jr., in a statement to E! News.

The attorney said this type of "strategic" disqualification can "cause irreparable harm" to the children and families involved "by unnecessarily prolonging" the legal battle. "Allowing this kind of crafty litigation strategy will deprive parents of irreplaceable time with their children," Broutrous stated.

However, Jolie's lawyer praised the appeals court for disqualifying the judge and giving the Maleficent actress full custody.

"The Court of Appeal unanimously refused to tolerate the ethical violations of the private judge," said her lawyer, Robert A. Olson, in a statement to E! News.

Pitt's petition shows he is "clinging to this private judge who exhibited bias and refused statutorily required evidence," Olson said, adding, "It is disturbing that in full knowledge of unethical behavior, and having previously failed to disclose their new and ongoing financial relationships with him, Mr. Pitt's counsel would seek to reinstate the private judge."

Jolie hopes Pitt will "join her in focusing on the children's needs, voices, and healing," according to Olson.

In the ruling from the appeals court, three judges determined that "Ouderkirk's ethical breach," along with information about his alleged connection to Pitt's lawyers, allow one to "reasonably to entertain a doubt as to the judge's ability to be impartial." They wrote, "Disqualification is required."

Per the ruling, Ouderkirk said he "made all required disclosures in a timely manner at the time of his initial appointment."

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ARIES:

Watch out for the green-eyed monster today, Aries. It can rear up before you even say the word "jealousy" if you're not on your guard. Many situations that cause this feeling are born of insecurity. If you aren't secure in your job, relationship, or family, and feel threatened by someone else, it's time to take a look at the reason. Look for answers rather than lash out.

TAURUS:

You may feel insecure about your appearance today, Taurus. This can be a vicious cycle, and the end result is almost always negative. Rather than picking yourself to pieces, find ways to accept your looks. Whether it's your weight, age, or anything else, if you can't accept yourself as you are, you'll always find something wrong no matter how many changes you make.

GEMINI:

Jealousy might rear its head today, Gemini. The key to coping with it is to understand why you feel insecure. If you're jealous of a partner, why is this? Is trust an issue? If this comes up at work, is it because you don't feel recognized for your contributions? Examine the cause of jealousy. It's almost always a symptom of a deeper problem.

CANCER:

Arts and crafts may hold your interest today, Cancer. Even if you lean more toward sports, an artistic streak likely runs pretty strong in you. Creating can be richly satisfying, both in the process and in the finished product. Allow yourself the opportunity to explore this part of you. The day's energy will lend much to your abilities.

LEO:

Getting along with others may prove challenging today, Leo. The planetary aspects can have you isolating yourself. You might feel impatient and easily annoyed. If this is so, stay solo if you can. If you can't, you'll need to curb a tendency to be argumentative or confrontational. Exercise patience and bite your tongue if that's what it takes. Avoid conflict.

VIRGO:

Don't be surprised if you're a little weepy today, Virgo. The day's planetary influences could enhance your sensitivity to everything, including your feelings. Let yourself cry if you need to - it can be cleansing. Try not to wallow too much, as things will look better tomorrow. Take good care of yourself today.

LIBRA:

Obsessive thinking may be something you need to look at today, Libra. Common areas for such

behaviors are in the pursuit of money, power, success, and romance. There's a fine line between determination and obsession. If you fixate on the same thing day after day, it may be time to talk with someone about it. An expert can help you see what you don't want to see.

SCORPIO:

Don't act impulsively today, Scorpio. It can be easy to confuse this with spontaneity, but one has more thought in it than the other. Look before you leap! Think everything through from decisions to projects to contracts. Read the fine print more than once. When it comes to relationships, avoid trusting too quickly. Don't set yourself up for hurt by being gullible.

SAGITTARIUS:

Is it time to take a more drastic approach to solving a problem, Sagittarius? If you've made several attempts to resolve your trouble to no avail, it might be something to consider. As long as drastic doesn't equate with destructive, you may find it works to try something more aggressive. Be careful. Think things through first. Run any ideas past a trusted friend.

CAPRICORN:

Tap into your creativity to unblock your emotions

today, Capricorn. This can be a more powerful tool than you realize. Creativity is a big part of you - almost as big as communication. Your emotions are linked to these, and all are interacting beneath the surface. If one is blocked, the key to releasing it is to focus on the other two. Express yourself through creativity and talking to someone close.

AQUARIUS:

You may need to deal with disapproval today, Aquarius. This will likely come from someone you see as a superior or authority figure, perhaps a parent or teacher. While it's important to listen, if what they have to say involves your personal life and how you live it, it's no one's concern but yours. No matter what you do, someone will disapprove of something!

PISCES:

Taking time alone is essential for everyone, Pisces, but recognize when you're isolating yourself to the point where it's unhealthy. If you ask why you're taking this time and answer because you're avoiding something or someone, you need to reconsider. Things will only build and get worse under these conditions. You begin to work things out by facing whatever it is that's upsetting you.