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# SummitTIMES

Vol 05 | Issue 140 | Gangtok | Sunday | 31 May 2020

ON TOP OF THE NEWS

RNI No. SIKENG/2016/69420

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## CM UNVEILS REGULATIONS FOR LOCKDOWN 5.0 IN SIKKIM

*School reopening postponed, inter-district travel suspended for 15 days*

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 30 MAY:**

Chief Minister, PS Tamang [Golay], today announced regulations for Lockdown 5.0 in Sikkim.

Chairing a high-level meeting to decide the way forward as Lockdown 4.0 comes to an end, the Chief Minister announced provisions for the lockdown's next phase in Sikkim. Significantly, inter-district movement will be suspended for 15 days starting 01 June and the decision to reopen educational institutions has been

revoked. As things stand, senior classes at schools and colleges will now resume on 01 July. Just at the time when college and university students from outside the State must have been planning to get back to Sikkim to complete their mandatory 14-day quarantine in time for resumption of classes earlier scheduled for 15 June, the CM today directed that such students not be allowed back until 15 June. This presumably so that they can be quarantined for 14 days before being allowed to sit in classrooms.

Significantly, institutions to which these students will be returning have been directed to prepare their own quarantine facilities. Thus far, quarantine centres have been arranged and managed by the State Government.

Interestingly, this condition is also being extended to pharmaceutical companies in Sikkim.

As per details of the meeting shared by IPR Department, the Chief Minister also suggested that students from bordering states studying in Sikkim should be allowed to opt for

examination centres in their home states and directed the Education Department to immediately prepare a proposal in this regard.

Speaking on the immediate challenges, the Chief Minister appealed to the people to be receptive to new opportunities arising from the vacuum left behind by skilled and unskilled workers from outside who have left the State. The Chief Minister stressed that the State was not yet out of danger and hence there should be complete compliance of the lockdown guidelines.

## Viral Lab at STNM Hospital comes online

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 30 MAY:**

The RT-PCR testing facility at STNM Hospital is now operational and will fully functional from Sunday onwards, Director General and Secretary, Dr PT Bhutia, informed a high-level meeting chaired by Chief Minister PS Tamang [Golay], here at Samman Bhawan today. He also informed that samples of 53 secondary contacts of the COVID-19 positive patient which had been sent to North Bengal Medical College & Hospital have

also tested negative along with the 40 additional samples which had been awaiting testing there.

He assured that a dedicated team of doctors and medical staff will try their level best to clear the backlog at the earliest. Updates from Sikkim will be reflected on the ICMR website.

The Chief Minister welcomed the news and commented that this will ease the load being faced by the State especially with regard to the backlog of existing samples, an IPR press release states.

*turn page 2*

## First batch of medical team treating COVID-19 patient sent for quarantine



**GANGTOK, 30 MAY [IPR]:** The first batch of frontline healthcare workers treating Sikkim's first COVID-19 patient at the STNM Hospital in Sochakgang have completed their weeklong COVID duty this morning.

The team of 32 healthcare frontline warriors including one Medical Specialist, one Paediatrician, two Medical Officers and one Dental Surgeon along with Nursing Officers, medical attendants and sanitary attendants received a huge round of applause from the officials and staff of the hospital while on their way to government identified quarantine facility in Gangtok where they will be housed for another 14 days.

The officials and staff then welcomed and cheered for the second batch of 32 healthcare workers as they entered the COVID-19 dedicated hospital to take over charge of COVID duty.

Additional Medical Superintendent, Dr Yudok Bhutia, informed that samples of all the outgoing healthcare workers have been tested a day prior to the completion of their duty and the results are negative. They will be quarantined at designated centre for 14 days and will be tested again in a week. However, if their test results turn out negative, they will be allowed to leave for strict home quarantine for further period, she stated.

She informed that the State's first Viral Research and Diagnostic Laboratory (VRDL) at the STNM Hospital,

*turn page 2*

## Remaining Sikkimese stranded in Mumbai to be evacuated soon

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 30 MAY:**

Secretary Coordination (COVID-19), State Nodal Officer for Evacuation, Rinzing Chewang Bhutia, today informed a high-level meeting chaired by the Chief Minister, that most of the stranded Sikkimese people been evacuated from different parts of the country.

He informed that following up on directives received from the Chief Minister, Sikkimese people stranded in Maharashtra were contacted and added that many people have chosen not to return to the State as they have resumed their economic activities in their respective areas.

He updated that around 250 people who are willing to return to Sikkim will be evacuated in the coming days through a special train after approval from the Government.

Speaking about the process of evacuation, the Chief Minister added that the State Government is preparing a special strategy to evacuate people stranded in Maharashtra and Mumbai considering the high rate of infection there. He appealed to the people to be patient in the meanwhile.



**Dear Shopkeepers  
and Hawkers...  
Do you know?**

**After this long period of closure you should not worry about restarting your shops and handcarts. Your problems of capital will be solved and burden of interest will be eased.**

- Rs. 1500 crore interest subvention for small business and cottage industries has been announced under Mudra Shishu loan. Under this scheme beneficiaries can avail interest benefit of 2% for a year.
- A Rs. 5,000 crore package has been announced for the roadside hawkers. Under this 50 lakh street vendors can avail loan upto Rs. 10,000. Contact any Nationalized Bank/Co-operative Bank/RRB/NBFC/MFI to avail the benefit.

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**“ Let us pledge to make  
Aatmanirbhar Bharat  
(A self-reliant India) ”**

- Narendra Modi, Prime Minister



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## NERAMAC helps Sikkim farmers sell cardamom in Siliguri



**SUMMIT REPORT**  
**GANGTOK, 30 MAY:**

NERAMAC Sikkim under Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) helped the farmers of Heegaon, West Sikkim, by procuring large cardamom (Ceremna verity 1.8MT) directly from farmers and supplying it to the dealers in Siliguri during the time of lockdown. This crop being one of the important cash crops in the international and national markets

we have decided to take it to Siliguri so that buyers can access it, said Assistant Manager, NERAMAC Government of India, Durga Chettri.

NERAMAC was set up to support farmer/producers of North East getting good prices for their produce thereby bridging the gap between the farmers and the market and also to enhance the agricultural, procurement, processing and marketing infrastructure of the North-eastern Region of India.

# Minister apprises CM about North landslides



**WANGCHUK BHUTIA**  
**MANGAN, 30 MAY:**

Minister, Roads and Bridges cum Lachung MLA, Samdup Lepcha, Former Chairman, Nim Tshering Lepcha along with Panchayat met Chief Minister, PS Tamang (Golay) at

his residence on 29 May, 2020. During the meeting they congratulated the CM on the completion of one year of the SKM Government.

Minister Lepcha also reported about the landslide of Bey and damages

suffered in Sakyong Pentong, Upper Dzongu and requested for immediate relief and restoration. There was also a briefing about the Highway road as the NSH is connected with national security and for the general public of North Sikkim

and there was also discussion about the long pending bridges to be constructed at Ritchu, Meyongchu and Lanthay khola.

The meeting also discussed the Kabi Tingda landslide which had blocked the highway recently.

## Namchi Government College Quarantine Centre

**NAMCHI, 30 MAY (IPR):**

As the world is bracing an unprecedented change in the form of COVID-19, the State Government administration in Sikkim particularly the south district is also putting its best efforts to combat this disease. Now, it's been more than two months that this virus has gripped Sikkim, evacuation process of stranded Sikkimese is on track they are being brought via buses provided by Sikkim National Transport and some stranded people are choosing their own mode of transport to enter the state. These people enter via Melli or Rangpo Checkpost after which they undergo stringent medical checkup at the screening centre set up at Melli and Rangpo respectively, then these people are sent to the various identified quarantine centres.



Currently, the South District has a total of fourteen quarantine centres out of which nine is free and five are paid. Out of these centres a building at Namchi Government College has also been recognised by the authorities as one of the quarantine centre. Presently, a total number of 118 inmates are lodged here out of which there are 86 females and 22 males. Basic facilities like food, medical doctors and other important amenities are provided in this centre. Apart from this the nodal officer and

In-charge of this centre have come up with innovative ways to keep the quarantined people interested and occupied by requesting them to do basic household work like cleaning and dusting based on the willingness of the people. The Nodal Officer, incharge and staff of this facility is also organizing painting, essay and other various kinds of unique competition so as to encourage and express their work. For this kind of competition the facility also provided pen and notepads in addition

musical and dance event was also performed by frontline staff to uplift the spirits of the inmates.

As for food and snacks the kitchen staff serves the quarantined people with standard packets of vegetables and other meals consisting of high nutrients. Breakfast with milk tea is given in the morning additionally, local gentry has also started serving the people with food such as Selroti, momo and other items. This quarantine centre also has a Swab Sample Collection Chamber which has a build-in gloves for the use medical workers. The protocol laid by State Government for COVID-19 is followed carefully at this centre and the quarantined people are strongly requested to follow basic hand and respiratory hygiene and also practise social distancing at all times.

## Year of disappointment, disastrous management and diabolical pain: Cong on Modi govt anniv

**NEW DELHI, MAY 30 (PTI):** The Congress on Saturday described the first year of the Modi government as a "year of disappointment, disastrous management and diabolical pain".

Congress leader K C Venugopal said the six years of the Modi dispensation have seen fraying of bonds of empathy, fraternity and brotherhood with increase in acts of communal and sectarian violence.

Congress chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala said that at the end of six years, it appears the Modi government is at war with its people and is inflicting wounds on them, instead of healing them.

"It is inflicting wounds on Mother India," he said.

"This government is trying to fill the coffers of the select rich and is exploiting the poor and inflicting pain on them," Surjewala said.

The Congress also released a set of six "myths" about the government, highlighting its failures on various fronts and alleging that democracy is under threat and Parliament is being subjugated and side-lined under the BJP-led dispensation.

The two leaders said that while the people of the country are feeling helpless, the government has turned out to be heartless.

On the BJP's charge of the Congress playing politics over the COVID-19 crisis, Venugopal said the opposition party did not indulge in any politics and gave suggestions instead.

"Being a responsible opposition, it is our duty to raise the problems

faced by the common people. As opposition, we highlighted the failures of the government," he said.

Venugopal said the government "is totally insensitive" to the plight of migrant labourers and farmers and the Congress was only trying to highlight the problems and plight of common people and failures of the government in resolving them.

Surjewala also demanded that a virtual session of Parliament be convened immediately to discuss pressing issues and the due process be set in motion for holding of meetings of various parliamentary committees. "When 'pradhan sevaks' become autocratic, the first casualty is the democracy. In fact, democracy is under attack by the Modi government which got elected through this democratic process," he said. The Congress leader said subjugation of Parliament has become the norm.

"Sadly and tragically, Indian Parliament has been sidestepped under the garb and guise of COVID-19 pandemic."

He said standing committees and select committees have been side-lined and given a go-by. Even grassroots democracy of panchayats, zila parishads and municipal councils and corporations have been virtually non-functional with the bureaucracy ruling the roost and the entire country is being ruled directly by the central government.

"This can be fatal for any democracy and more so for Indian democracy. the Congress and 22 political parties have demanded that a virtual session

of Indian Parliament should be called forthwith and all standing committees and select committees of Parliament constituted for oversight on government should be activated without delay and the democratic process set in motion," he said.

He also said that justice has been denied to millions of people in the country as the subordinate judiciary has been non-functional for the first time in India's history for almost 60 days now. Venugopal said at the start of the seventh year, India stands at a crossroads with its citizens exhausted by the weight of this "government's sins, ineptitude and callous insensitivity to the widespread suffering".

"Over the last six years, India witnessed a steady increase in the politics of distraction and false noise, to the point that it has become a defining mainstay of Modi Government's administrative style. While it served the political interests of the BJP, it came at an unprecedented economic and social cost to the nation," he said.

"Prime Minister Modi would do well to remember that extraordinary promises beget extraordinary expectations. But as we shall see, even the most ordinary and mundane expectations of keeping a country running were beyond the capabilities of this Government which promised 'so much' and delivered 'so very little'," Surjewala said. Modi and his cabinet members had taken oath on this day last year for a second term in office.



## Trash trouble

**YOGEN THATAL**  
**SINGTAM, 30 MAY:**

The warning on the board clearly did not work in this corner of ward no. 02, Singtam Bazaar, East Sikkim.

## Sanitization programme by Doctor Safe team



**SUMMIT REPORT**  
**GANGTOK, 30 MAY:**

Doctor Safe team from Mount Distilleries Limited carried out sanitization work in Namcheybung constituency today, a press release informs.

The programme was flagged off by area MLA cum Advisor Excise Dept, EM Prasad Sharma, Secretary Excise Dept, TN Namgyal, Commissioner, Binita Chettri, SDM, BDO and other officials of various departments.

The process of sanitization was carried out in the Pakyong Public

Health Centre, Police Station,

Main market area, Haat bazaar, ATMs, Banks, Petrol pump, Traffic booths and the entire vicinity.

The Area MLA thanked Mount Distilleries Limited for carrying the sanitization to combat Covid-19. Earlier, Mount Distilleries Limited carried out similar sanitization programmes in various towns and villages and also covered quarantine centres at Mining School, Himalayan Pharmacy, Majhitar School etc.

## First batch of medical team...

inaugurated by Chief Minister, Prem Singh Tamang (Golay) on 21 May, is now fully operational. A total of 12 samples related to COVID-19 were tested at the laboratory on 29 May, all of which have tested negative after validation process. It has also been informed that tests of the samples brought back to Sikkim from North Bengal Medical College and Hospital due to backlog issues will now be resumed at the VRDL of STNM Hospital from tomorrow.

It may be recalled here that Sikkim reported its first COVID-19 case last week after the test result of a 25-year-old quarantined returnee came out positive. He is currently in the isolation ward undergoing treatment.

Dr Yudok Bhutia updated that the patient is in a stable and healthy condition and the viral load of the patient has gone down. He will be tested again next week for consideration of further plan of action by the hospital administration. It was informed that the patient has been cooperative throughout his treatment and added that the medical staffs on duty have shown immense positivity and bravery while treating the sole COVID positive patient of the State.

The entire frontline healthcare warriors were commended and applauded for their determination, grit and selflessness in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

## iral Lab at STNM...

Dr Bhutia further informed that the dialysis machine in Gyalshing was also ready and will be operational very soon.

The Chief Minister congratulated the Health Department on the completion of Dialysis Unit in Gyalshing and further informed that the Government has plans to open Dialysis Units in all the subdivisions. He directed the Health Department to prepare an estimate for the same.

~ SummitTIMES ~  
**CLASSIFIEDS**

### GENERAL LAND FOR SALE

General land 30X40 (3 Plots) available for sale at Tadong 6th Mile next to Harka Maya College. Flat Land no cutting required. Price 27 Lakhs (negotiable).

**Contact: 9800201335**

### LAND FOR SALE

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

### LAND FOR SALE

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

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## 5/6 COVID patients at DKK Bhawan recover

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 30 MAY:**

Five of the six people who had tested positive for COVID-19 at DKK Bhawan in New Delhi have fully recovered.

Chief Minister PS Tamang [Golay], made this announcement at a high-level meeting on COVID-19 here today.

He also appealed to the people not to panic and continue to abide by social distancing and all safety norms.

## Pictorial book for kids offers key info on COVID-19

**NEW DELHI, MAY 30 (PTI):**

A pictorial book seeks to answer key questions related to coronavirus to help five to nine year olds understand this unprecedented time in which a hidden virus has compelled them to stay at home - away from school, friends and the outdoors.

“Coronavirus: A Book for Children” is written by Elizabeth Jenner, Kate Wilson and Nia Roberts and has illustrations by Axel Scheffler. The book is published by HarperCollins India in partnership with Nosy Crow and is available in English, Hindi, Marathi, Tamil, Malayalam, Gujarati, Assamese and Nepali.

“There’s a new word you might have heard. You might hear people talking about it or you might hear it on the news. This word is the reason that you’re not going to school. It is the reason you can’t go outside very often or visit your friends. It might be the reason why the grown-up or grown-ups who look after you are at home. The word is coronavirus,” the book begins.

According to Tina Narang, publisher (children’s) at HarperCollins India, this is an “extremely relevant picture book” which will “help children understand this truly unique time in which a hidden virus has compelled them to stay at home - away from school, friends and the outdoors”.

The book, which also has an expert’s input - Graham Medley of the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, attempts to answer questions like what is coronavirus, how one catches it, is there a cure and what is going to happen next.

It says this is a strange time for everybody, and it’s happening all over the world. “But if we are all careful and we all stay at home, we are doing what we can to stop the coronavirus spreading. And that gives the scientists and doctors time to work out how to cure the illness and maybe stop people getting it altogether by using medicines and vaccines,” the authors say.

“One day, quite soon, though nobody knows exactly when, you’ll be able to visit people you love who don’t live with you, play with your friends, go to school again and do lots of other things that you enjoy but that you can’t do now,” the book says.

It ends on a positive note saying “one day, this strange time will be over”.

## Contribution towards CM’s Relief fund



**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 30 MAY:**

Nav Prabhat Club Ramaram from Ratepani Namthang constituency, South Sikkim, contributed Rs. 8300 towards the Chief Minister’s Relief Fund. The contribution cheque was handed over to the Minister,

Sanjit Kharel.

Members of the organization expressed gratitude towards CM, PS Golay for his efforts in fighting the COVID-19 pandemic. Thanking the members, Minister Kharel said that the government has always worked for the welfare of the people.

## Sikkim Judicial Academy organizes Discussion programme

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 30 MAY:**

Sikkim Judicial Academy organised an Interaction and Discussion programme on “The Recent Development in Criminal Law, Laws Relating to Bail and Surety and Recording of statements including Statements under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012” via video conference on 23 May, 2020.

A press release informs that the Resource Person for the programme was Justice AtulSreedharan, Judge, High Court of Madhya Pradesh, Jabalpur Bench. The participants for the programme were Sessions Judges of Sikkim Superior Judicial Service.



During the programme the Resource Person while highlighting the developments in Criminal Law, emphasized that there must be consistency in the bail orders. Further he mentioned that in cases such as Criminal Breach

of Trust or Cheating, the Court can don the role of a Mediator. This will bring down the number of cases in Courts.

He also enlightened on the importance of DNA Report in cases falling under the Protection of Children from Sexual

Offences Act, 2012. The Resource Person discussed the first case of rape and murder which had been solved with the help of DNA report in United Kingdom. The entire programme was very engaging and interactive.

## SRP welcomes Delhi Govt faux pas on citizenship of Sikkimese



**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 30 MAY:**

Sikkim Republican Party president, KB Rai, on Saturday welcomed the Delhi Government faux pas of mentioning Sikkimese as a separate entity - Subjects of Sikkim - as different from Indian citizens in the recent job advertisement. This mistake, it may

be recalled, has been condemned by the State Government and has since been withdrawn by the Delhi Government.

Mr Rai asserted today that the concerned advertisement has reminded everyone that the Sikkimese enjoy a unique identity and status in the country.

Addressing a press

conference, Mr Rai alleged that the Sikkim government and political parties here condemned the mistake in the advertisement just to please the Centre.

This was unfortunate since the advertisement served the larger purpose of reminding everyone that Sikkimese enjoyed a special identity

within the Indian Union.

He also took the opportunity to reiterate that several of Sikkim’s political demands and rights based on the terms of the Merger and the special status Sikkim enjoys were still pending with the Centre and need to be resolved at the earliest.

Politicians and officials in Sikkim should focus more on these pending issues instead of hyperventilating on issues like the oversight referred to earlier, he said.

On the Economic Revival Committee constituted by the State government, he said that the composition of the committee was not satisfactory since no one from the grassroots was included in it.

## Government not serious about Viral Lab, alleges SDF

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 30 MAY:**

Sikkim Democratic Front (SDF) spokesperson, MK Subbatoday alleged that the State government has never shown seriousness in expediting the setting up of testing lab for COVID-19 in the State and public pressure has forced the government to do so.

He further alleged that the State government has not taken this pandemic situation seriously and is still busy accusing the previous government. The state government should stop playing politics and work for the people, he added.

Addressing a press conference here today, MrSubba stated that in his budget speech the Chief Minister had said that Sikkim is fully equipped to handle the COVID-19 situation but the government has still

not been able to start its own testing lab even after two months of the lockdown.

“The state government was unmoved when the viral lab was not operational even after 10 days since its inauguration but it came into action only after North Bengal Medical College [NBMC] returned samples sent by Sikkim,” he alleged.

MrSubba stated that 641 labs have already been established in the country but Sikkim has not been able to get approval from ICMR for RT-PCR testing even after two months of lockdown.

He mentioned that there are 7 criteria in ICMR protocol to establish COVID-19 lab but the State government has been able to meet only 3 so far and still needs to procure equipments, kits and

technicians required for the testing lab.

SDF had repeatedly raised the issue of keeping the COVID-19 dedicated hospital and general hospital in separate locations, he said.

“Earlier the ruling party accused us for doing politics when we raised this issue but after one month the state government has now proposed STNM as COVID-19 dedicated hospital and Central Referral Hospital for general patients,” he expressed.

On the same, he added that keeping COVID-19 dedicated hospital and general hospital separate is according to protocol and guidelines of the centre but the state government has been playing with the lives of the people by keeping both hospitals together.

He further alleged that there are lots of contradictions on COVID-19 related figures issued by different authorities of the government and that it shows the confusion of the government over figures. He reiterated the demand of the party to the government to issue a white paper on COVID-19 facilities in the State.

While mentioning that Glenmark Pharmaceutical Company is conducting research on anti-viral drugs, he suggested the state government immediately coordinate with Glenmark Pharmaceutical Company unit at Ranipool to get anti-viral drugs for the people of Sikkim if the research is successful. He also suggested the constitution of an expert medical advisory committee to make suggestions to the government in this crisis.

## Homestay Association of Sikkim formed



**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 30 MAY:**

Homestay Association of Sikkim [HAS] has been formed to bring all homestays in the State together under one umbrella. The newly formed organisation plans to work for the welfare of homestay stakeholders and also to support and guide upcoming stakeholders in this sector.

An ad-hoc committee led by Jigme Dorjee Bhutia as president has been formed to carry forward registration and other required process of the organisation. The adhoc committee has Priya Basnett as vice-president, Gyatso T Lepcha and Pintso Gyatso as general secretaries, Sonam Peggyla and Nitisha Basnett as secretaries [East] and TN Wangdi as secretary [South].

Addressing a press conference here today, HAS president, Mr Bhutia expressed that work had been on for some year to form this association and finally

it has happened during this lockdown. He added that the association has representations of homestays from all four districts.

He mentioned that homestays are also a badly hit sector due to the lockdown and the organisation plans to place suggestions to the government to provide relief to homestays in the present situation.

HAS general secretary [I], Mr Gyatso mentioned that there are over 1300 homestays in the State and the organisation has been working to bring them together on one platform.

The immediate plan of the organisation is to place suggestions to the government to provide relief to homestay owners and the organisation also has long term plans for the welfare and development of homestays in the State. Likewise, HAS general secretary [II], Mr Lepcha stated that the organization is looking forward to homestays being included in the tourism policy of the

State.

Mr Lepcha mentioned that earlier homestay was seeing as an alternative source of income but now it has become a primary source of income for 80% of homestay owners.

“The main idea of the organisation is to take forward sustainable and responsible tourism in the State and to smoothen the system of homestay and rural tourism,” he said.

HAS secretary, TN Wangdi mentioned that the adhoc committee is presently working on registration of the organisation and taking suggestions and consultations from all stakeholders to prepare its memorandum. Secretary, Ms Peggyla expressed that homestay owners can contact the organisation in case of any difficulty or issue.

HAS secretary, Ms Basnet stated that if the government permits, homestays in the State are all set to host local people of the State by following all protocols during the lockdown.

## NGO urges Assam to strictly implement COTPA to protect children, youth from tobacco products

**GUWAHATI, MAY 30 (PTI):**

A non-government organisation has urged the Assam government to strictly implement the Cigarette and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA), 2003 to protect children and youth from tobacco products, the NGO said in a release on Saturday.

The NGO, Voluntary Health Association of India (VHAI), made the appeal on the eve of the World No Tobacco Day.

The COTPA regulates trade and commerce and prohibits the advertisement of tobacco products. Tobacco use is one of the major risk factors for non-communicable diseases, which is one of the major co-morbidity factors of COVID-19, it said.

The NGO has also launched an awareness and signature campaign in Guwahati against tobacco use, the release said.

Quoting the Global Adult Tobacco Survey

(GATS-2) report, it said that the prevalence of tobacco use in India decreased from 34.6 per cent to 28.6 per cent between 2009 and 2017 whereas, in Assam, it increased from 39.3 per cent to 48.2 per cent during that period. “The World Health Organisation’s theme for this year’s World No Tobacco Day is to alert the youth against the tobacco industry’s tactics to hook them to the addictive products,” the release said.



**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.

<p><b>Symptoms of nCoV</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Fever</li> <li>● Difficulty in breathing</li> <li>● Dry Cough</li> <li>● Severe acute respiratory syndrome</li> <li>● Pneumonia - like symptoms</li> </ul>	<p><b>Precautions to Prevent nCoV</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Wash your hands often with soap.</li> <li>● Use an alcohol based hand sanitizer</li> <li>● Observe good personal hygiene.</li> <li>● Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands.</li> <li>● Avoid contact with people with possible symptoms.</li> <li>● Avoid contact with animals and consumption of undercooked meats.</li> <li>● Avoid travel to nCoV affected places.</li> <li>● Wear a mask if you have respiratory syndrome and cover your mouth while coughing or sneezing.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Treatment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Treatment is symptomatic and supportive, based on the patient's clinical condition.</li> <li>● No vaccinations available as of now.</li> <li>● Visit Doctor in case symptoms detected.</li> </ul>	<p>If you seek help, you may call :</p> <p>-Toll free no. 104</p> <p>District surveillance Officer</p> <p>EAST : 7028372100</p> <p>WEST : 9593297809</p> <p>NORTH : 9641957468</p> <p>SOUTH : 7407691463</p> <p>New STNM</p> <p>AMS : 9434711402</p>

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



## Rediscover the Thrill of Competition After employability, instill the desire to excel

Unemployment has a habit of remaining in the news. Or maybe because it is on everyone's minds, that it appears to be in frequent discussion as well and through that affiliation, also getting mentioned often in press releases and becoming standard fare in political pronouncements. Meanwhile, the State Government started with a youth-empowerment year a little over a decade ago and has since developed the initiative into skill development which now has a directorate of capacity building dedicated to it, an institute and livelihood schools in all territorial constituencies and now a whole start-up programme dedicated to supporting young entrepreneurs. Scholarships are also on offer, as are attractive student loans. In a scenario such as this, the focus of those wishing to address the challenge of unemployment should be in expending more energy on ensuring that the skill development initiative, the effort which makes the job-seekers employable, are more effectively carried out. Unfortunately, more energy has traditionally been directed at embarrassing the clutch of officers serving on service extensions. The aspiration for government employment is still so strong that these "extensions" still irk many even though their retirement will only open up a sliver of positions. But can one really blame the unemployed who still aspire for government employment at the cost of compromising their chances in private sector advancement or self-employment options? The salary differential is so staggering and the work ethic requirements so relaxed, that it is really unfair to shoo the youth away from government employment and have them pursue opportunities in the private sector.

But this, in a way, is a lost pursuit. There can never be enough government jobs for the youth hoping for employment and it is only a matter of time before government offices are slimmed down and openings shut even tighter. It goes without saying that when the crunch comes, the survival instinct will kick in and the youth of Sikkim will explore and attain new options and livelihoods. But why wait for resoluteness to evolve only when the going gets tough. Sikkim is undoubtedly among the few places which are lucky enough to have the chance of staving off tough times if they "get going" while the going is still good. Few regions have been as pampered and are as blessed with lucky breaks and opportunities as Sikkim is. For a State that has no political clout by way of parliamentary strength in Delhi, Sikkim has had a good run with the powers-that-be in getting its demands met and problems resolved even in these times of absolute "sevaks" when larger states have been cold shouldered. Many opportunities have been created and continue to be offered. Even a cursory listing of new investments in Sikkim will bear out that opportunities abound in a diverse range of activities, from trading to academics to white-collar jobs. What is now required is for these opportunities to be seized.

Unfortunately, this is where Sikkim is found lacking. Opportunities require hard work for success. It is this drive that Sikkim needs more of. The technical qualifications apart, every job requires only a few more qualities from prospective candidates - diligence, commitment to quality and a tenacity to compete. The faster Sikkim rediscovers these strengths, the sooner the opportunities will start delivering. The Livelihood Schools, apart from the subject-specific trainings they impart, should also include sessions on work-culture and introduce trainees to real achievers from around them and from elsewhere so that they complete their courses inspired to sweat it out, compete, stumble and stand up again.

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# Why lockdown life is a lot like insomnia – a philosopher of sleep explains

PATRICK LEVY  
THECONVERSATION.COM

As a philosopher who researches insomnia, I'm struck by how similar the lockdown experience is with lying awake through the night, waiting for either sleep to come or the new day to dawn.

In particular, it is this warped relationship with time and the type of discomfort involved that makes the two experiences similar. I've found this analogy of likening lockdown to insomnia helpful for understanding the current situation and for evaluating how we respond to it.

Inspired by the work of the philosopher Emmanuel Levinas, I have identified three features common to most forms of insomnia that can be revelatory for those living under lockdown. These are the waiting involved, along with the watchful and wasteful feelings that accompany it.

The insomniac, regardless of how they pass this time, is in a time of waiting. They wait for the soft relief of sleep – tantalisingly close and yet so far. But, when things get desperate enough, they also wait for the return of daylight, which justifies the abandoning of this waiting, the getting back up and returning to the activities that order our lives.

Either way this waiting is torturous and anticipatory. It involves repeated imaginings of, and reachings for, that which we long for.

Under lockdown we are, at a societal level, thrown into a kind of waiting akin to that of the insomniac in bed. Boredom in the face of this waiting quickly morphs into desperation.

We become so sick of our waiting that we imagine and anticipate not only the successful treatment of COVID-19, and a return to "healthy" normality, but moreover any future



beyond this drawn-out time of confinement.

This anticipatory structure of insomnia is connected to a second and equally cruel aspect of sleeplessness. The insomniac is all too aware of their situation. They hear every tick of the clock as they wait.

They sense sleep, just out of reach. The familiar becomes strange and the unnoticed is drawn into view: the ambient noises of the building, the beat of their own heart. Just so under lockdown. Our waiting at home is not easily ignored or avoided by distractions and activities. Instead, we remain active, hyper-aware and distractedly drawn to the constant stream of news. And yet all this information leads us nowhere. It merely throws us back into the mundane and into an awareness that we are still waiting.

This watchful waiting in insomnia is experienced as wasteful. The suffering from insomnia is riven with the knowledge not only of our powerlessness to end this waiting but also that one is wasting something oh so precious: not just one's time but one's time of rest.

The thought, "I should be asleep"

echoes through every experience of insomnia, as does the imagined loss of productivity in the following day ("I will pay for this tomorrow"). These echoes bring with them agitation, anxiety and anger.

Similarly, in lockdown, we know we are powerless to hasten the end of our waiting but feel pressure to be productive. We should enjoy this extra time we have on our hands, either spending it with our loved ones or taking the chance to improve ourselves. Needless to say, for many such pressure is oppressive. They feel lockdown as time wasted.

VICIOUS CIRCLES, INTERRUPTED

These features of insomnia and lockdown have a viciously circular structure. One waits for sleep and thus it never comes. One is aware of this absence and thus the experience of waiting is intensified. One grows angry at this futile passing of time, this inactivity without reward.

In this sense, the experience of insomnia perpetuates and strengthens its grip on us. While suffering from lockdown does not extend the lockdown, it certainly intensifies the suffering.

Vicious circles are by their very

nature hard to escape and they are harder to escape the longer we inhabit them. But it is possible to interrupt these structures.

Research increasingly suggests that the best method of escaping insomnia is to avoid a direct, one-on-one conflict with it. Give up on the time of waiting and retreat to the kitchen or the living room. Anywhere but the bedroom, anywhere but the place of sleep(lessness). Locked down, such a change of place is limited.

But we can reconceive and change the spaces we inhabit. This can be as simple as changing a chest of drawers into a desk and inviting friends, via video, to join you around it.

It can be the changing of the street and the park into spaces for conversation and support, at a safe distance. Staying at home does not mean that this home and its locale, cannot be changed, reshaped or reimaged.

The other fundamental element of insomnia that we can take control of is how we spend our time. Through coordination, compassion and consideration, we can make time for each other. Time formed around one another, put aside for checking in on one's elderly neighbours or for a call with an immunosuppressed friend, is time broken free from the isolation and monotony of lockdown.

This is no guarantee. The analogy with insomnia should make, at least, this fact clear. Insomnia will probably return and lockdown will probably continue to be difficult. Our struggles, anxieties and fears will not disappear. But that doesn't mean we must face them alone. In fact, that's precisely what we shouldn't do.

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# Hong Kong: how China's new national security law subverts the territory's cherished rule of law

CAROL ANNE GOODWIN JONES  
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Tensions are running high in Hong Kong at a decision by China's ruling body, the National People's Congress (NPC), authorising its standing committee to draft a national security law for Hong Kong. The decision, drafted in secret, is likely to become law by August.

It should never have come to this. Article 18 of Hong Kong's Basic Law – the territory's de facto mini-constitution that came into effect after the British handover in 1997 – specifically limited Beijing from applying national laws to the territory, except in matters of defence and foreign affairs. The NPC decision changes all that. It not only authorises the standing committee to draft such a law, it allows the law to be inserted into Hong Kong's Basic Law by promulgation.

This completely by-passes the Legislative Council, the law-making body of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) government, and creates new national security crimes. It talks, for example, of "unflinchingly" preventing, stopping and punishing any conduct that seriously endangers national security, such as separatism, subversion of state power, or organising and carrying out terrorist activities. Any activities by foreign and overseas forces that interfere "in any fashion" in the affairs of Hong Kong, and any overseas forces that use Hong Kong to carry out "separatist, subversive, infiltrative or destructive activities", will be punished.

Articles 3 and 4 of the decision also specifically reiterate the HKSAR's obligation to enact its own national security law. Hong Kongers thus face the dubious prospect of having not one but two national security laws.

UNILATERAL DECISION

The US Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, claimed the NPC's decision means Hong Kong is no longer politically autonomous from mainland China. The US will could now revoke the special status it accords Hong Kong, and which gives it favourable trading terms. This, married with further US sanctions, is a threat to China's economy. Worse still, it would be fatal to Hong Kong's standing as one of the world's major financial centres.

Under a 1984 Joint Sino-British Declaration, Britain retains a watching brief, sanctioned by an international treaty lodged with the UN. Once upon a time, such treaties meant something. Despite this, apart from a few stalwart voices, the UK's initial response was muted, despite the fact that Hong Kong was a British colony until 1997. However, on May 28, the NPC decision finally prompted the British government to offer

300,000 Hong Kongers sanctuary in the form of the right to live in the UK.

With China becoming a political hegemon as well as an economic powerhouse, its leaders feel able to unilaterally declare the joint declaration obsolete, bar British critics from entering Hong Kong, and denounce all foreign criticism as foreign interference.

CHIPPED AWAY

It would be a mistake to see the NPC's decision as just another aspect of the US-China trade war. It comes after a series of protracted and increasingly unsuccessful attempts by the Chinese Communist Party (CPC) to capture the hearts and minds of Hong Kong people. There was a short window, just after the 1997 handover, when optimism was high and this goal might have been feasible.

But the years since 1997 have been marked by sniping attacks on Hong Kong's legal system, chipping away at what Hong Kongers see as the territory's core value: the rule of law. Its independent judges have been termed "administrators" who must toe the party line. Retiring judges have spoken of the impending demise of the rule of law.

Since 1997, the Chinese government's response to popular protest has been single-minded and blunt repression. Invariably, such conflagrations leave only two escape routes: submission or retraction.

This is what happened in 2003, when HKSAR government first proposed a national security law, as it was obliged to do under Article 23 of the Basic Law. This aimed to prohibit any act of treason, secession, sedition or subversion against the Chinese government.

The broad, sweeping nature of its provisions, which included the prohibition of foreign political organisations or bodies from conducting political activities within the region, caused a storm of protest – on July 1 2003, over 500,000 people demonstrated against the proposal. After a standoff, it was eventually withdrawn.

The NPC latest decision reveals that while the 2003 bill was gone, it was not forgotten. Frustrated with the inability of the HKSAR government to pass such legislation, China secretly planned its own law. In the meantime, it nibbled away at some of Hong Kong's other legal defences.

In 2019, the HKSAR government was pressured by Beijing to introduce a new extradition law. Overnight, Hong Kong, once seen as a city of law, became a city of street battles. The massed ranks of para-military police, equipped with tear gas, pepper spray, water cannons and rubber bullets, openly

fought protesters on the streets.

There was violence from both protesters and the police, but while numerous by-standers and protesters felt the full force of the HKSAR's legal and para-military capability, demands for an independent inquiry into police conduct have been rejected by Carrie Lam, Hong Kong's chief executive. My own phone buzzed with messages from former students caught up in events: one messaged that the friend standing beside her had just been hit in the stomach with a rubber bullet. My former student was acting as a frontline medic and, though clearly identified as such, was forced "run for her life" from the police.

Beijing deemed her and others like her "subversives", "secessionists", and "terrorists". This word has now been added to the lexicon of crimes by the NPC's new decision, reflecting China's recent predilection for defining its opponents as "terrorists".

IGNORING THE INTERNATIONAL ORDER

The NPC decision states that China will oppose "foreign interference" in Hong Kong and will punish foreign forces which use Hong Kong to carry out "separatist, subversive, infiltrative or destructive activities". In their own struggle for power before 1949 this is exactly how Chinese communists used Hong Kong. Ever since then they have worried that their enemies would also use the territory as a "base for subversion" to overthrow the communist regime. It is perhaps no wonder, then, that given the domestic and international challenges to President Xi Jinping's authoritarian regime, China sees the Hong Kong protests through a lens of paranoia about the rest of the world.

The NPC decision does not prohibit sedition, treason, theft of state secrets, or ties with foreign political organisations. But it would be naive to think that the new law will ignore such activities. The NPC's decision also states that bodies such as the Ministry of State Security will be allowed to operate in Hong Kong – which could mean spying on schools, universities, the media and monitoring people's personal social media accounts for any sign of dissent.

The possibility that the new national security crimes may violate the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights can no longer be relied upon to check China's intentions. As its dismissal of the Joint Sino-British Declaration suggests, China feels able to disregard laws it sees as against its interests. On Hong Kong as elsewhere, Beijing is prepared to challenge the rules-based international order.

[the writer is Reader, Birmingham Law  
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# Rathayatra sans devotees in the time of coronavirus

**BHUBANESWAR, MAY 30 (PTI):** The Shree Jagannath Temple Managing Committee (SJTC) Saturday recommended to the Odisha government to conduct the annual Rathayatra of Lord Jagannath in Puri sans devotees in view of the coronavirus pandemic.

Rathayatra is scheduled to be held on June 23 in Puri.

Keeping the SJTC's recommendation in mind, the Odisha government has asked the Indian Railways not to run trains to Puri.

The SJTC decision in this regard was taken at a meeting of the SJTC which was chaired by Gajapati Maharaja Dibyasingha Deb, traditionally considered the prime servitor of the deity.

The committee also recommended that the state government arrange live telecast of the annual festival so that lakhs of devotees across the globe can witness it on TV.

Deb said most of the events of the grand



festival should be live telecast keeping in view their sentiments.

We have recommended holding the Rathayatra without the presence of devotees on the Grand Road in front of the 12th century temple in Puri. It is for the state government to take a final decision on conducting the Rathayatra, Deb told reporters after the meeting held through video conferencing.

The devotees, he said, should not congregate in Puri for Rathayatra keeping in mind the pandemic. If we allow

devotees to participate in the festival this year like in the previous years, it will not be possible to maintain the social distancing norm which is essential to stop the spread of coronavirus.

Deb said the SJTC also suggested to the state government to keep the Grand Road on which the chariots of the dieties will roll on Rathayatra free from crowds. Even the residents of Puri town should not be present on that during the festival.

Replying a question, he said the SJTC has decided not to allow

devotees either to Shree Jagannath Temple or Gundicha Temple, the destination of the chariots, at Puri on Rathayatra even if the the central and state governments lift the lockdown after two days.

This is because it will not be practically possible to control the crowd if we open the doors of the temples.

Therefore, the SJTC has decided to prohibit entry of devotees into the shrine at least till the completion of Rathayatra," he said.

According religious scriptures and the puranas, the Lords bathing rituals (Snana Jatra), car festival (Rathayatra Jatra) and other rituals must be observed as per the tradition. The Rathayatra festival can be observed without the presence of devotees. But we will observe the rituals as they are being performed since ages, Deb said.

The Snana yatra rituals on June five will be conducted by a limited number of servitorss inside the premises of the temple in the absence of devotees, he said.

A senior official of East Coast Railway said Due to the advice received from the government of Odisha, it has been decided to terminate Puri-based trains at Bhubaneswar till further advice, a senior official at East Coast Railway said.

Accordingly, the Purushottam Express starting on June 1, 2020, will originate from Bhubaneswar instead of Puri.

Similar will be the case with Sealdah-Puri Duroto Express, the official said.

## 513 domestic flights carrying 39,969 passengers flew in India on Friday: Puri

**NEW DELHI, MAY 30 (PTI):** A total of 513 domestic flights carrying 39,969 passengers were operated in India on Friday, Civil Aviation Minister Hardeep Singh Puri said on Saturday.

Domestic services resumed in India after a gap of two months due to the coronavirus lockdown.

Indian carriers have operated a total of 1,827 flights till Thursday -- 428 on Monday, 445 on Tuesday, 460 on Wednesday and 494 on Thursday.

Puri said on Twitter on Saturday: "Day 5. 29th May till 2359 hrs. Departures 513. 39,969 passengers handled. Arrivals 512. 39,972 passengers handled." A departure is counted as a

flight during the day.

During the pre-lockdown period, Indian airports handled around 3,000 daily domestic flights, aviation industry sources said.

In February, when the lockdown was not imposed, around 4.12 lakh passengers travelled daily through domestic flights in India, according to Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) data.

Airports in West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Telangana and Tamil Nadu have been allowed to handle a restricted number of daily flights as these states do not want a huge influx of flyers amid the rising number of COVID-19 cases.

While domestic services resumed in Andhra Pradesh on Tuesday, they restarted in West Bengal on Thursday.

Though domestic flight operations across the country began on May 25, they could not be restarted in Kolkata and Bagdogra as the West Bengal machinery was involved in relief and restoration work after cyclone Amphan's devastation.

A total of 16 automatic passengers on seven different flights, including 13 who travelled by IndiGo, have tested positive for COVID-19 since the resumption of domestic air services.

## Over 21 lakh migrant labourers have returned to UP: Official

**LUCKNOW, MAY 30**

**(PTI):** More than 21 lakh migrant labourers have returned to Uttar Pradesh from different parts of the country on over 1,500 special trains so far, a senior state government official said on Saturday.

The Indian Railways started Shramik Special trains on May 1 to facilitate the movement of migrant labourers back to their home states during the coronavirus-induced nationwide lockdown.

"So far, over 21 lakh migrant labourers have come back to the state on as many as 1,550 trains. The maximum

number of trains -- 257 -- has arrived in Gorakhpur on which 3.31 lakh migrant labourers returned," Additional Chief Secretary (Home and Information) Awanish Awasthi said.

He said 109 trains arrived in Lucknow, 125 in Jaunpur, 111 in Varanasi and 99 in Deoria.

Awasthi said the maximum number of trains (520) arrived from Gujarat, followed by Maharashtra (398) and Punjab (233).

"The chief minister has directed that food and water should be arranged for the

migrant labourers who are returning from various states. They should be taken to quarantine centres," he said.

"During medical screening, the labourers, if found fit, should be provided with ration kits. Those who are found to be medically unfit should be sent for treatment," he said. The lockdown has had a devastating impact on the economy as well as on the livelihoods of lakhs of migrant labourers. With no money to buy food or pay rent, labourers across the country have been returning to their native places.

## 144 new COVID-19 cases in Assam; total rises to 1,024

**GUWAHATI, MAY 29 (PTI):** Assam crossed the 1,000-mark in COVID-19 cases on Friday with 144 new patients, including six air travellers, and the tally stood at 1,024 in the state now, Health Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said.

Eighty-nine COVID-19 cases were reported in the night, 25 in the evening and 30 during the day.

A dedicated treatment unit for COVID-19 patients at the Guwahati Medical College Hospital (GMCH) became functional from Friday, the health minister said.

A repatriation flight from Kuwait, carrying 155 passengers under the Vande Bharat Mission scheme, arrived at the Lokpriya Gopinath Bordoloi International Airport in the evening, a spokesperson of the Airports Authority of India (AAI) said.

Among the 89 cases reported in the night, 30 were from Kamrup, 17 from Tinsukia, 14 each from Guwahati and Dhubri, 10 from Cachar and four from Dhemaji.

Twenty-five new COVID-19 cases were detected in the evening -- six air travellers, 11 from Kamrup (Metro) and eight from Hojai, Sarma said.

Among the 30 new cases reported during the day, 16 were from Golaghat, six from Karimganj and two each from Lakhimpur, Cachar, Hailakandi and Karbi Anglong, he said.

Twenty-four patients were discharged on Friday, including 12 from Mahendra Mohan Choudhury Hospital (MMCH), six from GMCH, three from Silchar Medical College Hospital and one from Jorhat Medical College Hospital, taking the number of recovered and discharged patients in the state to 125.

Of the total 1,024 cases, 892 are active,



while four patients have died, three have migrated and 125 have recovered, the minister said.

Sarma also inaugurated an exclusive COVID-19 treatment unit at GMCH and said the Rs 150-crore centrally-funded unit is perhaps the first of its kind in eastern India.

It is housed in a new building and has 236 beds -- 50 in the ICU and 186 in the wards -- with each bed having a dedicated supply of medical gas.

The unit is centrally air-conditioned and equipped with 14 Ultraviolet Germicidal Irradiation (UGVI) systems, imported from Canada, which will help improve the indoor air quality and bacteria management.

Sarma said the latest COVID-19 patients are mostly those who have returned from other states.

This week alone saw 637 cases. Monday saw the highest single-day spike of 156 cases followed by 139 on Tuesday, 101 on Wednesday, 97 on Thursday and 144 on Friday.

The state government has partially modified the existing protocols for COVID-19 test, by which swab samples of all patients should be taken on the fifth day after the initial positive result.

If the test result of the sample taken on the fifth day is negative, a repeat swab sample would be

taken on the sixth day.

If the results of both the samples taken on the fifth and sixth days are negative, the patient will be released from hospital, subject to verification of the asymptomatic status and approval of discharge by the State Discharge Board, according to an order by the state Health and Family Welfare department's Principal Secretary Samir Sinha.

Hospitals and testing laboratories will give priority to testing COVID-19 patients.

In Assam, 92,390 samples have been tested for COVID-19 so far, with 10,24 testing positive, 84,933 negative and the remaining results are awaited, according to a Health and Family Welfare department bulletin.

The state has decided that everyone coming from outside will be sent for institutional quarantine. No home quarantine will be allowed for the first seven days, till the test results are received.

It has made partial modifications to exemptions from institutional quarantine, which include any woman who has travelled alone to Assam by train or plane need not undergo institutional quarantine provided she is asymptomatic, but has to undergo 14-day home quarantine after compliance with health protocols such as collection of swab

samples for COVID-19 test.

Any senior citizen who has travelled to Assam by air need not undergo institutional quarantine, provided the person is asymptomatic. However, the person shall undergo home quarantine for 14 days. Exemption from institutional quarantine in case of senior citizens, however, is not applicable to travel by a bus or train.

For Army, Air Force and Central Armed Police Forces personnel travelling to Assam, each agency shall nominate a senior official as its nodal officer to liaise with district magistrates and other representatives of the state government, as required.

The nodal officer shall communicate movement of the returning personnel in advance to the DMs where the disembarking airport or train station is located and the districts where the cantonment or group centres are located.

The nodal officer will confirm that adequate institutional quarantine facilities have been created for the personnel within the cantonment. There will be a general protocol for the Army, Air Force and CAPF personnel on official duty or deployment.

Screening of all personnel will be done at disembarking railway station or airport by district authorities in coordination with the Army, Air Force or CAPF authorities.

The personnel will directly proceed to their cantonment, where adequate institutional quarantine facilities will be created by the authorities. Any

asymptomatic personnel will have to undergo a combined institutional quarantine inside the cantonment or camp.

Defence personnel returning to their home in Assam on leave will have to follow quarantine and testing protocols stipulated for the public, according to the order.

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# Football is back and all it took was the spectre of financial catastrophe

**JONATHAN LIEW**  
**LONDON, 30 MAY**  
[THEGUARDIAN]: A Premier League ball is sprayed with disinfectant at Wolves’ training complex. A Premier League ball is sprayed with disinfectant at Wolves’ training complex. Photograph: Wolverhampton Wanderers FC/Getty Images

Well done, everyone: we did it. They said it wasn’t possible. They said it wasn’t safe. They said it would be tactless to start up one of the world’s most lucrative sports leagues while thousands are dying. They said it wouldn’t be a fair competition. They may still be right about all of this, of course. More on that in a moment.

But for now, football is back. Watch it. Drink it in. Lose yourself in a pure six-week football bender: 92 Premier League fixtures, spread across every day of the week and every conceivable time slot, all of it live on television, much of it free to air. Take that, null-and-voiders; dry your tears, PPG; up yours, Troy Deeney. Football is back and all it took was the spectre of financial catastrophe and the sight of Germany handling things far more adeptly.

The first point to make is that football is hardly striking out alone. Snooker and horse racing are planning to

begin behind closed doors on Monday. Professional golf, cricket and rugby league will be back by August. The resumption of the 2019-20 season was probably a foregone conclusion from the moment the prime minister offered his backing this month and heaven knows the government would be grateful of a little popular distraction right now.

Even so many have been surprised by the speed and bombast which the game has managed to coalesce around the terms of its return. Crisis has a marvellous way of focusing minds. Envy, too. Stung not just by the urgency of the balance sheet but the largely frictionless resumption of the Bundesliga and the resolute noises coming out of Spain and Italy, the 20 Premier League clubs managed to set aside their trademark factionalism for just long enough to approve the contours of Project Restart.

Full contact training was unanimously approved on Tuesday. Thursday brought a provisional schedule, beginning on 17 June with Aston Villa v Sheffield United and Manchester City v Arsenal. On Friday came the announcement of a rescheduled FA Cup final on 1 August. It’s fine to be straightforwardly delighted about this.



This, after all, is what we’re here for: the spectacle, the moment, the Barclays.

It’s only natural to get excited about the prospect of Sadio Mané tearing up a defence again, or Kevin De Bruyne ping-ponging a cross, or Allan Saint-Maximin running the ball extremely quickly out of play for a goal-kick. Meanwhile the move to free-to-air television is a laudable initiative and one of the few progressive ideas to emerge from a situation that largely promises to calcify the game’s existing inequalities.

Equally: it’s fine to be conflicted, overwhelmed, even stupefied, by the cold weirdness of this new landscape. Disinfected training cones. No celebrations. Neutral venues. Not really being able to remember if Chelsea were any good or not. To find all this disorienting does not render you a fraud, a plastic, someone who doesn’t actually like football. One of the more amusing claims for the game’s return is that it will represent a return to normality, as if watching Wolves v Everton on a baking hot July evening

at a deserted Molineux on BBC Two will be anything of the sort.

Certainly it’s possible to feel vaguely queasy about the lengths to which clubs are going in order to prove their readiness: all those millions being spent on tests and disinfectant and distancing, all that single-use plastic equipment going straight in the bin. Already, Premier League clubs have carried out more Covid-19 tests (2,752) than the entire UK did in the first two weeks of the outbreak.

And of course it will be safe; at least, as safe

as it is reasonable to guarantee. But then, what was euphemistically described as “the safety issue” was only ever partly about safety. It was less about meeting an objective standard or an acceptable vector of risk than about persuading players and public that they could feel safe. It was to this end that the league commissioned such a formidable array of expertise and scientific research to bolster its case (much of which swiftly and mysteriously found its way into the newspapers).

From an early stage Project Restart was as much PR campaign as public health drive. This is why, from the league’s standpoint, the nightmare scenario is not a glut of positive tests among players and staff. Rather, it is the prospect of elite football sailing on in its sterile little bubble while the country at large endures a second wave of the virus: entrenching the idea that good health is not a basic right but a privilege available to those who can afford it.

It’s worth noting the astonishing inversion that has subtly taken place here. The return of the Premier League comes as the Women’s Super League season is cancelled, as Leagues One and Two move to abort their campaigns, as the non-league

pyramid is annulled en masse, as grassroots facilities and five-a-side pitches and school fields lie unused. Football, the original people’s sport, the sport anyone could play anywhere, has been shrunk into an elite pursuit, the preserve of the very richest alone.

And for what? Germany may already have dropped the canary down the mineshaft but what we don’t know still far outweighs what we do. We don’t know how much time will be required to build proper match fitness and how sharp any increased injury risk will be as a result. We don’t know the extent to which BAME players are being put disproportionately at risk. We don’t know when fans will return, or even whether they will return in anything like the same numbers.

We do know Liverpool will win the league for the first time in 30 years, and deservedly so, but nobody knows what it will feel like to watch them do it in an empty stadium, surrounded by plastic seats and a skinny row of photographers. We don’t know how serious the erosion of home advantage will be, although intuition and experience suggest the best clubs will benefit most. We don’t know how the asymmetry

of the season will impact on fairness. Will Tottenham suffer from playing a “home” north London derby behind closed doors? Perhaps. Will José Mourinho use it as an excuse if they lose? Almost certainly.

In short, we don’t really know anything at all. Nonetheless we push on, because what else is there? The Premier League has thrived by dint not just of its reach but its ubiquity: an endlessly refreshing feed of content, narratives, controversies and tribal beefs. The likes of PPG v Null and Void, Overpaid Footballers v Underpaid Nurses, Kyle Walker v Lockdown Rules, were only going to get us so far.

This is why the grand reopening also feels like a clearance sale. After all, we know what the real story is here: the billion-pound hole in the broadcast deal that needs to be filled with something, anything. Football has never been entirely free of the profit motive but rarely has it felt less like a vital service and more like a fungible commodity: a commercial obligation, a piece of content, a tin of supermarket mystery meat, to be stacked high and sold at a knockdown rate.

It will certainly smell interesting. It will doubtless sustain us for a while. What we don’t yet know is whether you can live off it.

## Dinara Safina: ‘Being world No 1 is not fun, it is the opposite’

**TUMAINI CARAYOL**  
**LONDON, 30 MAY**  
[THEGUARDIAN]: The oldest Dinara Safina press conference archived on the internet dates back to 2003. Safina was 16 years old, ranked 63rd in the world and she had just defeated Anna Kournikova, the most famous Russian player across the lands. As usual, many questions were about people other than Safina; about Kournikova, her mother, her superstar brother. Finally, somebody wondered what she actually wanted from her own career. “The sport life is so short,” she replied. “I just want to enjoy it and don’t get injured.”

Safina went on to have an enviable career. She won 12 titles, Olympic silver and reached No 1. She bullied top players with her brutal weight of shot, reaching three grand slam finals. Even though she never won Roland Garros, she is one of the best clay-court players of the 21st century.

It has been nine years since Safina, now 33 and retired, last competed and she is locked down in Moscow. It takes just one question – about whether she would return to the sport if not for the stress fractures in her back – to understand that for everything she did, she never actually managed to reach either of those simple goals she set years ago.

“If I would be able to start from the beginning of my career, maybe, but



I don’t feel like coming back to the tour. It’s something that I guess is very deep. I think I got disappointed in some way by tennis, because I dreamed that once you become really famous, you become No 1 in the world, you would have a different life. But once you have this, everything, and you realise that it’s not what you’ve been dreaming of, then all your dreams fall apart.”

Safina grew up training in Valencia as her brother, Marat Safin, ascended to No 1 in 2000. Despite his two major titles, Safin’s discipline never matched his talent. Fans lined the stadiums for his charisma, looks and famed self-destructions as much as his tennis. Safina was different. Her discipline drove her success as she became a supreme athlete, but she always directed her frustrations inwards. While he would break racquets, she would break down.

This is where her disappointment lies – she came to take everything

in her career so seriously that the pressure was suffocating and her joy was lost: “I couldn’t handle my emotions and all these things, and for me that’s why it was tough.”

The rise itself was thrilling. Safina announced herself to the world in the spring of 2008, beating both Justine Henin and Serena Williams to win a breakthrough title in Berlin. Within a year she was No 1 and dominant on clay, but the more Safina’s ranking rose the more she would play the biggest moments in a state of perpetual torment, on the verge of tears, unable to cope. “I always had a dream to be famous, No 1 and all this, but then suddenly I felt so much pressure being there. I didn’t expect that I would have this pressure. I thought it was going to be fun, you know? You become famous, you become No 1. And everybody is happy. It’s actually the opposite! Everybody wants to beat you.”

In the 2009 Australian Open final, she froze and

was eviscerated 6-0 6-3 by Williams. She collapsed under pressure in the Roland Garros final against Svetlana Kuznetsova, infamously serving a double-fault on match point. By Wimbledon, she was the No 1 player in the world yet Serena held three grand slam titles. She became the butt of every joke.

“Of course, you hear every day the same questions in every interview: ‘When are you going to win your first grand slam?’ And I’m like: ‘You think I don’t want to win a grand slam?’ And then I started to struggle with this because it’s something that was really annoying for me and it was very painful because it’s something that I really wanted to win.”

There was no chance for the redemption achieved by the likes of Simona Halep, Caroline Wozniacki and Kim Clijsters. By 2010 her back pain felt “like somebody stabbed a knife in your back”. As she continually rehabbed for a return, just the thought of stepping on to the court became a source of trauma. She quickly learned that no longer competing was also a relief for her mental health. “It was so deep in my mind, because phew... I just couldn’t go back again to feel this pain. I had enough of this pain and I think another thing [was] that, finally, I could step away from all the pressure I had.”

When your whole life is tennis, hotels

and travelling the world every week, stopping abruptly can have a huge impact. “[Retirement] was different. Completely different, which I was also not ready for. I guess it’s my journey in life. I take it always with philosophy, I don’t start to make a drama out of it. Well, that’s my journey, anyway we only have one life. And that’s it. So why not try everything?”

Safina sees her future in the player box rather than on the court. She cannot wait to fly back to Valencia and work as a coach. She may not have been able to enjoy herself at the top of the sport, nor to stay healthy, but the emotional intelligence and self-awareness she displays as she talks in her third language will carry her a long way. Perhaps it can help.

“For all the experiences that I went through while I was struggling, I don’t want players that I coach to feel like that. I want them to understand that tennis is a beautiful life. It’s a beautiful sport. It’s so much joy and even the hard work should be a joy. Tennis is not a struggle. It’s fun and it’s a short period of life. I don’t want to go back for my perspective myself because I know that I’m going to be the same – taking it too seriously and crying.” Then she laughed. “I want to teach the players not to make the same mistakes I’ve made.”

## Cricket West Indies announces temporary pay cut for all players, employees across regions

**ST. JOHN’S (ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA), MAY 30 (PTI):** Cricket West Indies (CWI) has announced a temporary 50 percent salary cut and funding across the entire regional cricket system, effective from the start of July, due to financial crunch caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The decision was made after CWI’s Board of Directors received recommendations from the Financial Strategy Advisory Committee (FSAC) during a tele-conference.

“With no international cricket currently being played anywhere in the world, and with great uncertainty of when regular cricket activity will resume, CWI like many other international sporting organisations worldwide is facing

a significant loss of income, whilst also being uncertain of the long-term impact of the crisis on our operations,” CWI said in a statement.

“It is in that context that CWI’s Board of Directors, with deep regret, have agreed to a plan that we expect will safeguard CWI’s future while delivering at least a minimum level of job protection for all of the people employed or contracted throughout the region’s cricket community.”

CWI President Skeritt said, “This pandemic is hurting every West Indian and this decision to cut staff and player incomes has been a very difficult one to make; one that will impact so many members of the cricketing family around the Caribbean.”

“This business continuity plan unfortunately requires all stakeholders to make a huge sacrifice, but I am confident that it won’t be long before CWI will be in a position to ensure that the sport we love can restart and be enjoyed once again by the thousands of cricket fans across the region and diaspora.”

CWI had kept staff, players, umpires and coaches on full-pay since the outbreak of COVID-19.

“CWI hopes that these temporary measures will only be in place for not more than three to six months. These measures will also include a 50 percent reduction in funding for Territorial Boards, Territorial Board Franchises and WIPA, as well as a 50 percent cut in all retainers and allowances for Directors and Executive management.

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# Trump bans entry of certain groups of Chinese students to US

**By Lalit K Jha**  
**WASHINGTON, MAY 30 (PTI):** US President Donald Trump has issued a proclamation banning the entry of Chinese students and researchers having ties with the People's Liberation Army to dismantle China's efforts to use graduate students to acquire intellectual property and technology from America.

Trump's announcement came amidst escalating confrontation between the US and China over trade, the origins of the novel coronavirus pandemic, Beijing's security crackdown in Hong Kong and the communist giant's aggressive military moves in the disputed South China Sea.

Issuing the proclamation on Friday, Trump said China is engaged in a wide-ranging and heavily resourced campaign to acquire sensitive US technologies and intellectual property to modernise its massive military -- the People's Liberation Army (PLA).

This action of China is a threat to the US' long-term economic vitality and the safety and security of the American people, he said.

Trump alleged that China uses some



Chinese students, mostly postgraduate and postdoctoral researchers, to operate as non-traditional collectors of intellectual property. Therefore, Chinese postgraduate students or researchers who are or have been associated with the PLA are at high risk of being exploited or co-opted by the Chinese authorities and provide particular cause for concern.

"In light of the above, I have determined that the entry of certain Chinese nationals 'seeking to enter the US pursuant to an 'F' or 'J' visa to study or conduct research in the US would be detrimental

to the interests" of America, he said.

China on Friday had termed Trump's threat to slap sanctions on its students in America as racist, saying it is a brazen political persecution and reminiscent of the McCarthy era. McCarthyism is the practice of making accusations of subversion or treason without proper regard for evidence.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian said the plan exposes a deep-rooted Cold War and zero-sum mentality that permeates the thinking of some Americans and warned the US not to violate the legal rights of the Chinese students in

America.

While the F-1 visa is for students attending a full-time degree or academic programme at a school, college or university in the US, the J-1 visa offers cultural and educational exchange opportunities in America through programmes overseen by the US State Department. The F-1 visa is valid for as long as it takes the student to finish his or her course of study. An F-1 Visa also allows students to work on campus and in some situations even off campus.

Describing the proclamation as a good step, Congressman Mike Rogers, Ranking Member of the House

Homeland Security Committee, said China is committed to a long-term campaign for global technological leadership, even if it means stealing their way to the top.

China has taken concerted steps to extract the latest technologies from leading American institutions and transfer information back to China's defense industrial base and state-run industries.

"This is a wholesale attack on American competitiveness. I commend the President for issuing this proclamation. It is a good step forward to safeguard our national security and American economic competitiveness," he said.

reappearing in the 1990s as waterways were cleaned.

"I simply don't understand anyone who could not like them. They are really cute," said Pam Wong, a 35-year-old Singaporean.

Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong weighed in on the debate Friday, posting a photo he took of otters before the lockdown on his Facebook account.

"Rather than being focused on protecting 'territory', we must find ways to coexist and thrive with our local flora and fauna," he wrote.

## Pentagon puts military police on alert to go to Minneapolis

**DELRAY BEACH (US), MAY 30 (AP):** As unrest spread across dozens of American cities on Friday, the Pentagon took the rare step of ordering the Army to put several active-duty US military police units on the ready to deploy to Minneapolis, where the police killing of George Floyd sparked the widespread protests.

Soldiers from Fort Bragg in North Carolina and Fort Drum in New York have been ordered to be ready to deploy within four hours if called, according to three people with direct knowledge of the orders.

Soldiers in Fort Carson, in Colorado, and Fort Riley in Kansas have been told to be ready within 24 hours. The people did not want their names used because they were not authorized to discuss the preparations.

The get-ready orders were sent verbally on Friday, after President Donald Trump asked Defense Secretary Mark Esper for military options to help quell the unrest in Minneapolis after protests descended into looting and arson in some parts of the city.

Trump made the request on a phone call from the Oval Office on Thursday night that included Esper, National Security Advisor Robert O' Brien and several others.

The president asked Esper for rapid deployment options if the Minneapolis protests continued to spiral out of control, according to one of the people, senior Pentagon official who was on the call.

"When the White House asks for options, someone opens the drawer and pulls them out so to speak, the official said.

The person said the military units would be deployed under the Insurrection Act of 1807, which was last used in 1992 during the riots in Los Angeles that followed the Rodney King trial.

If this is where the

president is headed response-wise, it would represent a significant escalation and a determination that the various state and local authorities are not up to the task of responding to the growing unrest," Brad Moss, a Washington DC-based attorney, who specializes in national security.

Members of the police units were on a 30-minute recall alert early Saturday, meaning they would have to return to their bases inside that time limit in preparation for deployment to Minneapolis inside of four hours.

Units at Fort Drum are slated to head to Minneapolis first, according to the three people, including two Defence Department officials. Roughly 800 US soldiers would deploy to the city if called.

Protests erupted in Minneapolis this week after video emerged showing a police officer kneeling on Floyd's neck. Floyd later died of his injuries and the officer, Derek Chauvin, was arrested and charged with third-degree murder and manslaughter on Friday.

The protests turned violent and on Thursday rioters torched the Minneapolis Third Police Precinct near where Floyd was arrested. Mayor Jacob Frey ordered a citywide curfew at 8 pm beginning on Friday.

The unrest has since spread across the country, with protests, some violent, erupting in cities including Washington DC, Atlanta, Phoenix, Denver and Los Angeles.

Minnesota Governor Tim Walz ordered 500 of his National Guard troops into Minneapolis, St Paul, and surrounding communities.

But a Pentagon spokesman said Walz did not ask for the Army to be deployed to his state.

The Department has

been in touch with the Governor and there is no request for Title 10 forces to support the Minnesota National Guard or state law enforcement.

Title 10 is the US law that governs the armed forces, and would authorise active duty military to operate within the US.

Alyssa Farah, the White House director of strategic communications said the deployment of active-duty military police is untrue.

False: off the record - title 10 not under discussion, said Farah in an email response. No off-record agreement was negotiated with The Associated Press.

The 16th Military Police Brigade forwarded the AP's questions to the Defence Department.

The three officials with direct knowledge of the potential deployment say the orders are on a classified system, known as the Secret Internet Protocol Router or SIPR for short.

Active-duty forces are normally prohibited from acting as a domestic law enforcement agency. But the Insurrection Act offers an exception.

"The Insurrection Act would allow the military to take up a policing authority it otherwise would not be allowed to do, enforcing state and federal laws," said Stephen Vladeck, a University of Texas School of Law professor who specialises in constitutional and national security law.

The statute is deliberately vague when it comes to the instances in which the Insurrection Act could be used, he said. The state's governor could ask President Donald Trump to take action or Trump could act on his own authority if he's determined that the local authorities are so overwhelmed that they can't adequately enforce the law, Vladeck said.

It is a very, very broad grant of authority for the president, he added.

## Singapore otters' lockdown antics spark backlash

Singapore's otters, long adored by the city-state's nature lovers, are popping up in unexpected places during the coronavirus lockdown but their antics have angered some and even sparked calls for a cull.

With the streets empty, the creatures have been spotted hanging out by a shopping centre, scampering through the lobby of a hospital and even feasting on pricey fish stolen from a pond.

While many think of tiny Singapore as a densely populated concrete jungle, it is also relatively green for a busy Asian city, and has patches of rainforest, fairly clean waterways and abundant wildlife.

There are estimated to be about 90 otters in Singapore, making up 10 families, and appearances at popular tourist sites around the city-state's downtown waterfront have transformed them into local celebrities.

They featured in a documentary narrated by David Attenborough,

are tracked avidly by the local media -- and have been spotted more frequently since people were asked to stay home and workplaces closed in April to fight the virus.

"When there's restriction of movement, there's less vehicles and there's less people, so the urban space opens up," said N. Sivasothi, a biologist at the National University of Singapore known as "Otterman" due to his work on the animals.

But their newfound freedoms appear to have emboldened the otters, and they are now facing a backlash.

- 'More daring' -

The most high-profile incident was a raid on a pond at a spa shuttered due to the pandemic. The creatures gobbled several fish including an arowana, a prized species that can sell for tens of thousands of dollars.

Actress-turned-entrepreneur Jazreel Low, who owns the spa, posted pictures on Facebook of fish parts scattered around the

pond and lamented a "massacre".

"They probably realised that there was nobody there and became more daring," Low told entertainment news website 8 DAYS.

The case sparked a debate about whether more should be done to stop otters rampaging through the city, with a widely discussed letter in a local newspaper calling for air horns and rubber bullets to be used as deterrents.

"Wild boars have never been encouraged to enter urban areas, neither should otters be just because they look cute," wrote Ong Junkai in the correspondence to the Straits Times, which triggered calls from some for a cull.

In other incidents, a video showed a group charging into the lobby of a children's hospital before being shooed away, and the creatures were also filmed frolicking in the empty streets outside a popular shopping centre.

The otters' more frequent forays onto

the streets of Singapore are part of a global trend triggered by virus lockdowns, with animals increasingly slipping cover to explore the streets of some of the world's biggest cities.

- 'Coexist and thrive' -

Still, otter experts believe the anger is an overreaction and that the creatures are likely just enjoying the extra freedom to venture to new places.

NUS's Sivasothi criticised calls for a cull as "quite an uneducated response", and said such a move would be ineffective. He also said many recent sightings were likely of the same family of smooth-coated otters, which have been searching for a new home along the city's rivers. Most of Singapore's otters are the smooth-coated variety, classified as "vulnerable".

Fans believe people should be celebrating the return of an animal that was driven out of Singapore by coastal development and water pollution around the 1970s, and only started

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**TIE-DYE FOR!** The cute couple, Anwar Hadid & Dua Lipa wear matching sweaters as they enjoy a walk around London, England.

## Ramy Youssef says Lindsay Lohan was cast in 'Ramy' S2 but she ghosted him

**LOS ANGELES, MAY 30 (PTI):** Actor-comedian Ramy Youssef says he had managed to convince Lindsay Lohan to make a guest appearance on his critically-acclaimed Hulu series "Ramy" but she never showed up.

In an interview with Entertainment Weekly ahead of the second season's premiere on Friday, Youssef said Lohan had signed on for the cameo role. "We had an idea that it wasn't just her, but we were interested in this idea of people that you don't really think are Muslim," he said.

"We actually cast Lindsay Lohan, because Lindsay had this whole thing about converting to Islam. And so we had cast Lindsay and I talked to her and she was down, and then, you know, like Lindsay



does, we just kind of stopped hearing from her," he added.

Youssef, however, has no hard feelings for Lohan.

"You can't try and put Lindsay in a box, that's what I know. Lindsay is going to be Lindsay. She is one of my favourite Muslims," he said.

The cameo ultimately went to former adult movies star Mia Khalifa.

"Ramy", created by Youssef, Ari Katcher and Ryan Welch, is about a first-generation American Muslim

who is on a spiritual journey in his politically divided New Jersey neighbourhood.

It explores the challenges of what it is like being caught between an Egyptian community that thinks life is a moral test, and a Millennial generation that thinks life has no consequences.

Youssef, who plays the lead role in the series, had won this year's Golden Globe for Best Actor in a Television Series - Musical or Comedy for the show.

## Irrfan's wife Sutapa pens an emotional note a month after his demise

**MUMBAI, MAY 30 (PTI):** With a promise to meet again, Irrfan Khan's wife Sutapa Sikdar shared a heartwarming note remembering her actor husband and cherishing the time they spent together.

Irrfan, 54, lost his battle with a rare form of cancer and died in a Mumbai hospital on April 29. He is survived by Sutapa and their two sons -- Babil and Ayaan.

Quoting Sufi poet Rumi, Sutapa wrote on Facebook, "Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing there is a field. I'll meet you there. When the soul lies down in that grass the world is too full to talk about. It's just a matter of time... Milenge baaten karenge... Till we meet again."

Along with the note, she also shared two throwback photographs of the late actor.

Irrfan had stayed away from the public eye after being diagnosed with the neuroendocrine tumour in 2018 and



later went to the UK for treatment.

The actor returned to the country in 2019 and shot for "Angrezi Medium", the sequel to his 2017 hit "Hindi Medium".

However, his health condition

prevented him from promoting the movie, which hit the theatres in March just before the coronavirus-forced nationwide lockdown that began on March 25.

## Ryan Gosling to star in Universal's 'Wolfman'

**LOS ANGELES, MAY 30**

**(PTI):** Universal has started developing a new monster movie, "Wolfman" with Hollywood star Ryan Gosling set to take on the lead role.

The studio is gradually developing a cinematic universe around its classic monster characters and with the success of its small-budget horror thriller "The Invisible Man", it has decided to go ahead with "Wolfman", about a man who turns into a werewolf.

According to Variety, the film is based on an original pitch by Gosling with "Orange is the New Black" scribes Lauren Schuler Blum and Rebecca Angelo penning the script.

The new adaptation is said to be styled after Jake Gyllenhaal's "Nightcrawler" and will be set in modern times with an obvious



supernatural twist.

The studio is in talks with a number of filmmakers for the director's job with "Bad Education" helmer Cory Finley currently leading the race.

The last movie based on the studio's classic monster character was 2010's

Benicio del Toro-starrer "The Wolfman", which was a reboot of the 1941 original of the same name. The film had also featured Anthony Hopkins, Emily Blunt and Hugo Weaving.

In 2017, Universal had planned a cinematic world, dubbed "Dark Universe" for

its monster characters and roped in stars like Johnny Depp, Tom Cruise, Russell Crowe, Javier Bardem and Sofia Boutella for it.

However, the failure of Cruise-starrer "The Mummy" the same year, spilled water on its plans.

The studio is now planning to release individual films on the characters with "The Invisible Man" reboot being the first one.

The Elizabeth Moss-starrer, which was made on a budget of USD 7 million, amassed over USD 120 million during its theatrical run in February.

Universal is simultaneously also working a number of projects, including Elizabeth Banks' "Invisible Woman", Paul Feig's "Dark Army", Dexter Fletcher's "Renfield", and Karyn Kusama's "Dracula".

## Akshay Kumar quashes casting rumours for 'Filhall 2' song

**MUMBAI, MAY 30 (PTI):** Superstar Akshay Kumar on Saturday debunked rumours about fresh casting for the follow up of his hit music video "Filhall".

"Filhall", sung by B Praak, released last year and became an instant hit. The music video featured Akshay and marked the screen debut of Kriti Sanon's younger sister Nupur Sanon.

There has been news circulating on social media that the team of "Filhall" is looking for a fresh pair for song's sequel.

Akshay, 52, took to Twitter to put an end to the speculation.

"I have heard a lot of fake news during coronavirus pandemic but now fake casting is also happening. #Filhall yeh padhiye#FakeNewsAlert

#FakeCastingAlert, he tweeted.

The actor also shared a notice to clarify that his production house hasn't authorised any agency to cast for "Filhall 2".

"For all the 'Filhall' fans out there! It has been brought to our notice that some impostors have made fake news for casting of the song 'Filhall part 2'.

"We, the team of 'Filhall', would like to clarify that neither we nor our production house/banner have authorised or engaged any individual, agency, partnership firm or company to cast for the sequel of our song 'Filhall'," the notice read.

It further stated that the second installment of the hit song will feature original cast.

"We assure you that the story

of 'Filhall' continues and will be portrayed by the original cast and the same team of the original 'Filhall'. We would request all our fans and viewers to disregard any such fake casting call.

As per the notice, the team will soon come with part two of the song as the entertainment industry plans a way out of the coronavirus-induced lockdown. "Seeing the love and the phenomenal response for the first part of 'Filhall', we, as a team, were very excited to bring to you 'Filhall part 2' as soon as possible. However, while we fight through these times and respect the laws in place, we will soon be back with 'Filhall part 2'."

On film front, Akshay is awaiting the release of "Sooryavanshi" and "Laxxmi Bomb". He also has "Prithviraj" biopic in pipeline.

Aries:

If the law of karma is to be believed, then every action we take has repercussions. What are the seeds you want to plant in your reality? Where do you want to vibrate at, dear Aries? Remember, heaven and hell are not faraway concepts. They can be created right here, right now, in this dimension. If and when you find yourself becoming a victim of your unruly emotions, step into the role of the observer. Call upon your higher self for clarity. The path of meditation will help you become receptive to divine wisdom.

Taurus:

We spend so much time dimming our sparkle and lowering our expectations because we do not believe that we are actually capable of realising our dreams. As a result, we make peace with a mediocre existence. But what if you decided to reclaim your inherent power? To create a reality that is in alignment with your soul's purpose? It's time to shake things up, Taurus. The Universe wants you to know that you can live a life that is creatively, emotionally, spiritually \*and\* financially satisfying.

Gemini:

It's not that you're doing too much, it's that you're doing so little of what makes you happy. No wonder you're as exhausted as you are at this moment! Inner alignment is the need of

the hour, Gemini. That and a quick motivation check. Remember, when we're low on energy is when we are most likely to behave in a manner that's best described as 'insufferable'. So, practice kindness when it is hard to. Take responsibility for your thoughts, words, and actions.

Cancer:

"The gates of mystery stand ever ajar, and those who will may pass through into the spacious domicile of spirit," said Canadian-born author and mystic Manly P Hall. These words best describe the inner illumination you are experiencing; the realisation that you are gifted with the power to look beyond the veil. Remember who you are, Cancer. Reconnect with your true self. Some of you may feel inspired to practice arts or learn/teach the divine art. Trust where your intuition is leading you towards.

Leo:

Aren't you tired of weighing the pros and cons? Of trying to get into their head and figure out their next move? The best way around your dilemma: stepping into the role of the initiator. Instead of waiting for them to take a step towards you, take charge of the conversation. Express your feelings and emotions. You don't have to commit to a lifetime of togetherness if you're not ready, but you can tell them that

you're willing to explore and see where this leads to. Sounds like a win-win, Leo!

Virgo:

What's your poison, Virgo? Going back to an ex who made you feel horrible about yourself every time you recede into a space of loneliness, trying to control the lives of your loved ones to feel better about yourself, or turning to emotional eating in times of distress? Word of warning: the temptations are going to be many. Given your circumstances, it will be easy to go back to an old way of life. This is a make or break situation. Stay woke and focus on moving forward, rather than backwards.

Libra:

Let's talk about overcompensation. Where does the need to stretch ourselves thin stem from? Is there a void within that makes us seek love, approval, and validation from others? Introspection is the need of the hour, Libra. This chapter of your life requires you to free yourself from the patterns of the past, redirect your energy towards your own growth and understand the soul lesson that only you can fulfill yourself. Now isn't that liberating! The idea that you do not have to depend on anybody outside to create a custom blend of happiness.

Scorpio:

The darkness co-exists with the light—such

is the duality of life. We'd like to be joyful at all times, but the human experience boasts of all kinds of emotions, ranging from anger to melancholy. Instead of judging what's emerging from the depth of your subconscious, talk to the pain lovingly and with tenderness. Know that this is the secret to awakening to your truth and understanding what it is within you that needs to be healed. If there's anything your journey has taught you, it's that the world is where the light enters.

Sagittarius:

What are the threads that bind you together? Shared experiences of joy and victory, or the wounds and scars of the past? Trauma bonding is real, Sagittarius, and it's not the foundation you want to build your relationship on. Word for the wise: it's time to set healthy boundaries. Distance is the key to understanding the ways in which you could be controlling or manipulating each other. PS: It's a good idea to consider therapy or turn to a friend who will not shy away from giving you the reality check you need at this moment.

Capricorn:

Running away from the mundane world and joining a cult may or may not be an option, Capricorn. But that doesn't mean you have to crumble under the weight of your responsibilities. Take charge of your life.

Become mindful of how you are spending your time and energy. Say yes to the things you 'want' to do rather than 'need' to do, as you understand the power of saying no. This will help you serve the world (and the people you love) from the right space.

Aquarius:

We could do everything on our own if we wanted to, but where's the fun in that? As a community-driven being, you understand the power of co-creation more than anybody else. So, take charge of the given project. Recruit people with complementary skills. When you connect with your higher self, your imagination knows no limits. In the immortal words of Robin Williams, "No matter what people tell you, words and ideas can change the world."

Pisces:

There are deadlines to meet, presentations to make, vlogs to record, and dishes to clean. Being indoors doesn't have to be an overwhelming experience, Pisces. This is a time of establishing new rituals. Time-saving hacks can go a long way in freeing up mental space, so you can focus on your creative endeavours too. What's the one skill you didn't have the chance to practice prior to the lockdown? Consider splashing colours onto the canvas or signing up for a virtual singing class