



**TAYLOR SWIFT CANCELS
2020 TOUR DATES DUE TO
CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK**
pg 08

Reporting, Not Repeating
*Not just rights, we also need
more professionalism*
pg 4

**BASSIST MATTHEW SELIGMAN
HAS DIED AT THE AGE OF 64 AFTER
A BATTLE WITH COVID-19**
pg 08



SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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CS commends people for keeping Sikkim COVID-safe; Outlines post-20 April guidelines

**SAGAR CHETTRI
GANGTOK, 18 APR:**

Chief Secretary SC Gupta today commended the cooperation extended by every Sikkimese which has helped the State handle the COVID-19 situation much better than other States.

He stated that the people of Sikkim have been very disciplined, well-informed, cautious and very compliant to lockdown guidelines and further appealed to the people to bear with the situation for some more time and ensure that the guidelines continue to be adhered with.

Addressing a media briefing here on Saturday afternoon, the Chief Secretary pointed out that the Ministry of Home Affairs has issued revised guidelines with a few relaxations.

He said that the State has also notified the revised consolidated guidelines based on the guidelines issued by the Centre.

He also commented that it was disappointing to see largescale violation of the lockdown in the State on 13 and 14 April when people came out in large numbers thinking that the lockdown would be lifted on 15 April. On the same, he asserted that the people need to understand that the slightest

misstep could create a difficult situation for the State.

The CS also detailed activities which shall remain prohibited across the State till 03 May.

He informed that public transport, including buses and taxis except with specific permission and inter-district and inter-state movement of individuals expect for medical reasons for permitted activities will remain prohibited.

He added that all educational institutions will remain closed through the lockdown period.

He added that all industrial and commercial activities, hospitality services, all social, political, sports, entertainment, academic, cultural, religious functions and other gatherings, all religious places and congregations will remain prohibited till 03 May.

However, he stated that few of these activities in these areas would be specifically permitted in keeping with guidelines issued by the Centre.

The CS stated that to mitigate the hardships being faced by the general public some of activities will be allowed from 20 April onwards with specific instructions issued by the District Magistrates with strict compliance



of the general instruction with regard to movement of goods and personnel, social distancing, personal hygiene, safety measures, precautions and wearing of face masks or cover in public places.

He informed that activities which will be opened from 20 April onwards will be all health services like hospitals, nursing homes, clinics and telemedicine facilities, dispensaries, chemists and pharmacies, veterinary hospitals and dispensaries, manufacturing units of drugs, pharmaceuticals, medical devices and others, construction of medical and health infrastructures and movement of all medical and

veterinary personnel, scientists, nurses, paramedical staff, midwives and other hospital support services including ambulance.

He stated that all agriculture and related-activities, including farming operations by farmers, marketing of agricultural produce, movement and distribution of farm products and inputs will be allowed from 20 April onwards.

He added that other activities open from 20 April onwards were fisheries and related activities, tea plantation with maximum of 50% workers, animal husbandry related activities, financial sector activities, social sector activities and MGNREGA workers. He

mentioned that public utilities and essential services and movement, loading and unloading of goods and cargo both inter and intra state and supply of essential goods will also be allowed.

He mentioned that IT and IT-enabled service with upto 50% strength, courier services, cold storage, warehousing services and other links in the logistic chain, private security service and facilities management services for maintenance and upkeep of office and residential complexes are allowed.

He added that other activities includes hotels, homestays, lodges and motels which are accommodating tourists and persons stranded due to lockdown, medical and emergency staffs as identified and empanelled or notified by the DM.

He mentioned that other exemption includes services provided by self-employed i.e. electrician, IT repairs, plumbers, motor mechanics and carpenters.

Speaking on the National Directives for COVID-19 Management, he stated that the national directives shall be enforced by the DMs through fines and penal action as prescribed in the Disaster Management Act

2005.

He mentioned that wearing of face cover was compulsory in all public places as was social distancing in public places, gathering such as marriage and funeral shall remain regulated by the DM, spitting in public places shall be punishable with fine and others.

He informed about guidelines to be maintained in workspaces and manufacturing establishments mentioned under national directives for COVID-19 management. He appealed the people of Sikkim to download Aarogya Setu Mobile App.

The CS mentioned that the State has taken pro-active anticipatory steps to prevent COVID-19 in the State but the State has new challenges as offices will be opening from 20 April onwards, increase in movement of goods transportation and to bring back stranded students and people outside the State.

He mentioned that the State government has been doing its best to provide support and assistant to stranded students and people outside the State.

He also spoke about activities steps taken by the government to keep Sikkim free from COVID-19.

COVID-19 State Task Force decides transport regulations

GANGTOK, 18 APR [IPR]: Chief Secretary SC Gupta chaired a meeting of the COVID-19 State Task Force today to review activities of each department and to deliberate on future course of action in line with the revised guidelines of the Ministry of Home Affairs.

The meeting was attended by Heads of concerned departments, DC East, and was joined through video conferencing by Resident Commissioner, Sikkim House, New Delhi, Ashwini Chand, and the District Collectors of South, West and North Districts.

The Chief Secretary directed the Health Department to ensure immediate supply of Rapid Test Kits. Likewise, he directed for completion of the Viral Laboratory at STNM Hospital by 15 May, 2020.

The Food & Civil Supplies Department informed that the first round of distribution of all commodities have been completed, and the commodities for second round will be despatched by today evening. The department also shared the figures of the total number of beneficiaries.

The meeting discussed in detail the adjustments to be made after 20 April to resume certain essential services, as per the guidelines issued by Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.

The following broad decisions were taken:

1. Transit facility to be created for interstate drivers.
2. West Bengal drivers should be encouraged to return the same day after off loading.
3. Only some identified vehicles of Sikkim registration will be allowed to ply.
4. Aarogya Setu mobile application to be downloaded compulsorily by every individual. This will be a prerequisite for travel permits.
5. Anybody who will be entering Sikkim after likely relaxation after 03 May, 2020, should invariably have Aarogya Setu mobile Application downloaded and activated on their mobile phones.
6. Vehicles carrying Pharmaceutical company goods should enter the State in the morning, unload, and return back the same day.
7. There should be strict compliance of the guidelines issued by Home Department, Government of Sikkim on 17 Apr, 2020. Lock-down guidelines and precautionary measures should be strictly complied with.

In conclusion, the Chief Secretary said that there will be a separate meeting to discuss the strategy for the decisions to be followed after 03 May, 2020.

600 litres of adulterated ghee seized in Delhi

NEW DELHI, APR 18 (PTI): Delhi police has seized 600 litres of adulterated ghee packed in containers of a popular dairy brand in Northwest district, officials said on Saturday.

On a tip-off, the police intercepted a vehicle in Mangolpuri area on the intervening night of Tuesday and Wednesday, a senior police officer said,

adding that the driver was not carrying invoice of the consignment.

During checking, 15 cartons of adulterated ghee were recovered, the officer said.

The vehicle and the consignment were seized and a case was registered at the Mangolpuri police station, they said.

Nawin Kiran questions Dr Chandy's appointment as SPCB chairperson

**SAGAR CHHETRI
GANGTOK, 18 APR:**

Sikkim Subject Committee vice-convenor, Nawin Kiran Pradhan has criticized the appointment of retired IFS officer, Dr Thomas Chandy as the Chairperson of State Pollution Control Board for three years. He alleged that Sikkim Krantikari Morcha has been continuously failing to fulfill its promises to end the trend of reappointment and extension after forming the government in the State.

A Home Department notification on the appointment of IFS [retd] Dr Thomas Chandy as Chairperson of State Pollution Control Board for a period of three years with immediate effect also states that he shall draw a fixed consolidated pay of Rs 2



lakh per month and also be entitled to draw 15% of HRA.

Addressing a press conference here today, Mr Pradhan said, "I want to remind SKM about its promises made to the people of Sikkim before the election to end the

trend of reappointment and extension but many extensions and reappointments have been made so far by SKM government."

The State government will spend an amount of around Rs 82.80 lakh from people's money

in three years for Dr Chandy, he said further adding that the people of Sikkim should register their protest against such practice of the government.

As per a guideline of National Green Tribunal on the appointment

of chairperson and member secretaries of State Pollution Control Board stated that Chief Secretaries, IFS officer or officer of any other service, environment secretaries, politicians, MLAs, literary persons and non-technical persons should not be appointed as chairperson of the board, said Mr Pradhan.

He mentioned that the advertisement inviting eligible candidates for the post of Chairperson and Member Secretary of SPCB was issued on 06 November 2017 by the then Principal Secretary-cum-PCCF of Forest Department, Dr Thomas Chandy and now he himself has been appointed for the post. He said that the Chief Minister should be accountable and answerable for such practice in the government.

Lockdown crushes flower growers of Sikkim

AARON RAI

GANGTOK, 18 APR:

It is spring time and peak season for flower growers of Sikkim but the lockdown has meant that they have had to sustain heavy losses this year. Farmers in the floriculture sector have been forced to use their produce as animal feed or throw it in composting pits.

"I used to send around 500 sticks of flowers to the market per day with per stick costing Rs10-

15 so I have incurred a heavy loss in these last 21 days," said Bishnu Kr Rai, a flower grower from Radang, East Sikkim.

He grows flowers in 2 acres of land with his major crops being Gerbera, Anthurium and Phalaenopsis orchid. He added that he even gave away flowers to those living in the area.

Mr Rai used to grow vegetables earlier but felt that the earnings were not commensurate with the hard work that had to be

put in. He has requested the government to help sell the flowers by allowing SIMFED to come in and take the flowers along with vegetables to people's doors.

Meanwhile, Minister Sharma visited Mr Rai's farm as well as other flower growers and expressed deep concern towards private flower growers. He informed that the government is making an assessment of losses of flowers and planning to compensate the marginal farmers.



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Transit Camps for truckers and helpers functional in West Sikkim

GYALSHING, 18 APR [IPR]: District Collector [West], Karma R Bonpo, informs that transit camps - located at Sisnay Petrol Pump and Auditorium Hall of Kyongsa Girls Sr. Sec. School - for drivers plying to Siliguri from West Sikkim are functional for West District.

Mr Bonpo mentioned that all drivers who cross the Melli Checkpost to Siliguri are advised to halt at the Transit Camp on their return. The transit camps are well equipped to provide meals and lodging.

He also stated that the drivers need to understand that the



facilities are provided for them so they don't endanger their families and other members of the public they would otherwise come in contact with.

The steps were made

to ensure that drivers and their helpers did not pose a risk to the general population.

He has also underlined directives for them to follow which include:

1. Permits would only be issued by ADC/SDMs;

2. When returning back from Siliguri to the district the movement of the Driver and helper needs to be restricted

and they need to halt at the Transit Camp as mentioned above.

3. The Driver and the helper need to wear face-masks at all times.

4. Medical Certificate is a must for the drivers

and helper while applying for permit.

5. Weekly inspection of the Driver and helper by Medical Officer must be done.

6. The driver and helper will not be allowed to immediately go home in the district after their return.

7. All drivers MUST install the Aarogya Setu App on their phones.

8. Any violation of the directions would be dealt with strictly.

He also mentioned that the Police will ensure that the drivers and helpers of vehicles plying to Siliguri are stationed at the Transit Camps.

MasihiMandali Church provides relief to 12 families



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 18 APR:

Masihi Mandali Church, Rangpo Goliground, provided relief to 12 needy families in the area

today, a press release informs.

Pastor TarzenChettri informed that they provided every family with 12 Kg Rice, 4 Kg Dal and 2Ltrs Oil.

NHPC distributes essential items at Legship



RUDRA KAUSHIK

GANGTOK, 18 APR:

NHPC's Rangit Power Station distributed free vegetables to local residents and migrant workers at Legship in West Sikkim today.

General Manager

(I/c), Ram Swaroop, also distributed 70 packets [containing 5 kg vegetables] to local residents and another 20 packets to casual and daily wage migrant labourers who are stranded in Sikkim due to the lockdown.

N Korea says released all foreign nationals from coronavirus quarantine

SEOUL, APR 18 (AP): North Korea on Saturday said it has released all foreign nationals from coronavirus quarantine while it continues to strengthen anti-virus efforts.

The official Korean Central News Agency also said Saturday authorities released all citizens who had been quarantined in the provinces of South Phyongan and North Hwanghae, which are near capital Pyongyang, and the city of Rason at a tri-point bordering China and Russia.

The report didn't specify how many people remained under the country's 30-day quarantine. Figures from previous state media reports suggest the North would have released close to 10,000 people over the past weeks.

The North had initially placed 380 foreigners under quarantine. The North in March arranged a special government flight to fly out dozens of diplomats to Vladivostok, Russia.

The KCNA says officials are continuing to strengthen medical monitoring of its citizens while ensuring normal activity for those released from quarantine.

The North has said there hasn't been a single virus case on its territory, but the claim is questioned by many outside experts.

~SummitTIMES~
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The Marauding Corona and the final Warzone

GGOPAL YATRI

A week ago, all was well in the small state of Meghalaya, with its borders sealed and the nationwide lockdown being implemented effectively. It was the only state after Sikkim and Nagaland to have checked the infiltrations of the deadly Novel Corona virus.

Suddenly, things changed forever in the state when the first positive case of COVID 19 was reported on 13th April 2020. The chief secretary issued a press statement mentioning that a doctor from Bethany hospital, Shillong has tested positive and the imposition of curfew in Shillong.

The news was shocking and the state was brought into a standstill. Later on the victim was identified as Dr. John L. Sailo, 69, a renown doctor and

owner of the famous Bethany hospital which was in news in July 2015 due to death of Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, the former president of India. After two days, however Dr. Sailo passed away leaving behind many unanswered questions. With the first casualty of COVID19, Meghalaya paid a heavy price:- a prominent medial practicenor with no travel history lost his life within a span of less than 72 hours.

People found it hard to believe the Irony- a frontline warrior who was all prepared to combat the virus became the victim, reminding us the uncertainty of life.

The administration sprung up in action and started contact tracing of the patient and sealing of hospital. Later on, the chief minister, Conrad Sangma confirmed that six more people from the

same family tested positive (current status: 11). There are unconfirmed reports that the victim contracted the virus from his son-in-law, a pilot who had travelled from New York to Delhi recently. If it is true than more number of cases are likely to be reported from the areas of his travel.

Normally a patient who contracted the virus is suppose to show symptoms within 14 days. But the victim here was asymptomatic, leading to delayed diagnosis and treatment.

According to the WHO, which has declared the virus as Pandemic, a total of 213 countries has been affected by the virus so far with about 2 million active cases and 1,30,000 deaths globally. After its first case reported in November 2019 in the Wuhan province, China

has been able to contain the virus all of sudden. However, countries like the USA, Spain, Italy, France and the UK has been badly affected. Germany appears to have been able to contain the spread of virus to some extent.

The Indian Government adopted extreme precautionary measures at early stage which have paid off. The complete lockdown effected from 25th March has been extended till May 3rd. The number of confirmed cases in India stands at about 14,000 with 480 deaths so far. The worst hit states are Maharashtra, Delhi, and Madhya Pradesh where all possible measures are taken to tackle the crisis.

Amid the fear and uncertainty, there is also some good news coming. The single positive case of Arunachal

Death toll due to COVID-19 rises to 480; cases climb to 14,378

NEW DELHI, APR 18

(PTI): The death toll due to COVID-19 rose to 480 and the number of cases to 14,378 in the country on Saturday, according to the Union Health Ministry

While the number of active COVID-19 cases stood at 11,906, as many as 1,991 people have been cured and discharged, and one had migrated, it said

The total number of cases includes 76 foreign nationals

Twenty-eight deaths have been reported since Friday evening -- 12 from Madhya Pradesh, seven from Maharashtra, four from Delhi, three from Gujarat, one each from Jammu and Kashmir and Bihar

Of the total 480 deaths, Maharashtra tops the tally with 201 fatalities, followed by Madhya Pradesh at 69, Delhi at 42, Gujarat at 41 and Telengana at 18.

Tamil Nadu has reported 15 deaths while Andhra Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh have reported 14 fatalities each. Punjab and Karnataka have reported 13 deaths each. Rajasthan has registered 11 deaths while West Bengal has reported 10 deaths fatalities

Five persons have lost their lives in Jammu and Kashmir while Kerala and Haryana have recorded three deaths each. Jharkhand and Bihar have reported two deaths each

Meghalaya, Himachal Pradesh, Odisha and Assam reported one

fatality each, according to the health ministry's data updated in the morning

The highest number of confirmed cases in the country is from Maharashtra at 3,323, followed by Delhi at 1,707, Tamil Nadu at 1,323 and Madhya Pradesh at 1,310

COVID-19 cases have gone up to 1,229 in Rajasthan, 1,099 in Gujarat and 849 in Uttar Pradesh

Telengana has 766 cases, followed by Andhra Pradesh at 572 and Kerala at 396

The number of novel coronavirus cases has risen to 359 in Karanataka, 328 in Jammu and Kashmir, 287 in West Bengal, 225 in Haryana and 202 in Punjab

Bihar has reported 83 cases and Odisha 60. Forty people were infected with the virus in Uttarakhand, while Chhattisgarh and Himachal Pradesh have 36 cases each. Assam has registered 35 cases so far

Jharkhand has 33 cases, Chandigarh 21 and Ladakh 18. Twelve cases have been reported from the Andaman and Nicobar Islands

Meghalaya has reported nine cases while Goa and Puducherry have reported seven COVID-19 infections each. Manipur and Tripura have two cases each, while Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh have reported a case each

"State-wise distribution is subject to further verification and reconciliation," the ministry said on its website



Namchi traffic police at work

NAMCHI, 18 APR (IPR):

Namchi traffic police works hard manning the entry and exit at Namchi bazaar and other surrounding areas.

Coronavirus: South African political outfits draw flak for printing party logo on masks

FAKIR HASSEN

JOHANNESBURG, APR 18 (PTI):

South Africa's ruling and the main opposition party have been accused of politicising the COVID-19 pandemic after protective masks with party logos embossed on them were distributed among the people.

While the ruling African National Congress (ANC) decried the printing of party logo on protective gear, the opposition Democratic Alliance (DA) said the masks were distributed among the poor as a goodwill gesture.

The novel coronavirus, which originated in China's Wuhan city in December last year, has claimed 50

lives and infected 2,783 people in South Africa.

ANC deputy secretary-general Jessie Duarte condemned the use of the ANC name and insignia on coronavirus masks, manufactured by private businesses.

"We are making an appeal to those private sector individuals [manufacturing these masks] not to abuse the ANC emblem. And also we are asking the ANC membership to understand that COVID-19 affects everyone, irrespective of the political party you may belong to," Duarte told The Citizen newspaper.

"We cannot be selling masks that have political emblems on

them and hoping that (party supporters) will support the private sector in this regard. This flies in the face of the unity (amongst all political parties) that is being forged in fighting against COVID-19. We urge these people not to sell masks with the ANC's emblem on it."

However, DA national spokesperson Solly Malatsi said the party was aware of the masks with party insignia that were used in two South African provinces.

Malatsi said members of the DA were "acting out of their goodwill to help the communities who could not afford masks," emphasising

that the masks were only used by local party members and were not commissioned by the party itself.

"Those masks were meant to help towards providing protective gear to individuals who may not have the resources or the equipment to make their own masks," Malatsi said.

With a number of local elections pending across the country because of the national coronavirus lockdown, calls have also gone out for the Independent Electoral Commission to investigate the matter as a possible breach of electoral laws and regulations.

Sichey youth's Free Kitchen initiative serves free meals

PRITAM LAMA
GANGTOK, 18 APR:

A group of youth led by TashiTsering Bhutia from Church Road, Gangtok, have started the Free Kitchen initiative to help patients and their attendants at STNM hospital. The Free Kitchen has been providing three meals every day to the guardians and

visitors of patients admitted at Psychiatry and Oncology ward of STNM hospital. They also provide meals to stranded people and migrant workers on a daily basis.

West District administration extended support to the Free Kitchen initiative through Gyalshing S. D. M, Tsering Topgay Bhutia by

handing over essential commodities. The essential commodities include, over 4 sacks of rice, 3 sacks Dal/pulses, 40 Ltrs cooking oil, and 2 sacks potatoes.

TashiTsering Bhutia said that the Free Kitchen initiative has been working since 26 March keeping in mind that the patients will be provided daily

meals by the hospital but their attendees and guardians will suffer because of the lockdown. He informed that the Free Kitchen initiative will run till the lockdown is in place.

People can approach Mr Bhutia at STNM hospital premises near Oncology ward above Psychology ward in Sochaygang, STNM

hospital premises. He also provides daily meals to stray dogs in and around Gangtok.

Mr Bhutia has thanked the West District administration for extending support and providing the essential commodities. He also thanks the Hospital Administration for letting them run the Free Kitchen.

MP manufacturing 10,000 PPE kits daily: Official

NEW DELHI, APR 18 (PTI): Madhya Pradesh has started manufacturing 10,000 personal protective equipment (PPE) kits daily for frontline warriors battling coronavirus, the state's Additional Chief Secretary (Health) Mohammed Suleman said on Saturday.

He said the treatment for COVID-19 is free in the state.

"PPE kit is a very important thing. We

ensured development of the PPE kit locally. We are making 10,000 PPE kits daily in a factory at Pithampur near Indore and providing them to our people. So far we have distributed one lakh PPE kits," he said while interacting with a group of Delhi-based journalists during a video-conference.

Suleman said the state government has over 9.5 lakh of hydroxychloroquine tablets and adequate

stock of N-95 masks.

Twenty-five dedicated COVID 19 hospitals have been set up in Madhya Pradesh, besides 66 dedicated health centres and more than 400 COVID care centres, he said.

"We are utilising 28 per cent of the total capacity of isolation beds. We have sufficient spare capacity to treat people in case of any emergency. In the case of ICU beds, we are using 17 per cent of the overall

capacity," Suleman said.

The official said the state government has received 30,000 rapid diagnostic kits from the central government and they will be made available in Indore and other cities.

"COVID treatment is free in Madhya Pradesh. Nobody would be charged a single penny. The Government of Madhya Pradesh will bear all the expenses and provide free of

cost treatment to all," Suleman said.

After 50 more people tested positive for coronavirus in Indore on Friday night, the number of COVID-19 cases in the state has climbed to 1,360, health officials said.

So far, 69 people have died due to the infection in the state, the officials said on Saturday.

With this, the number of coronavirus positive cases in Indore has gone up to 892.

Emergency drill at LPG plant



**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 18 APR:**

An emergency response fire drill was conducted at the LPG Plant at Bageykhola on the eve of Safety Week today.

All plant employees took active part in the drill.

During the debriefing

session, Plant Manager Suman Tamang urged all to follow safety rules inside the Plant and stressed that prompt action needs to be taken during emergencies emphasizing this year's Safety Week theme, "Fight Fire or

Surrender to Fire".

Mutual Aid members, Zydus Health Care and IOCL Depot personnel also took part in the drill.

During the drill, all prescribed norms of sanitization and social distancing were maintained, it is informed.

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IPL's opening night changed my life forever: McCullum

KOLKATA, APR 18 (PTI): Former New Zealand captain Brendon McCullum says his sizzling 73-ball 158, which set the ball rolling for IPL in its very first game 12 years ago, changed his life forever.

On this day in 2008, McCullum got the inaugural IPL off to a scintillating start for Kolkata Knight Riders against Royal Challengers Bangalore.

"That night, my life changed completely in the space of those three hours or actually, even an hour and a half. You talk about sliding doors, and moments in your careers

and in lives," McCullum told kkr.in.

McCullum has now reunited with the Knight Riders as their coach.

Recalling the time when he was a 26-year-old dazzler, McCullum wondered, "Why was I the one who got that opportunity to be able to go and face (the) first (delivery) with Sourav Ganguly? How did I get a chance to play in the first game, have the first opportunity to bat in such a huge tournament for world cricket?"

"How was I even able to grab that opportunity? How much luck did I have along the

way? Honestly, I don't know the answers to any of these, but what I do know is that it changed my life forever."

His score has been battered only once in 11 seasons so far, by Chris Gayle.

McCullum also recalled his then captain and opening partner Ganguly's reaction to his incredible innings.

"Dada said, 'Your life is changed forever,' and I didn't quite know what he meant at the time, but (in hindsight), I 100 percent agree with him," McCullum said.

"Shah Rukh (Khan, the KKR co-owner),

in the months which followed or the days and the weeks and the months which followed, he said, 'you'll always be with the Knight Riders.'"

McCullum said he never thought he would be able to pull off an innings like that.

"I couldn't have done it without my teammates, that's 100 percent sure," he said. "It was just a surreal moment in time where you just look back and say, 'How lucky was I?'"

McCullum had two stints with the Knight Riders, scoring 882 runs in 35 innings at a strike rate of nearly 121.

Over 3,600 people detained for violating lockdown in Delhi

NEW DELHI, APR 18 (PTI): Over 270 cases were registered and 3,608 people detained in Delhi on Saturday for violating lockdown orders, police said.

According to the data shared by the police, 271 cases

were registered under section 188 (for disobedience to order duly promulgated by public servant) of the Indian Penal Code till 5pm.

A total of 3,608 people were detained under section 65

(persons bound to comply with reasonable directions of police officers) and 301 vehicles have been impounded under section 66 of the Delhi Police Act, the data showed.

A total of 677 movement passes were

issued and 188 cases registered against people for stepping out of their houses without wearing masks, the police said.

Since March 24, 94,686 people have been detained for violating orders under section 65 of the Delhi Police Act.

Trump consults faith leaders on phased-in reopening

NEW YORK, APR 18 (AP): President Donald Trump held a call with faith leaders on Friday that included discussion about a phased-in return to broader in-person worship after weeks of religious services largely shifting online in response to the coronavirus pandemic.

Trump's call with faith leaders came one day after the White House included houses of worship among large venues that could be able to reopen while observing strict physical distancing protocols in the first stage of a three-part plan to reopen a U.S. economy that's been frozen by the toll of the highly contagious virus.

The call included representatives of multiple Christian denominations as well as Jewish and Islamic leaders, according to a statement distributed by the White House.

Trump mentioned his memories as a young child attending

Billy Graham's service at Yankee Stadium, and acknowledged that while he has enjoyed watching services online from the White House, he told the faith leaders it is important for people to soon be able to once again come together, pray, and worship," the White House said in its statement.

Participants in the call with faith leaders said it featured discussion about how restarting in-person worship could work, without any conclusion reached, and underscored their commitment to not imperiling the health of the faithful. Indeed, Trump has said that governors would be empowered to spearhead their states' paces of economic reopening.

Jack Graham, pastor of Texas-based Prestonwood Baptist Church, said the call included conversation about how would we go about bringing people back together,

adding that those involved agreed that "we're going to do that carefully and gradually, and not put people at risk."

Samuel Rodriguez, president of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Council, said that religious institutions want to be a blessing and not a burden" by not returning to practices that could cause more harm than good if taken up too early.

Rodriguez added that he hoped to see clergy and other faith leaders nationwide identified as essential workers, as well as a clear resumption of outdoor religious services that can be conducted with people remaining in their automobiles. That sort of step would "help us transition to a new normal," he said.

Cissie Graham Lynch of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association and Samaritan's Purse, said churches would be

committed to keeping their congregations safe and emphasized the importance of healing the spiritual pain caused by widespread social distancing restrictions imposed to fight the virus.


People are lonely, people are scared, Lynch said.

Those who participated in the call described Trump as closely engaged in the discussion.

We may be opening, but we're putting safety first, the president told reporters Friday.

The faith leaders' conversation with Trump is not the only sign that religious leaders are beginning to explore how to resume in-person worship services.

The Christian executive search firm Vanderbloemen has launched ReopeningChurch.com and ReopeningSchool.com websites to start a conversation on that process.



What is Novel Coronavirus - nCoV?

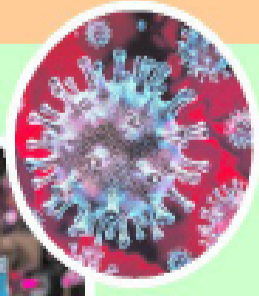
The Novel Coronavirus (nCoV) is new strain of Coronavirus that originated in Wuhan, China. Notorious for mutating quickly and acquiring new qualities, it is a rising epidemic that was previously not identified in humans.

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.



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-Toll free no. 104

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WEST : 9583297808

NORTH : 9641957468

SOUTH : 7407691463

New STNM

AMS : 9434711402

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM



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SummitTIMES

ON TOP OF THE NEWS

Reporting, Not Repeating *Not just rights, we also need more professionalism*

The Right to Free Speech, like any other freedom, needs pause where someone else's space begins; quite like how the right to swing one's arms ends the moment someone's nose comes in the way. When it comes to speech, the volume needs to be turned down when someone else's eardrums begin hurting. Ditto for the freedom of expression enjoyed by newspapers, the right to write enters the domain of solid research and defensible evidence the moment someone's reputation is being blemished. Since one cannot really go ahead and start telling people to shut up or stop writing, a civilized way to handle the situation would be to clarify to those with a weakness for public outpourings that free speech does not come bundled with the right to be believed. For that one has to work much harder on the supporting arguments.

In Sikkim, the public domain which used to earlier be dominated by newspapers is now increasingly occupied by SocialMedia. The medium is not a worry so long as the information is pucca and provided news and opinion are clearly segregated. But now we are digressing into a journalism class, which is not what this is about. Returning to topic, a press release to publications and Facebook pages starved for news and driven by urgency, guarantees reportage. No problems thus far, these are after all mediums for sharing information and opinions held by organizations, political parties and even individuals. The problem starts when the fourth estate starts presenting news culled from press releases as reportage prepared from independent investigation. Here the reader tends to get misled. When claims by affected parties or involved agencies start getting presented as independent reportage, readers are led to believe that the information has been verified by unbiased reporters and are not just mischievous speculations and allegations. When these lines get blurred, a lot of mischief can be played.

News media is expected not to slip in comment into news-reports and when reports start getting editorialized, they start confusing readers even more. When that happens, we, as newspaper people, end up defeating the very reason we are in business – to provide a clear picture of how events unfolded, opinions were expressed and drama played out. It is not just the readers who end up confused, even journalists, because they become part of the story themselves, lose focus and appropriate 'angles' to foist their individual beliefs, reaching a nadir from where the larger picture is no longer visible.

The demand on newspapers to work harder on their research and legwork is more amplified nowadays than ever before because there are too many voices in the air, too many claims and allegations, too much conscious ignoring of facts... News media because it is essentially in the business of reporting and not just repeating, has been shouldered an enormous workload even if it just reports all sides, and fleshes out all required details. And we are not even talking investigative reporting here, just background research and crosschecking. We also need to recognize that people can connect the dots, and as much as their observation will expose empty rhetoric of politicians and see through the disguises to notice the politics, it will also recognize shoddy reporting. Politicians don't seem to care much for such public exposure, but those in the business of news cannot afford such shaming, because their survival depends on accuracy and reliability.

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Green Zones: a mathematical proposal for how to exit from the COVID-19 lockdown

MIQUEL OLIU-BARTON & BARY S. R. PRADELSKI
THECONVERSATION.COM

The COVID-19 pandemic has put the world to the test. Never before have we been so aware of the many ways we come into contact with innumerable others. We have been forced to reassess and retrain common habits, from the handshake to the simple act of opening a door.

This is because the virus spreads via physical proximity: direct contact between people (handshakes, kisses and hugs), coughs, or even touching objects with contaminated droplets. The sum of all of these contacts forms a large and dynamic network – just like Facebook maps out our social interactions online. Disconnecting or weakening this extensive network is the key purpose of social distancing measures, currently experienced across the world.

How we come out of lockdown is the next challenge. It is important to avoid a resurgence of the virus while minimising the societal and economic damage. Proposals range from creating herd immunity to keeping the lockdown intact until the development of a treatment or vaccination.

We are part of a group of mathematicians and economists specialising in modelling random and uncertain situations. We propose an exit strategy that mitigates the health risks of the former, and the social and economic risks of the latter. This is in line with other ideas such as keeping limitations only for high-risk groups.

Our recently published proposal is based on two key elements. First, identifying green zones, meaning areas where the sanitary system is operational, the growth rate of infections is low and the future risks appear manageable. And second, progressively joining these green zones together once it is safe to do so.

ZONING

The purpose of lockdown is to partition the world population into disconnected sub-networks, between which movement is limited. But such partitions are far from complete.

In France, where we are based,

people are asked to stay within 1km of their homes. Although such a measure significantly slows down the spread, the virus can still travel through the entire network. In a city like Paris, two people who are 2km apart may still share the same grocery shop, and so everyone in this 10km city is connected within five degrees of separation.

Instead of enforcing a radius of movement for each individual, as is the case in France, we propose that it would work better if people were allowed to move within disconnected areas, such as counties, towns, or boroughs. Obviously, such a division would be easier to enforce between separate towns than between boroughs of one single town. Division between some zones may therefore need to be legally enforced, while divisions between other zones merely recommended. This would, of course, represent a step up in state-enforced control in many countries.

Such zoning measures have been successfully implemented in several areas in China, notably Wuhan. This would reduce links between different areas and prevent the virus from travelling throughout the territory. As it is impossible to cut links completely due to the need for key workers to travel, and some people ignore the rules, we incorporated this into our analysis.

MAKE IT GREEN

Green zoning would make the transition back to normal life after the initial spread is contained a lot easier. To control the process and the inevitable partial resurgence of the virus, we suggest an approach building on a recent article by the Spanish economist Joan Monràs. He proposes first opening up zones that act as local labour markets – areas that have high levels of commuting within, but little commuting beyond them.

We suggest that each nation should be partitioned into geographic areas, or cells, with 5,000 to 100,000 inhabitants. To limit economic damage, this partition should consider “commuting zones”, that is, zones which share many economic ties.

Each cell is labelled red or green

depending on their current status regarding COVID-19. In red cells, the situation would be similar to lockdown. The sanitary measures, restrictions on opening of shops and restrictions on leaving your house would remain in place. In addition, in order to leave one's zone, a special certificate would be required, reserved for key workers and other important reasons. In contrast, life would progressively go back to normal within green cells.

Consider a town with some 10,000 inhabitants where most people work in a local factory, or in other occupations within the community. Once the virus is under control, no new infections have been detected for several consecutive days (determined by thorough randomised testing as proposed by Economic Nobel Laureate Paul Romer), the town would be labelled “green”. Its inhabitants would then be able to return to their usual social and economic interactions within their zone but travel out of town would be restricted.

After approximately a week, when the virus is under control within a small number of neighbouring green cells, they would be joined together into a “green zone”. In this way, ever-larger green zones would be created, with people sharing the same shops, workplaces, parks, and schools. Returning to our Parisian example, all arrondissements could successively be joined together to eventually reunite the city.

The exact definition of what would constitute a green zone and when to join them together would depend on the specific countries and needs to be defined with consultation of medical, epidemiological and economic experts. In some cases, it may be preferable to refer to them as “amber” in order to highlight the fact that many restrictions remain in place.

Testing and zoning would of course not be perfect. Some green zones would therefore inevitably show a resurgence of infections, and so cease to be “green”. When this happens, the green labelling of the entire area would be lost, and we would go back to the previous lockdown situation.

ADVANTAGES OF GREEN-ZONING

This reunification process might seem tedious, as the size of the green zones, while often increasing, might also decrease from time to time. But our study suggests that when the probability of new infections is controlled, this process would still enable an exponentially fast return to normality. A country such as the UK, our simulations suggest, could be reunified within two to four months. This assumes sufficient sanitary measures are maintained, and testing becomes more widely available.

While green zone merging requires a careful process, it is efficient. In some sense, this approach would involve deconstructing society into its fundamental blocks before reconstructing society from these same blocks.

Green zoning would allow rapid reunification and the minimisation of societal and economic damage by restarting normal relationships as soon as possible. There would also be the possibility of adopting green zoning to fit each region's capability to implement other measures, such as, availability of testing or immunity certificates or practice of sanitary precautions.

To reap the full advantages that the practise of green zoning offers, important policy choices must be made. The definition of zones needs careful consideration of social and economic ties. The rules applying for each zone would need to be clearly defined. Importantly, all measures, including green zoning, would need the support of the public – which may not be easy to secure, given the significant increase in policing measures involved.

The time has come to consider an exit strategy. Our mathematical modelling suggests that some version of green zoning would offer this. Through the progressive enlargement of green zones, we would be able to rebuild our social and economic interaction in a safe, efficient, and rapid way.

[Miquel Oliu-Barton is Associate Professor, Université Paris Dauphine – PSL; Bary S. R. Pradelski is Associate Member, Oxford-Man Institute, University of Oxford]

New Zealand's coronavirus elimination strategy has united a nation. Can that unity outlast lockdown?

GRANT DUNCAN
THECONVERSATION.COM

During a national emergency we discover how well, or poorly, a country is governed. But New Zealand's success so far in working towards eliminating COVID-19 isn't due just to leadership from the top. It's been a collective success, involving most “ordinary” Kiwis and unity across political divides.

As New Zealand awaits a decision on easing its strict level 4 lockdown, it's worth looking at what's worked here so far, what hasn't – and how much national unity might survive in the months ahead.

UNSEEN ACTS OF PUBLIC SERVICE

New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern's crisis leadership skills have attracted the most international attention. And understandably so – it took courage and leadership to heed scientific advice and go for elimination of the virus, which is not an option for many countries. Ardern has also shown a strong command of the issues, along with humane, firm and consistent messaging.

But Ardern has not been the only leader in New Zealand's COVID-19 response. Instead, what's been striking is how well the nation's broader political system – the public service, health experts, the opposition, and the vast majority of New Zealand's nearly 5 million people – have all played a role.

Senior officials, led by director-general of health Dr Ashley Bloomfield, have wielded significant emergency powers and performed impressively.

Ministers and public officials have worked well as a team when fronting up to journalists, and been willing to address difficult questions.

Behind each of those leaders, from the prime minister down, there has an army of often unseen public servants and health professionals working around the clock to support a nation-wide effort.

Of course, certain problems were not well anticipated. For example, the repatriation and quarantining of Kiwis returning home could have been better, while initially there was lax monitoring at the border and inconsistently

applied policing guidelines.

Admittedly, no one could have fully prepared for this pandemic. But the government and the public sector will have lessons to learn for next time. Taiwan was better prepared than many nations for COVID-19 due to its past experience with SARS in 2003.

PERSONAL LEADERSHIP FROM THE GROUND UP

New Zealanders right across the country also deserve recognition for having cooperated for weeks with severe, if not dictatorial, restrictions on their liberties and customs, even affecting the ways we mourn.

For many Kiwis, there's been painful loss of income, social isolation, and radical changes in sport and recreation. But we have each played a part in successfully breaking the chains of COVID-19 transmission.

The community has got in behind an elimination strategy that (so far) is working. The daily numbers of new reported cases peaked at 89 on April 5 and have declined since. The number of active cases (all reported cases minus recoveries) is declining. Health system overload has been averted.

There have, of course, been rule-breakers, some of whom even Ardern has called “idiots”.

But, fearful of either infecting others or being infected, most people have been supportive of the government's efforts. An international poll found 88% of New Zealanders surveyed “trust the government to make the right decision around the response to COVID-19” – significantly higher than in other countries including the UK, US, Canada and Japan.

OPPOSITION SCRUTINY AND UNITY

“On the big questions [...] there's no National or Labour, or Green or ACT or New Zealand First; just New Zealanders.” – Opposition leader Simon Bridges' speech to parliament about the declaration of a national state of emergency, March 25, 2020.

When rapid action was needed to pass emergency legislation in March this year, including a massive stimulus package, New

Zealand's parliament acted quickly, and with unusual unity across party lines.

Since then, while parliament has been adjourned, a special select committee chaired by National Party leader Simon Bridges, has been running public online hearings, with opposition members in the majority.

They have asked ministers and officials critical but constructive questions about the crisis response, holding the government and officials to account, as they should. Following a fractious exchange at the start, there has been relatively little political point-scoring.

Similarly, not long after the prime minister's announcement that she, her ministers and public sector leaders would take a 20% pay cut for the next six months, the opposition leader said he'd be doing the same.

RETURNING TO POLITICS AS USUAL BEYOND LEVEL 4 LOCKDOWN

I'd love to say the present politics of unity will last, but it would be naive to expect that.

Even today, the opposition leader moved to take the initiative from the government, pushing for more businesses to re-open sooner rather than later. Bridges' call preempted finance minister Grant Robertson's speech later in the day about opening more “safe” businesses.

The date for the next election is still set for 19 September. While Labour is riding high at the moment, this is likely to be temporary. After the Christchurch terrorist attack in March last year, Labour surged ahead of National in the polls, but soon fell back to second place.

By the time this immediate health crisis is over and the economic consequences start to bite, we are bound to go back to politics as usual. National could, for instance, attack the government over the economic fallout, and Labour would then have to defend its record.

And political fallout from national crises can really damage an incumbent government, if things go badly.

[the writer is Associate Professor for the School of People, Environment and Planning, Massey University]

All Bihar govt depts to start work from April 20



PATNA, APR 18 (PTI): All Bihar government departments will start functioning from April 20, a General Administration Department (GAD) order said.

All government officers of Group A and B will be present in the office on all working days while 33 per cent of Group C employees and those on contract will be present in the office of their total strength, the GAD order said.

All officers and

government employees will have to follow the national guideline issued to contain COVID-19.

Besides, officers and employees will have to wear masks, use sanitizer and practice social distancing in the office, the order said.

All employees, data entry operators, employees on contract, office attendants, assistants, stenographers posted in different sections/cells will work as per roster of the department, it said.

The Education department has also issued a separate order to open all its offices and concerned directorate and subordinate offices from April 20.

A Home department order said not more than five employees will gather at a particular place in the office.

Chewing pan, gutkha, tobacco and spitting in the office premises will be considered as a punishable offence, it said, adding that offices will be sanitized.

Odisha police takes initiative to address domestic violence during lockdown

BHUBANESWAR, APR 18 (PTI): The Odisha police has come out with an initiative through which policemen will contact women who had earlier reported domestic violence to enquire about their condition over phone during the ongoing lockdown, an official said on Saturday.

The special drive -Phone-Up Programme- has been launched across the state to deal with the problems of domestic violence in the crisis period, he said.

The initiative will be

implemented with the help of the State Crime Record Bureau, the official said.

The SCRB has contacts of women who had experienced domestic violence in the past, and they will be contacted to find out their present condition, a senior officer of the state police headquarters said.

If violence is reported, physical verification will be conducted to find out the condition of a victim and the matter will be

intimated to the Investigative Units for Crime against Women (IUCAW) for follow up action, he said.

"This will address the issues related to domestic violence against women during the lockdown imposed to contain the spread of COVID-19," the official said.

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik had, earlier, asked the DGP to take strong action against the persons involved in the domestic violence, he added.

World economy bound to suffer 'severe recession': IMF

LALIT K JHA WASHINGTON, APR 18 (PTI): The world economy, already "sluggish" before the coronavirus outbreak, is now bound to suffer a "severe recession" in 2020, IMF chief Kristalina Georgieva has warned and said the current crisis posed "daunting challenges" for policymakers in many emerging markets and developing economies.

Addressing the Development Committee Meeting during the annual Spring Meeting of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, the IMF Managing Director said a large global contraction in the first half of this year was inevitable.

She said the coronavirus pandemic hit the world economy when it was already in a fragile state as it was weighed down by trade disputes, policy uncertainty and geopolitical tensions.

"The global coronavirus outbreak is a crisis that is like no other and poses daunting challenges for policymakers in many emerging market and developing economies (EMDEs), especially where the pandemic encounters weak public health systems, capacity constraints, and limited policy space to mitigate the outbreak's repercussions," Georgieva said.

She said that the

world economy was in a "sluggish" recovery before the coronavirus outbreak, warning that it is now bound to suffer a "severe recession" in 2020.

She said the medium termed projections were clouded by uncertainties.

"Medium-term projections are clouded by uncertainty regarding the pandemic's magnitude and speed of propagation, as well as the longer-term impact of measures to contain the outbreak, such as travel bans and social distancing," she said.

However, most EMDEs are already suffering from disruptions to global value chains, lower foreign direct investment, capital outflows, tighter financing conditions, lower tourism and remittances receipts, and price pressures for some critical imports such as foods and medicines, she said.

"The world economy was in a sluggish recovery before the coronavirus outbreak and is now bound to suffer a severe recession in 2020," Georgieva added.

According to Johns Hopkins University data, the number of confirmed coronavirus cases surpassed two million globally and 144,000 people have died so far. The US is the worst hit with more than 700,000 COVID-19 cases and 35,000 deaths.

Rising malnutrition is expected as 368.5

million children across 143 countries who normally rely on school meals for a reliable source of daily nutrition must now look to other sources, the IMF official said.

Georgieva said that prospects had deteriorated sharply with the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Countries that were affected early such as China, South Korea, and Italy have suffered large contractions in manufacturing activity and services, exceeding the losses recorded at the onset of the global financial crisis, Georgieva said.

She said retrenchments in activity have been accompanied by a sharp re-pricing of financial assets amid rapidly deteriorating risk sentiment, large equity sell-offs, widening risk spreads, and reversals of portfolio flows to EMDEs.

Many commodity prices have fallen sharply, notably for oil.

"A large global contraction in the first half of 2020 is inevitable. Prospects thereafter depend on the intensity and efficacy of containment efforts, progress with developing vaccines and therapies, the extent of supply disruptions, shifts in spending patterns, the impact of tighter financial conditions on activity, and the size of the policy response," Georgieva said.

Now, books come to you on bicycles during lockdown

Thiruvananthapuram, Apr 18 (PTI): Are you disappointed over being unable to visit libraries or book shops during the lockdown period?

Don't fret, now your favourite titles will come straight to your doorstep, that too on bicycles!!

Bicycle buffs in Kerala capital have launched an initiative to help bibliophiles by bringing their favourite books to their doorsteps.

"Books By Bicycle" is an initiative by the bicycle lovers in Thiruvananthapuram, led by the Cycle Mayor Prakash P Gopinath.

Writer Johny ML gives necessary guidance to the move, it's organisers said here.

They offer the service of delivering English and Malayalam books and children's literature at the consumers' doorsteps that too with great discounts.

All the leading book houses including the DC Books, Mathrubhoomi Books, Poorna Books, Chintha Books, Green Books, Cost Ford, Maithri Books and Modern Books collaborate with Books by Cycle, a statement said here.

"There are so many people who could not visit book stalls, browse and buy.

You just need to let us know about the books you need," the

organisers said.

The volunteers, under the initiative, provide information on latest books and books in stock through their facebook page and group and Whatsapp group *BOOKS by BICYCLE*.

The books would be delivered inside the corporation limits, with 10 per cent discount.

The payment can be made by cash, google pay or payTM, it added.

21-month-old tests positive for coronavirus in Kolkata

KOLKATA, APR 18 (PTI): A 21-month-old boy has tested positive for COVID-19 in the city even as none of his family members exhibited any coronavirus-like symptom, a health official said on Saturday.

The infant, a resident of Uttar Panchanna Gram in south Kolkata, was shifted to the Beliaghata ID and BG Hospital from the Institute of Child Health (ICH) after he tested positive for COVID-19 on Friday night, the official said.

"The child was admitted to the ICH on April 16 with a severe cough. He is stable now but we have kept him under observation at the special isolation ward of the Beliaghata ID and BG Hospital," he said.

All 14 other members

of his family, including four children and two elderly persons, will be sent to a quarantine centre in Rajarhat as they had shared a three-bedroom flat with the infant, the official added.

The mother of the child is in the hospital while his father, a driver, has already been sent to the Rajarhat quarantine centre, he said.

The couple also has two daughters aged four six years, he added.

The father of the infant had visited Jharkhand on March 28 to bring back his younger brother, also a driver by profession, to Kolkata after the latter met with a road accident in the neighbouring state, the official said.

West Bengal Chief Secretary Rajiva Sinha said two more persons



died of coronavirus in the state, taking the toll to 12, adding that 23 fresh COVID-19 cases were reported in the state in the last 24 hours, taking the total count to 233.

Meanwhile, the state health department

started trial runs for testing the samples of persons suspected to be infected with coronavirus at its Virus Research and Diagnostic Laboratory (VRDL) on Saturday, a senior official said.

The testing at VRDL

of the samples of those suspected to have contracted the disease is expected to begin next week, he added.

At present, such samples are being tested at eight ICMR-authorised laboratories in the state.

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Dhoni arguably the greatest captain ever: Pietersen



MUMBAI, APR 18 (PTI): Former England batsman Kevin Pietersen says two-time World Cup-winning skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni is arguably the greatest captain ever.

When asked, Pietersen said it would be difficult to argue against Dhoni's greatness.

"It will be very difficult just with the weight of expectation to go against MS Dhoni because of what everybody expects from him, how he has to live his life and what he has been through captaining India and then captaining the CSK," Pietersen, who played 104 Tests, told Star Sports.

India tasted huge success under Dhoni, winning the 2007 World T20 and the 2011 World Cup at home.

India also won the 2013 Champions Trophy under the Jharkhand dasher, who has not played any international cricket since India's semi final exit from the ODI World Cup last July.

Dhoni, who has also been leading IPL franchise Chennai

Super Kings, has been a successful captain there also, winning the cash-rich T20 league thrice in 2010, 2011 and 2018.

The IPL was supposed to be his comeback event but it has been postponed indefinitely due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Meanwhile, former India batsman Gautam Gambhir, who led Kolkata Knight Riders to two IPL titles in 2012 and 2014, believes that the franchise could have added another one or two titles if they had got swashbuckling West Indian all-rounder Andre Russell earlier than it did.

Russell, known for hitting towering sixes, was the player of the series in 2019, when Mumbai Indians clinched their fourth title.

Imagine (Andre) Russell going for (Rs) 50 Lakhs to KKR and Pawan Negi for (Rs) 8 crore to (Delhi) Daredevils. I probably wished that he would have been there for 7 years when I was playing we would have certainly won one or two more," said the former left-handed batsman.

Australia wicket-keeper Carey not sure of IPL happening this year



MELBOURNE, APR 18 (PTI): Alex Carey was eagerly waiting to share the Delhi Capitals dugout alongside the great Ricky Ponting but the Australian wicket-keeper now feels he is unlikely to get the opportunity this year with the IPL indefinitely postponed.

Carey, who was scheduled to make his IPL debut with the Ponting-coached Delhi outfit, said only time will tell whether the T20 World Cup and the IPL can happen this year with the COVID-19 wreaking havoc across the globe.

"At this stage it's looking likely that (IPL) might not go ahead," Carey was quoted as saying by Cricket Australia on Friday.

"It would be nice to be in Delhi playing cricket - it was my first time selected to be part

of the IPL. I'm still really positive.

"I'm sure the world will move in the way we want it to, and there's still that hope later in the season the IPL will go ahead and the (men's T20) World Cup (scheduled for Australia), but we'll

wait and see," he added. With most countries under lockdown, Carey currently is in isolation with his wife Eloise and 19-month-old son Louis in Adelaide. He is also fine-tuning his wicket-keeping skills by throwing a golf ball against a wall

and catching it on the rebound. "I look at it as I'm healthy, safe, and getting to spend a lot of time with my family. It was a big couple of years on the cricket field, so to have to spend time at home is quite nice," the vice-captain of Australia's limited-over team said.

Premier League could return by mid-June in 'best-case scenario'



LONDON, 18 APR [THE GUARDIAN]: Premier League clubs have discussed resuming the season on the weekend of 13-14 June after Uefa wrote to domestic associations stating a desire they should finish their competitions by 31 July to leave August clear for the completion of the Champions League and Europa League.

The letter from European football's governing body formed the basis of a two-hour conference call on Friday that explored how the Premier League may be concluded.

While any resumption is being modelled on matches occurring behind closed doors, guiding the decision-

making is the overriding principle that the National Health Service's ability to treat those with Covid-19 should not be compromised and that it has to be at ease with the top-flight restarting. This means the Premier League wants the NHS to give the go-ahead and so the health service has power of veto.

In the best-case scenario clubs would have a "pre-season" from 10 or 14 May, giving players four weeks to regain fitness, with the minimum they would need set at two weeks. If training began three or four weeks before the weekend of 13 and 14 June, the opening days may feature players training individually or in small groups to ensure

the best protection before squads worked together as normal.

Protocols devised by the Premier League and club doctors and signed off by the requisite bodies would have testing at the forefront and would be in place to try to ensure a safe return to games. Those at matches - players, club staff, officials, security and media - would all have to be tested and there would have to be procedures to address the prospect of large groups of fans gathering outside stadiums.

Uefa's wish is that the Champions League and Europa League should each recommence from the week of Monday 3 August with the final of the former being staged on Saturday

29 August and that of the latter to be played a few days before.

If the Premier League was to restart on 13 June - a Saturday - it would allow seven weeks to finish the season. As 16 clubs have nine matches left and Manchester City, Sheffield United, Aston Villa and Arsenal have 10, the timeframe would appear to be long enough for the campaign to be finished comfortably.

It is understood the Premier League is conscious of a worst-case scenario given the unpredictability of coronavirus and how long it may take to tackle it. The pessimistic view is that no football can resume until October, seven months after the last round of matches.

NBA, players agree on plan for partial salary withholding



LOS ANGELES, APR 18 (AFP): With the NBA on hold, the league and players union said Friday they had agreed on a method for reducing player compensation should games be permanently cancelled amid the coronavirus pandemic.

"Through this agreement, and in order to provide players with a more gradual salary reduction schedule, partial reductions of 25% will begin with the players' twice-a-month payment due on May 15," the league said in a statement.

The league noted that the collective bargaining agreement between the league

and National Basketball Players Association stipulates that compensation of all players will be reduced in the case of a "force majeure" event such as an epidemic or government order.

The amount of salary lost is calculated based on the number of games missed.

Although no games have been played since March 11, players have continued to receive their full salaries and are to receive their full wages on May 1.

Under the plan, money withheld would be set aside and paid out to players if the season resumes, depending on how many games are played.

Senegalese wrestler keeps training with an eye on tiny but dangerous foe



DAKAR, APR 18 (AFP): One of the rising stars of traditional Senegalese wrestling, Moussa Diop has been driven off the beaches of Dakar, where he usually trains, and behind closed doors by the country's coronavirus lockdown. Diop, a fighter who "packs a punch", is due to fight again in June and is working at keeping up his training in an unfamiliar environment.

Diop fights as "Serigne Ndiaye 2", in homage to his father, but is known to friends as "Coriace." Every morning at seven he leaves the Medina, a poor neighbourhood in the centre of Dakar, to go to the "Body Max" gym which is opened especially for him by his trainer, Maguette Seydi, who has had to close his gym to the general public.

"Before, there were other wrestlers and other people who trained for fitness here. Now it's just me, my brother and the coach," Diop said.

Alone, the 24-year-old heavyweight works through his reps.

"A lot has changed," said coach Seydi. "We train in private, which I've never done before." "With coronavirus, I have to protect Serigne Ndiaye 2 and myself. We've increased our hygiene and we're working carefully," the coach said.

Traditional Senegalese wrestlers compete bare-handed and shirtless, in loincloths, in full stadiums. Their fights are broadcast live.

The 4,000 or so registered competitors are

"forced to follow the same rules as the general population: safe distance, no groups, no physical contact," says the wrestling federation vice-president Thierno Ka.

"If they train individually, there are no special guidelines. Many of them do road work, jogging, etc. It's their responsibility," he adds.

For these stars, adored by the public, respecting social distancing is a challenge.

"We are famous, a lot of people want to greet us and everyone wants to hold us," said Diop, adding that the virus is a different sort of opponent.

"It's normal for us to be suspicious, to be afraid. It's normal for us to be wary and scared, because you can't see this cunning guy."

After the gym, Diop does a cardio session on a vacant lot before practising his moves on the roof of the family home.

"There are some wrestlers who are not training," said Diop.

"But since I have a fight planned, I can't go without training. In a month's time, the coronavirus may go away and if it goes away and I have to fight, I have to be ready."

"I pray to God that in a few days time the coronavirus will be gone," he says.

His mother doesn't object to him continuing his training.

"All he has to do is take precautions, go to training sessions, come back, and not mix with other people," says Mbery Diop.

Remaining I-League matches cancelled in view of lockdown



NEW DELHI, APR 18 (PTI): The remaining 28 matches of the I-League will be cancelled due to the coronavirus-forced lockdown and Mohun Bagan will be officially declared as the champions, the committee running the league decided on Saturday.

The I-League panel, which met via a video conference, made the recommendation to the All India Football Federation's executive committee not to resume the I-League in view of the nationwide lockdown,

which will remain in force till May 3.

It will now just be a formality for the AIFF executive committee to endorse the recommendation of the I-League committee.

"The committee recommended that the 2019-20 season be deemed to be concluded. That Mohun Bagan be declared as the Hero I-League champion for the 2019-20 season as they stand atop current standings in the Hero I-League until the point of suspension on March 14, 2020," the AIFF said in a statement.

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Coronavirus cases in US cross 700,000, death toll more than 35K

LALIT K JHA

WASHINGTON, APR 18 (PTI): The number of the coronavirus cases in the US crossed 700,000 on Friday, while over 35,000 people have died from the disease, as President Donald Trump assured his people that America was “very close” to seeing the light “shinning brightly” at the end of the tunnel.

New York, the financial capital of the world, has emerged as the epicenter of the pandemic. More than 14,000 people have died in the city and over 200,000 lakh people have tested positive so far. Neighbouring New Jersey has more than 78,000 cases and 3,800 deaths.

President Trump told reporters at the White House on Friday that to date the US had conducted more than 3.78 million coronavirus tests, by far the most in any country.

“It’s not even close. In the hardest-hit areas such as New York and Louisiana we have also tested more people per capita than South Korea, Singapore, and every other country. The United States has the most robust, advanced and accurate testing

system anywhere in the world,” he said.

Trump said that the number of deaths could have been much higher if his administration had not mounted a massive effort against containing the coronavirus. Against initial estimated death of between one and two lakhs, Trump hoped that the death toll could be far less and around 65,000.

“It’s a horrible thing that happened to our country. This is a horrible thing that happened to 184 countries all over the world. It was a horrible thing and there was no reason for it. That should never, ever happen again,” Trump said.

Ultimate victory in this war will be made possible by America’s scientific brilliance, Trump asserted.

“There is nothing like us, there is nobody like us, not even close. I wish I could tell you stories what other countries, even powerful countries say to me, the leaders. They say it quietly and they say off the record, but they have great respect for what we can do,” he said.

The last few months have been among the most challenging times in the history of the nation, Trump said.

“This invisible enemy is tough and it’s smart and it’s a vicious that every day we are getting closer to the future that we all have been waiting for,” he said.

“I talk about the light at the end of the tunnel. We are getting very, very close to seeing that light shine very brightly at the end of that tunnel and it is happening,” he said.

According to data maintained by Johns Hopkins University, Over 35,000 people have died in the US and the country has 701,131 infections, the highest in the world.

Vice President Mike Pence said on Friday that despite the tragic loss of more than 36,000 Americans, the latest data show that the new cases are slow and steady on the West Coast.

“We continue to see cases and hospitalisations declining in the new greater New York City area, in New Orleans and Detroit and elsewhere,” he said.

A total of 154,142 people have died and 2,242,868 people have been infected by the novel coronavirus that originated in China in November last year, according to Johns Hopkins University.

Coronavirus response stirs Jerusalem sovereignty struggle

Israel’s arrest of senior Palestinian officials for “illegal” efforts to contain coronavirus and the Jewish state’s closure of a clinic have exacerbated a long-running row over the status of east Jerusalem.

Since the onset of the health crisis, Palestinian officials allege the Arab population of Israeli-annexed east Jerusalem has been overlooked by Israeli efforts to curb the spread of the virus.

Israeli police recently shuttered a COVID-19 screening facility in the east Jerusalem neighbourhood of Silwan -- the testing was unauthorised, they said, because it was only overseen by the Palestinian Authority, and not Israel.

“Our goal is to provide aid to the people of east Jerusalem who are intentionally being neglected” by Israel, Fadi al-Hadami, the Palestinian government’s minister for Jerusalem affairs, told AFP.

But meetings with “hospital doctors in Jerusalem, interviews with media calling on people to stay at home to fight corona(virus) -- they (Israel) consider these things violations,” he lamented.

Earlier this month, Hadami and Adnan Ghaith, the Palestinians’ governor of Jerusalem, were detained by Israeli authorities amid their on-the-ground response to the coronavirus crisis.

Both men were released within 24 hours. But the spread of COVID-19 in predominantly Palestinian east Jerusalem risks exacerbating political tensions that could put lives at risk.

At the heart of the dispute is the status of Jerusalem -- one of

the thorniest issues in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Israel captured that part of the city in a 1967 war and later annexed it in moves considered illegal under international law. It views the entire city as its undivided capital, banning any Palestinian government activity there.

The Palestinian Authority considers east Jerusalem the capital of its own future state and tries to maintain a presence on the ground.

The city’s status was meant to be resolved as part of a final peace agreement between the two sides, but the diplomatic process between Israel and the Palestinians has long been dormant.

Israeli police meanwhile enforce the prohibition of Palestinian political activity in east Jerusalem.

- Test clinics doubled -

A total of 81 people have tested positive for coronavirus in east Jerusalem, according to the Palestinian health ministry.

Israel recently doubled the number of its screening centres in Palestinian neighbourhoods in east Jerusalem from three to six following a petition to the supreme court by a rights group.

The detention of the senior Palestinian officials this month was nothing new -- Ghaith has been arrested seven times in two years, Hadami four times.

But this time, the men said, they were not asked about political activities but their work spreading awareness about the coronavirus among Palestinians in

Jerusalem.

The two men are from Jerusalem, but due to Israeli restrictions they work in Al-Ram, on the other side of an Israeli wall separating the city and the occupied West Bank.

“If I walk in the street the Israelis consider it political because of my position,” Hadami said.

Israel will carry out such arrests “until it is cemented in peoples’ minds that the city is subject to its authority” alone, Ghaith argued.

Since 2001, the height of the second bloody Palestinian intifada, Israel has closed more than 80 Palestinian institutions in Jerusalem, he said.

And since the US broke with decades of diplomacy and international consensus by recognising Jerusalem as Israel’s capital in December 2017, the Jewish state has “escalated the pace of its activity”, he added.

Israel prevents “any visibility of Palestinians in Jerusalem or activity of any kind.”

For Amal Jamal, a political scientist at Tel Aviv University, “on the one hand, Israel neglects the Palestinian part of the city and does not invest in it.

“On the other, it wants loyalty from the Palestinian population.”

Jerusalem Mayor Moshe Lion meanwhile welcomed the opening of the new clinics in the city’s eastern sector.

A spokesman for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu noted Israel was supplying equipment and training to the Palestinian Authority to help deal with the crisis.

The latest tensions have not so far erupted into violence in east Jerusalem.

Chile unrest simmers under pandemic lockdown

Six months after the largest social unrest in 30 years broke out, the streets of Chile are calm once again as the coronavirus pandemic forces the country into lockdown.

But experts say the underlying frustration and social inequality that sparked the mass demonstrations have not disappeared and are merely simmering under the surface, potentially ready to explode again once virus measures are lifted.

A mass movement against President Sebastian Pinera and his government erupted on October 18, initially triggered by a modest rise in metro fares in Santiago before mushrooming into general dissatisfaction with the cost of living and a system that seems to benefit the rich at the expense of all others.

For the last month, though, the epicenter of the protests in Santiago’s Plaza Italia, as well as other hotspot cities such as Valparaiso and Concepcion, have gone cool with the population barred from heading outside to prevent the spread of the deadly COVID-19 disease.

“The problems, whose public expression is currently suspended, are still there,” Patricio Zapata, a constitutional lawyer and member of the opposition Christian Democratic Party, told AFP.

Faced with a health crisis that has left more than 110 dead and over 9,200 infected, Pinera actually has the wind in his sails.

His approval rating plunged to less than eight percent in January -- with weekly protests raging -- but has climbed again to

‘Artemis Fowl’ to come out on Disney Plus on June 12

LOS ANGELES, APR 18 (PTI): The live-action movie, “Artemis Fowl” will be premiere on Disney Plus on June 12.

The film was set to have a worldwide theatrical release on May 29 but the studio, Walt Disney, recently decided to send it directly to its streaming service Disney Plus, reported Vareity.

Artemis Fowl, directed by Kenneth Branagh from a script by Irish playwright Conor McPherson, is an adaptation of Eoin Colfer’s book of the same name.

It follows 12-year-old Artemis (Ferdia Shaw), who finds himself in a battle of strength and cunning against a powerful, hidden race of fairies who may be behind his father’s disappearance.

Branagh said that Artemis Fowl would be as proud as I am that families around the world will now be able to enjoy his first amazing screen adventures together, on Disney Plus.”

The film will also features Colin Farrell, Josh Gad and veteran actor Judi Dench in pivotal roles.

almost 20 percent.

The good news may not last, though.

“We’re in something like a parenthesis, and there’s the chance that after the parenthesis, things will return to a similar situation” that existed before the unrest erupted, said Juan Pablo Luna, a professor in the political science institute at the Catholic University of Chile.

But “that will only happen if the consequences of the crisis are such that the people prefer to postpone their demands in order to satisfy basic needs in economic terms,” said Luna.

The inescapable economic downturn that the pandemic will wreak led the International Monetary Fund to warn that countries such as Chile, Ecuador or France “remain vulnerable to new protests, particularly if policy actions to mitigate the COVID-19 crisis are perceived as insufficient or as unfairly favoring large corporates rather than people.”

- Shaky political future -

Despite Pinera’s upturn in popularity, the virus pandemic will likely highlight the very inequality that fueled protests in a country whose health, education and pension sectors have been largely privatized since the Augusto



Pinochet dictatorship from 1973-1990.

“It seems to me that the crisis management will probably unveil new structural problems, like inequality, and in that case it seems obvious that the coronavirus will end up... hurting the government and provoking a new round of unrest,” said Luna.

For Zapata, Pinera’s political future looks shaky: “I can’t see how he can regain the majority’s trust,” he said.

Many accuse millionaire 70-year-old businessman Pinera of being out of touch with the poor and middle classes in a country that posts impressive macroeconomic figures that mask a low average wage, high costs of basic services and the privatization of a huge part of its health and care sectors.

Pinera has been widely criticized not just for those imbalances but also his management of the unrest, while the security services were accused of abuses by human rights groups.

He then scored another own goal when, during the mandatory quarantine, he stopped a convoy of official vehicles on Plaza Italia to take a picture in the now deserted protest epicenter.

“He’s always committing unforced errors... and it will take a lot for the people to regain trust in the government,” said Luna.

- Uncertain future - Pinera’s popularity had been starting to recover in part due to a decision to hold a referendum on changing the dictatorship-era constitution, which had to be postponed from

April 26 to October 25 due to the virus.

But he remains in the eye of a temporarily paused storm.

“I want this chapter to end so we can return to uniting for change politically, of the constitution, (with) everyone healthy for October,” said Maria Jose Gutierrez, a 30-year-old activist and supporter of constitutional change.

Zapata is unsure which way the crisis will affect the people.

It might “galvanize the forces of dialogue and cooperation, enabling great agreements,” said Zapata.

Or the subsequent economic downturn, “added to the discovery that the health crisis hit the poor and excluded sectors much harder, will generate a stronger, including more violent, return to social protests.”



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SAFETY FIRST! Couple, Ben Affleck and Ana De Armas took their dogs for a walk and shared a kiss through their masks in Los Angeles.

I've been built for this: Seth Rogen on living under lockdown

LOS ANGELES, APR 18 (PTI): Seth Rogen is having a blast while being in quarantine as the actor jokes that he has been practising self-isolation for many years.

During his virtual appearance on "Jimmy Kimmel Live", the 38-year-old actor shared his experience of being in quarantine.

"I've been built for this! We are not all in this together, because it has been great for me," Rogen quipped.

The actor also said that he has been smoking a "truly ungodly" amount of marijuana and indulging in his favourite hobby: pottery.

"So many of our friends wanted to do pottery, we got a literal third wheel, me and my wife. We have a kiln, we found a place that will deliver clay in this time of



quarantine," he added.

Rogen, who is married to Lauren Miller, also joked that he doesn't have to deal with kids during this time.

"Again, the fact that I have no kids is making this truly not that bad. I will be lying alone on my death bed having not talked to anyone in 15 years and I'll be like, 'It was worth it for the coronavirus s**t,'" the actor said.

Aries:

If you've been waiting for a green flag from the Universe, this is it, Aries! The time to set things into motion is now, despite the voice in your head that says you could fail or that there's potential of getting things wrong. The present moment is all that we have, right? The cards are also urging you to engage in physical activity or movement meditation. As a fire sign, you thrive on activity. Going into a space of complacency isn't great for your vibe. Oh, and mopping the floor doesn't count as cardio! Taurus:

There are days you wake up feeling like Beyoncé, and then there are days when the only constant is your RBF. Such is the cycle of life, Taurus! It's a constant and continuous dance between shadow and light. Instead of pushing against the flow, accept where you are and become an observer of your emotions. "This too shall pass" is a mantra that you need to keep in mind, now and for the rest of this period of self-isolation. The cards are also asking you to be mindful of what you are consuming by way of the media. Disengage with toxic news that can take you on a downward spiral.

Gemini:

There is more than enough to go around: a Universal truth that you are finally

acknowledging and accepting as your own truth. Spirit always wants the best for you, Gemini! It's your ability to receive that will determine what flows into your world. As such, this could be a good time for you on the work and money front (yes, despite the lockdown!). Be grateful for the prosperity that's coming through as you get smart with your funds and create a reserve that will serve you in the long run. Cancer:

Nurturing your inner child has been a big theme for you during this period of self-isolation. It's all about connecting with that wild, untamed energy within you, the one that has perfected the art of being playful, responding to the cosmic cues in a spontaneous manner, and living in the moment. When in doubt, choose creativity over productivity. Splash some colours onto a canvas, get crafty with what's available, or make yourself a big bowl of mac and cheese. If it makes you feel good, you're on the right track.

Leo:

Your physical space is an accurate barometer of your mental and emotional space. So what is the story your home is telling you? What are the unhealthy attachments and dated narratives you're

refusing to let go of? It's time to get real with yourself, Leo. It's time to free yourself from the burden of the past. You may not be able to give the space a massive makeover once you've decluttered, but you can play around with the existing elements and take on an upcycling project or two.

Virgo:

You know exactly what you want, Virgo. Don't doubt yourself or settle for less. Taking time to contemplate will give you clarity on your next move. Remember, learning to stand up for yourself is a big theme for you right now. It's true there are a few things or people who may disagree with your choices or decide to part ways. Don't consider this as a loss. What is no longer a vibrational match is simply being cleared out to make space for what is.

Libra:

It's taken you a while to get where you are, Libra. Be grateful for the journey. It's the inner work that has brought you to this point in your existence where you're no longer vibrating at the energy of fear. The world may or may not get the choices you're making, and that's okay. The only person you're answerable to is yourself. You are also likely to feel manifesting magick all around you this weekend.

Something you've been hoping and praying for will make its way into your existence in the most unexpected of ways. The key, as always, is to leave the how and why to the Universe.

Scorpio:

You've always known you're far more 'connected' than those around you. What the Universe is asking of you is to tune in and flex those psychic muscles. Oh, the divine downloads that will come through! You'll find that your dreams and visions are especially powerful at the moment. Keep a diary at hand so you can record what's coming through. There is a prophecy in here somewhere, Scorpio.

Sagittarius:

This could be a rather confusing time for you. Things that you once held sacred no longer resonate. At the same time, you are cultivating new rituals and habits. Change is the only constant and integral part of our existence. Accept where you are and let go of the need to be defined by boxes. Loss, too, might be a part of your narrative. What must go, must go, Sagittarius. Send it away with love and gratitude for it has served its purpose in your existence. PS: You are exactly where you need to be and everything is unfolding in accordance with the divine plan.

Capricorn:

We all have an army of angels, guides, and masters assigned to us at birth. We may not be able to see them through our naked eyes, but we can perceive them via our third eye or the 'ajna chakra'. Tune in, Capricorn. Feel their presence. Become aware of the many miracles they are manifesting on your behalf. As you do, be sure to express your gratitude for each one of them. It's true that there is a veil that separates us from the 'unseen world', but who says you can't look beyond the illusion?

Aquarius:

The trouble is, you've been doubting yourself a whole lot these days. Your spirit team is trying to send you important messages. All you need to do is tune in. Some of you may also find yourself guiding those who are walking on the same path as you. What's important to understand is that their truth may not be the same as yours. Instead of entrusting your beliefs upon them, inspire them to dig deeper.

Pisces:

Freedom comes from knowing you're not this or that. You are energy in its purest, most unadulterated form. So allow yourself to transcend the limitations created by your mind. Allow yourself to explore the territories you were afraid to venture into before. As for boxes you have been confining yourself to, they were never meant to be yours.

Bassist Matthew Seligman has died at the age of 64 after a battle with COVID-19



The musician is best known for his work during the '80s, including material with the Thompson Twins, Thomas Dolby and David Bowie.

Dolby shed light on Seligman's dire situation two weeks ago with the first in a series of Facebook posts chronicling his friend and former bandmate's condition. Earlier today he relayed a message he'd received regarding Seligman, stating that the bassist had suffered "a catastrophic hemorrhagic stroke from which he won't recover."

Seven hours later, Dolby confirmed Seligman's passing with a post that simply read "Matthew's gone."

Born in Cyprus and raised in England, Seligman initially came to prominence in the late 1970s as a member of the Soft Boys. The psychedelic group released two albums, 1979's A Can of Bees and 1980s Underwater Moonlight. Though neither were commercial successful, they've since become cult classics, inspiring such artists as R.E.M., the Flaming Lips, and the Replacements.

In 1981, Seligman joined synth-pop group the Thompson Twins. The bassist's tenure with the band was brief, as he only appeared on one of their albums, 1982's Set. The LP's opening track, "In the Name of Love" became a dance hit in the U.S., the group's first successful foray across the pond.

Dolby would also work with the Thompson Twins at this time, adding keyboards to Set and appearing with the band during several performances. The musician soon recruited Seligman to contribute to his solo work, spawning a creative friendship which would last for decades.

Seligman would perform on all five of Dolby's solo albums, including the debut LP The Golden Age of Wireless which featured breakout hit "She Blinded Me with Science." The track peaked at No. 5 on the Billboard chart, becoming synonymous with the '80s new wave sound.

"I first met Thomas to play Moog, not bass at all," Seligman explained during a 2019 appearance on the The Hustle podcast. The musician's Moog synthesizer part would appear on the "She Blinded Me With Science" single. "I'd never played Moog before. And the pattern with Thomas was he loved to give me things I couldn't do."

Follow-up album, 1984's The Flat Earth, made a concerted effort to get away from the sounds of "She Blinded Me With Science." "I think we were all inspired by Bowie," Seligman explained. "And Bowie had already by that stage established this pattern of going through several different versions of himself. And so I think Tom thought, 'Well, I could do that. I could have a new image.'"

The decision was polarizing. Flat Earth's most commercially successful single was "Hyperactive!," which peaked at No. 17 in the U.K. but failed to chart in America.

Following his stint with Dolby, Seligman became the musical version of a "gun-for-hire," contributing to a wide variety of artists' material. The bassist backed Bowie during the iconic singer's 1985 performance at Live Aid and would be featured on two of Bowie's releases the following year: the soundtrack to Labyrinth, as well as the song "Absolute Beginners" from the film of the same name.

Seligman's many other credits include work with Peter Murphy, Morrissey, Tori Amos and Sinéad O'Connor.

The bassist moved to Japan in the early 2000s, living there for years before returning to the U.K.. He transitioned from music to law, practicing as a lawyer who specialized in human rights while also working as a mental health advocate.

Seligman was diagnosed with COVID-19 in early April and admitted to St. George's hospital in London. He had been in a medically induced coma roughly two weeks prior to passing.

Taylor Swift cancels 2020 tour dates due to coronavirus outbreak

LOS ANGELES, APR 18 (PTI): Pop star Taylor Swift has cancelled all her 2020 live appearances and performances, including "Lover Fest East" and "Lover Fest West," due to coronavirus crisis.

The shows will now happen in 2021.

I'm so sad I won't be able to see you guys in concert this year, but I know this is the right decision. Please, please stay healthy and safe. I'll see you on stage as soon as I can but right now what's important is committing to this quarantine, for the sake of all of us, Swift wrote on

her Twitter account.

In a statement posted on the microblogging site, the singer said safety and well-being of fans is most important to her.

Health organisations and governments around the world have strongly discouraged large public gatherings for an undetermined period of time.

With many events throughout the world already cancelled, and upon direction from health officials in an effort to keep fans safe and help prevent the spread of COVID-19,



sadly the decision has been made to cancel all Taylor Swift live appearances and performances this year, the statement read.

Tickets held for each of

those shows will transfer to a new show date without action on the part of ticket holders. Fans seeking a refund should check in with Ticketmaster starting May 1.