



**LUCY HALE TO LEAD SURVIVAL THRILLER 'BORREGO'**  
pg 08

**Let's Pamper Our 10%**  
pg 04

**DAVID RUBIN GETS SECOND TERM AS FILM ACADEMY PRESIDENT**  
pg 08



# Summit **T**IMES

Vol 05 | Issue 200 | Gangtok | Thursday | 30 July 2020

ON TOP OF THE NEWS

RNI No. SIKENG/2016/69420

Pages 8 | RS. 5

## Nessur families go into voluntary quarantine to stop possible nCoV spread



**RUDRA KAUSHIK GYALSHING, 29 JUL:**

Twenty-five families of Nessur village under Lungthung ward of Mangsari Magarjung GPU, Soreng, have gone into voluntary quarantine to stem the possible spread of Novel Coronavirus. Some of them, it is informed, were primary and secondary contacts of the Lineman from Timburbung who recently tested positive of COVID-19 yesterday.

Not wishing to risk any more people than might have already contracted the virus, these 25 families have decided to opt for voluntary home quarantine pending testing.

They have cordoned their homes with strips of red colored cloth.

Gyanu Rai, Lungthung ward

panchayat member, informs that the 25 households have opted for voluntary home quarantine to avert any possibility of spread of COVID-19 in the village.

He adds that as the ward panchayat, he has made provisions for home delivery of essential commodities to families under home quarantine.

"I have my own vehicle to deliver essential commodities to the families. Since COVID-19 cases are surging in the State, we cannot take risks and that is the reason why the villagers have gone for voluntary home quarantine," he said.

Some of the villagers had helped the Lineman in question when was injured in the line of duty and could hence have been exposed to the virus.

## Heavy rain, thunderstorm forecast for Bengal till Friday



**JALPAIGURI, JUL 29 (PTI):** The Met department on Wednesday forecast heavy rain in all north Bengal districts, which got a day's respite from the continuous showers that lead to a flood-like situation.

Little or no rain was recorded in the 24 hours till 8.30 am in the region, where heavy downpour has caused flooding of low-lying areas in some districts, including Jalpaiguri and Alipurduar.

The Met department has warned of heavy rain or moderate thunderstorms in the districts of Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Jalpaiguri, Alipurduar, Coochbehar, North

Dinajpur and South Dinajpur till Friday morning.

Kolkata on the other side recorded moderate rainfall since Tuesday morning, along with some other places in the southern part of the state, the weatherman said.

Dumdum in the northern fringes of the metropolis recorded 79 mm rain, while Alipore in south Kolkata received 39 mm rain.

Bankura and Purulia received 84 mm rainfall each, the Met said.

The Met has also forecast heavy rain or thunderstorms in all south Bengal districts till Friday morning.

## Khaling defends CM, blames critics of misleading people

**SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 29 JUL:**

Sikkim Krantikari Morcha party spokesperson, the Political Secretary to the CM, Jacob Khaling, countered today that all allegations leveled against the CM by opposition parties and "some individuals" were false and baseless. This was in response to criticism of the CM for having allegedly blamed the people for spike in COVID-19 cases in Sikkim.

Mr Khaling lambasted such criticism as attempts to mislead and instigate the people of Sikkim with lies and raking up a non-issue.

In a video statement released on Wednesday, Mr Khaling contends that the state government has been deploying all its resources to protect Sikkim and its people from the COVID-19 pandemic.

He added that the government has been taking all possible steps to save the lives of the people from this infection



and that the government has increased the strength of STNM Hospital and health workers in the state and has also created COVID-19 facilities at different districts and prepared trained manpower for the same.

However, in such pandemic situation, he alleged, SDF and some other opposition parties in the State have been trying to mislead and instigate the people of Sikkim with lies and made-up issues.

He asserted that they have been trying to defame the

government by spreading lies that the CM has accused the people of Sikkim for the sudden surge in coronavirus cases in the State.

On the same, he asserted that there was no truth in the allegations.

Mr Khaling clarified that a high-level meeting of the State Task Force for COVID-19 was held on 27 July at Samman Bhawan which was chaired by the CM to discuss the present situation of COVID-19 in the State and to decide the future

## Sikkim surge appears to be tapering off with 17 new cases and 12 recoveries

**SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 29 JUL:**

Seventeen new COVID-19 cases were detected in the 24 hours ending 8AM Wednesday taking the number of active cases in the State to 397. The State's overall tally of confirmed cases recorded so far now stands within kissing distance of 600 at 596 of whom 198 patients have recovered and been discharged from the hospital.

In his daily health bulletin on Wednesday, Health Department DG-cum-Secretary, Dr Pempa T Bhutia informed that all the

17 cases were detected in East Sikkim, 12 of which were from Central Pendam alone.

He mentioned that all 32 samples tested yesterday by TrueNat came out negative.

The 12 new positive cases were detected from testing of 557 samples by RT-PCR.

He informed that all 12 patients were from Central Pendam and are contacts of Chanatar patients and following the same, East District Administration has declared Central Pendam a containment zone.

Likewise, five more contacts from Rangpo tested positive through rapid antigen testing of 19 contacts there, while all 46 returnees at Rangpo tested negative, Dr Bhutia informed.

He mentioned that out of these five new patients one has been shifted to STNM hospital after showing symptoms while four others have been shifted to the quarantine facility at Himalayan Pharmacy.

He further mentioned that rapid antigen testing of 05 samples at Rongli and 04 at

Rhenock returned negative. He informed six rapid antigen testing were also done on dialysis technicians from Gyalsing and all tested negative.

The Secretary mentioned that twelve more patients were discharged yesterday from the hospital after making full recoveries. He informed that there are four patients currently in the ICU of STNM hospital.

Out of 596 confirmed cases reported so far in Sikkim, 415 were reported in East Sikkim, 41 in West Sikkim, 139 in South Sikkim and 01 in North Sikkim.

## India's COVID-19 tally crosses 15-lakh mark

**NEW DELHI, JULY 29 (PTI):** India's COVID-19 tally went past 15 lakh on Wednesday, two days after it crossed the 14-lakh mark, with 48,513 fresh cases recorded in a day while the recoveries surged to 9,88,029, according to the Union Health Ministry data.

The total coronavirus cases climbed to 15,31,669, while the country's death toll due to the disease rose to 34,193 with 768 deaths being reported in a 24-hour span, the data updated at 8 am showed.

There are 5,09,447 active cases of coronavirus infection in the country presently.

The recovery rate among COVID-19 patients has risen to 64.51 per cent.

The total number of confirmed cases also includes foreigners.

This is the seventh consecutive day that COVID-19 cases have increased by more than 45,000.

According to the ICMR, a cumulative total of 1,77,43,740 samples have been tested up to



July 28 with 4,08,855 samples being tested on Tuesday.

Of the 768 fresh deaths reported, 282 are from Maharashtra, 102 from Karnataka, 88 from Tamil Nadu, 58 from Andhra Pradesh, 41 from Uttar Pradesh, 38 from West Bengal, 28 from Delhi, 24 from Gujarat, 18 from Punjab, 16 from Bihar and 13 from Rajasthan.

Twelve fatalities have been reported from Jammu and Kashmir, 10 from Madhya Pradesh, nine from Haryana, seven from Odisha, four each from Kerala, Puducherry,

Tripura and Uttarakhand, two each from Assam, Chhattisgarh, and Ladakh.

The figures of Telangana, in terms of cases and deaths have been not updated on the website as the data was "awaited" from the state government, the ministry mentioned.

Of the total 34,193 deaths reported so far, Maharashtra has reported the maximum at 14,165, followed by 3,881 in Delhi, 3,659 in Tamil Nadu, 2,372 in Gujarat, 2,055 in Karnataka, 1,497 in Uttar Pradesh, 1,449 in West Bengal, 1,148 in Andhra Pradesh and

830 in Madhya Pradesh.

So far, 644 people have died of COVID-19 in Rajasthan, 480 in Telangana (updated figures awaited from state government), 406 in Haryana, 336 in Punjab, 333 in Jammu and Kashmir, 269 in Bihar, 154 in Odisha, 89 in Jharkhand, 88 in Assam, 70 in Uttarakhand and 67 in Kerala.

Puducherry has registered 47 deaths, Chhattisgarh 46, Goa 36, Tripura 21, Chandigarh and Himachal Pradesh 14 each, Ladakh six, Meghalaya and Nagaland five each, Arunachal Pradesh three, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu two and Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Sikkim one each.

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

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

## Test confirms KB Rai's COVID-negative status, journals allowed to end quarantine

**SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 29 JUL:**

As per the East District Administration, Sikkim Republican Party president, KB Rai, has tested negative for COVID-19 and the eight media persons who had been sent for home quarantine can now resume

duty following the prescribed safety precautions.

It may be recalled that 8 media persons had been asked to undergo home quarantine after attending a press conference called by KB Rai since his son was a contact of a Covid positive patient.

## Chamling thanks frontline warriors, reiterates demands for them

**SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 29 JUL:**

Sikkim Democratic Front president, former Chief Minister Pawan Chamling, in a letter penned to Sikkim's COVID-19 frontline warriors, has thanked them and their families effusively for the service they are rendering.

Recognising the risks they face in the line of duty, he empathises with the worry they themselves and their families grapple with on a daily basis.

"When I see you in the forefront of this battle, I bow my head before you all in deep gratitude and honour," he writes in the letter posted on his Facebook page today.

"Please know that your family's contribution to the security and victory of Sikkim will be remembered with great appreciation for years and years to come," he adds, while reiterating demands he has made of the State Government on their behalf in the past as well.

Mr Chamling argues that it is the "fundamental duty" of the State Government to ensure the safety of its citizens' lives, freedom and dreams.

"These warriors have risked all of that to fulfil these governmental commitments. They, as government

employees, didn't compromise when they needed to stand for Sikkim. I therefore request the government to announce a Rs One crore insurance cover for all the COVID-19 front line warriors," he has demanded.

Mr Chamling has also sought a Rs 10 lakh financial grant for gazetted government employees and Rs 5 lakh each for non-gazetted employees and constitution of bravery awards to be given to them after the pandemic in accordance with their contribution.

As a recognition of their service, the ad hoc employment of all the COVID-19 front-line warriors must be regularized as special cases with retrospective effect, starting on the day they joined their COVID-19 duties, he adds.

Given the nature of their jobs, Mr Chamling has also demanded that the salary of frontline warriors be doubled and that they also be incentivized by way of provision of special promotions.

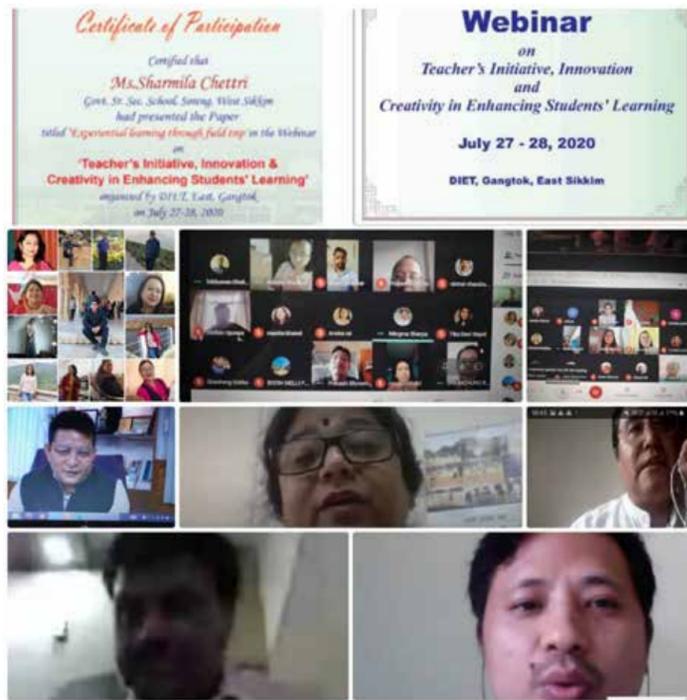
"Their COVID-19 duty must be counted as special merit to be given due consideration for promotion," he suggests.

"This is the least the government can do to honour our proud sons and daughters of Sikkim," he stresses.

# DIET webinar for teachers

**SUMMIT REPORT**  
**GANGTOK, 29 JUL:**

A webinar for Practicing Teachers was organised by District Institute of Education & Training (DIET), East, Gangtok on 27-28 Jul, 2020 on the theme "Teacher's initiative, innovation & creativity in enhancing students' learning". The objective of the Webinar was to provide a forum to practicing teachers to share their innovative pedagogical practices so that the same can be replicated in schools across the State, the initiatives they take to improve teaching learning environment and their creative ideas which not only contribute to students' learning exponentially but also to their professional growth.



The inaugural Session of the Webinar was graced by Additional Secretary, Anil Raj Rai, Chief Secretary, GP Education Department, Upadhyaya, Director SCERT, Rabin Chhetri, and Pre-Service Student Teachers of DIET, Gangtok.

There were around 100 invitees each on both the days who participated in the Webinar. The invitees included Faculties of SCERT, DIETs, BRCCs, CRCCs School Heads & Teachers and Pre-Service Student Teachers of DIET, Gangtok.

There were 12 presentations by practising teachers from government schools across the state in 4 technical sessions. The teacher presenters and their topics are as follows:

NAME OF TEACHER PRESENTERS	NAME OF SCHOOL	TOPICS OF PRESENTATION
Dikila Dolkar	Sir Tashi Namgyal SSS, Gangtok,	Innovative Pedagogy in Teaching of Social Science at Upper Primary Classes
Sandhya Sundas	CS Rai Government Sec. School, Arithang, Gangtok	Joyful Mathematics Learning & Yoga for Students
Pema Doma Bhutia	Govt Jr High School, Adampool, East Sikkim	Innovative Pedagogy in Teaching of English & Initiatives towards Students' Personality Development
Prakash Lepcha	Govt Primary School, Malling, North Sikkim	Shift in Teaching of Mathematics at Primary Level
Dhan Kumari Chhetri	Govt Primary School, Pasting, East Sikkim	Subject Classrooms
Indrani Sharma & Binita Basnett	Govt Sr Sec School, Tadong, East Sikkim	Peer Observation
Chukila Lepcha & Sukmit Tasho	Govt Sr Sec School, Tadong, East Sikkim	Team Teaching
Tenzing Peggy Lepcha	Govt Primary School, Selep Tank, East Sikkim	Art Integrated Pedagogy in Teaching of EVS
Arjun Bhandari	Brihaspati Parsai Sr Sec School, Ranipool, East Sikkim	Integration of Mathematics with other Subjects
Sharmila Chettri	Govt Sr Sec School, Soreng, West Sikkim	Experiential Learning
Mingma Sherpa	Govt Primary School, Lum, North Sikkim	Pedagogical Innovations in Teaching of Mathematics & Initiatives to ward School Development
Chimi Ongmu Lepcha	Govt Sec School Manul, North Sikkim	Innovative Pedagogy in Teaching of Science & Initiatives towards School Development

The 2-Day Webinar has been very enriching for all concerned in terms of learning and experiences gained during the Technical Sessions.

## Dummy run for capping operation at Baghjan oilfield

**DIBRUGARH, JUL 29 (PTI):** Oil India Limited (OIL) is planning dummy run of the final capping operation and subsequent killing operation at its Baghjan oilfield in Assam where a well is spewing gas for over two months.

Considering the critical nature of the operations, a dummy run is being planned to be carried out with heavy machinery before the final capping, a release issued by the energy major said.

A well kill is the operation of placing a column of heavy fluid into a well bore in order to prevent the flow of reservoir fluids without the need for pressure control equipment at the surface.

Transferring and unloading of well killing fluid at the site

has been completed and is ready for the operation.

The release said, "Final preparation for capping operation is in progress. All high pressure well control equipment were placed at the designated positions as per plan which included Choke manifold, Ground X-mass tree, BOP control unit and all associated high pressure lines/hoses.

"Heat shields are placed to shield these equipment.

The modified riser was also rigged up to the BOP stack, thus completing the capping stack."

Besides, six high discharge water pumps are operational at the site for spraying water to the well head during the operation.

The well no 5 at Baghjan in Tinsukia district has been spewing gas uncontrollably since May 27 and a fire broke out on June 9, killing two firefighters of the company at the site.

The fire is yet to be doused.

Three foreign experts, involved in the dousing operations, received minor burn injuries on July 22 while removing a spool from the well-head for the final preparation for capping operation, the release said.

The OIL release claimed that the company was facing protests and blockades near many of its wells and field locations, leading to heavy production loss since June.

Operations were disrupted in 12 oil wells and five gas wells and the cumulative production

loss since May 27 due to bandhs and blockades was estimated at 17,646 MT crude oil and 41.83SCM of natural gas, the release said.

Various assessments and impact studies of the blowout as well as the blaze in villages and nearby forest areas by multiple agencies such as ERM India and TERI are going on while the CSIR-NEIST's and IIT-Guwahati have completed data collection which is being analysed and interpreted for final submission.

Surveys for assessment of damage for compensation by the district administration are in progress in both Tinsukia and Doomdooma circles and 2,355 families have been surveyed till July 28, the release added.

Sikkim, Director (EE) cum SPD, Bhim Thatal and other Senior Officials from the Education Department, Government of Sikkim.

The Chairpersons and Penal Observers of Technical Sessions consisted of Faculties from NCERT, New Delhi, Azim Premji University, Bengaluru, Senior Officials of Education Department, Govt. of Sikkim and Principals of DIETs - South & West.

There were around 100 invitees each on both the days who participated in the Webinar. The invitees included Faculties of SCERT, DIETs, BRCCs, CRCCs School Heads & Teachers and Pre-Service Student Teachers of DIET, Gangtok.

## 5 Rafale jets arrive in India in a boost to IAF's combat capability

**AMBALA, JUL 29 (PTI):** India on Wednesday received its first batch of new multirole combat fighter aircraft in nearly two decades with the arrival of five Rafale jets, giving the country's air power a strategic edge in the midst of a bitter border row with China in eastern Ladakh.

The aircraft, having an undisputed track record and considered one of the most potent combat jets globally, landed at the Ambala Air Force base at around 3:10 PM after covering a distance of 7,000 km from the Merignac airbase in French port city of Bordeaux.

"The Birds have landed safely in Ambala," Defence Minister Rajnath Singh tweeted, adding if anyone should be worried about the Indian Air Force's new capability, it should be those who want to threaten "our territorial integrity".

The comment is seen as a veiled message to China.

The Rafales were escorted by two Sukhoi 30 MKIs after they entered the Indian air space and were given a water salute when they landed here.

Singh said that "the touch down of Rafale combat aircrafts in India marks the beginning of a new era in our military history. These multirole aircraft will revolutionise the capabilities of the IAF".

The NDA government had inked a Rs 59,000-crore deal on September 23, 2016 to procure 36 Rafale jets from French aerospace major Dassault Aviation after a nearly seven-year exercise to procure 126 Medium Multi-Role Combat Aircraft (MMRCA) for the Indian Air Force did not fructify during the UPA regime.

The emergency acquisition was made primarily to check the depleting combat capability of the IAF as the number of its fighter squadrons had come down to a worrying 31 against the authorised strength of at least 42.

The fleet, comprising three single seater and two twin seater aircraft, are being inducted into the IAF as part of its Ambala-based No 17 Squadron, also known as the 'Golden Arrows'.

A government statement on Monday said 10 Rafale jets were delivered to India and that five of them are staying back in France for training missions. The delivery of all 36 aircraft will be completed on schedule by the end of 2021, it added.

The Rafale jets, known for air-superiority and precision strikes, are India's first major acquisition of fighter planes in 23 year after the Sukhoi jets were imported from Russia.

The aircraft is capable of carrying a range of potent weapons. European missile maker MBDA's Meteor beyond visual range air-to-air missile, Scalp cruise missile and MICA weapons system will be the mainstay of the weapons package of the Rafale jets. The IAF

is also procuring new generation medium-range modular air-to-ground weapon system Hammer to integrate with the Rafale jets.

Hammer (Highly Agile Modular Munition Extended Range) is a precision-guided missile developed by French defence major Safran. The missile was originally designed and manufactured for the French Air Force and Navy.

Meteor is the next generation of BVR air-to-air missile (BVRAAM) designed to revolutionise air-to-air combat. The weapon has been developed by MBDA to combat common threats facing the UK, Germany, Italy, France, Spain and Sweden.

The Meteor is powered by a unique rocket-ramjet motor that gives it far more engine power for much longer than any other missile, said an official.

Though the jets are being inducted into the IAF on Wednesday, there will be a formal ceremony in mid-August

to welcome them into the force. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and top military brass of the country are expected to attend the event.

The fleet landed at Al Dhafra airbase on Monday in the UAE after flying for over seven hours from the Merignac airbase. It was the only stopover by the jets while flying from France to India.

The jets were also refuelled mid-air from a French tanker at a height of 30,000 feet, according to the Indian Embassy in France.

The first Rafale jet was handed over to the IAF in October last year during a visit to France by the defence minister.

While the first squadron of the Rafale jets will be stationed at Ambala airbase, the second one will be based at Hasimara base in West Bengal.

The Ambala base is considered one of the most strategically located bases of the IAF as the Indo-Pak border is around 220 km from it.

## ~ SummitTIMES ~ CLASSIFIEDS

### FOR RENT:

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

### GENERAL LAND FOR SALE

Riverside land [General] along Ra-nipool-Rumtek Highway near Adampool, stretching from the roadside down till the river bank. Total area measuring 0.2348 Hectares [approximately 25,274 sq ft]. Ideal for developing a Resort. Parties interested in purchasing the entire plot can contact 9083826462 and 9832556698. Brokers will not be entertained.

### FLAT FOR SALE

4BHK flat, total area 2376 sqft  
Ninety Bazaar, Near Paljor  
Stadium, Gangtok  
Contact: 9563083895

### LAND FOR SALE

Two plots available - 30X40 sqft and 50X30 sqft JunkeriDara, SamlikMarchak  
Price negotiable Contact: 6296366498, 9641878315, 9593262407

### 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 Roadside just below housing colony is for sale. It is just a one minute walking distance from Namchi bazaar taxi stand. Interested party may contact 9593373387 and 9434406761

### LAND FOR SALE

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

## Board to take stern action against Gangotri priests who shut doors on nonlocal pilgrims

**DEHRADUN, JUL 29 (PTI):** The Chardham Devasthanam Board on Wednesday warned of stern legal action against those who stop pilgrims from outside Uttarakhand to visit the Gangotri Dham.

The Panch Mandir Samiti, a body of priests and teerth-purohits

of Gangotri Dham, on Tuesday decided to not allow pilgrims from outside the state to visit the temple till August 15 for public safety in view of the growing cases of COVID-19 in the country.

"The decision is illegal. It invites stern punitive action including imprisonment and a fine

for those behind it. The Panch Mandir Samiti has no right to take a decision like this," Chardham Devasthanam Board CEO Ravinath Raman told PTI.

The priests and teerth-purohits have been asked by the Uttarkashi district magistrate to withdraw the decision or face

action, he said.

Terming the decision of priests a clear act of defiance, Raman said no temple under the jurisdiction of the board can go against its orders.

"If any misbehaviour with pilgrims is reported from Gangotri or anywhere else we will act tough," the board CEO

said.

The Devasthanam Board manages 51 temples in Uttarakhand, including the Char Dham.

The Devasthanam Board had opened the Char Dham Yatra for pilgrims from outside the state on July 24 to give an impetus to pilgrimage hit badly by the pandemic.



Facebook.com/  
SummitTimesSikkim  
Fresh lot of rapid information

**Bagheykhola LPG plant provides face-shields and hand sanitizers to Rangpo cops**



**SUMMIT REPORT RANGPO, 29 JUL:** LPG Bottling Plant, Bagheykhola, donated 70 face shields and hand sanitizers to the Rangpo Police Station as a gesture of gratitude today. The consignment was handed over at the Rangpo Police Station by the Plant Head, Suman Tamang to SHO Keshang D Bhutia, a press release informs.

**SC allows filing of plea against environmental clearance to Central Vista project**

**NEW DELHI, JUL 29 (PTI):** The Supreme Court Wednesday allowed filing of a fresh plea challenging the June 17 environmental clearance (EC) granted to the ambitious Central Vista project, covering 3-km stretch from Rashtrapati Bhavan to India Gate in Lutyens' Delhi, for constructing a new Parliament House and other government buildings.

A bench of Justices A M Khanwilkar, Dinesh Maheswari and Sanjiv Khanna allowed senior advocate Shyam Divan to file within a week a fresh plea challenging the EC by the Central Vista Committee' to the project.

The central government will respond to the petition a week after it is filed.

The top court, which posted the petition to be filed for hearing in the week commencing August 17, said however that it was not sure whether physical hearing would commence by then. It has been holding hearing via video conferencing since the COVID-19 lockdown in March.

We permit a week to Divan to file the petition and a week to Centre to reply within a week of receiving the plea... Matter to be posted after two weeks, the bench ordered.

The bench was hearing as many as seven pleas, including two transfer petitions from the Delhi High Court, on the issue and they have been filed by persons like activist Rajeev Suri and retired Lt Col. Anuj Srivastava against various permissions given to the project by the authorities including the nod to change the land use.

At the outset, Divan, appearing for one of the petitioners, said the case was primarily against the permission on change of the land use and then there was an environmental clearance granted on June 17 to the project. He said there were

multiple causes of action and the grant of the EC can be challenged before the National Green Tribunal (NGT) and the apex court cannot use its power to curtail that challenge to the EC before the NGT.

The bench said that there were two other petitions which raised the environmental issues and the fresh plea on EC will be governed by the orders of the apex court only.

Lawyer Shikhil Suri, appearing for Suri, said that one of the pending petitions challenged the grant of EC to the parliament project only, but now the issue of grant of EC to entire Central Vista project has come up.

There is no We versus They' here. Our parliament is being constructed. In future also defence and finance ministry buildings will be constructed, said Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, adding that private individuals are before the court as also the public spirited individuals.

The project has to go through every level of scrutiny that a citizen can invoke. The clearance granted was for the construction of new and renovation of the existing parliament building, Divan said.

Opposing the grant of the EC, Divan said a piecemeal approach was adopted and the entire central vista project was needed to be registered as a township project and then the EC should have been granted. Recently, the CPWD has supported the the project and sought dismissal of the pleas challenging it.

Earlier, the apex court had said that any change at the ground level made by authorities for the Central Vista project will be "at their own risk".

It had made it clear that the fate of the project, which includes several new government buildings and a new Parliament House, will depend on its decision.

**Endangered animals, birds seized in Silchar**

**SILCHAR, JULY 29 (PTI):** Forest personnel in Assam's Cachar district have seized endangered animals and birds from a vehicle coming from Mizoram, officials said on Wednesday.

A kangaroo, six macaw parrots, three tortoises and two monkeys were rescued by the wildlife personnel of Cachar Forest Division at Silchar after they intercepted the vehicle at Lailapur forest sub-beat during routine checking on Tuesday night.

The truck, suspected to be carrying illegal timber, was stopped at Lailapur and during checking, the forest personnel noticed a strong odour emanating from the vehicle, the officials said. On being questioned,

the driver said, it was coming from rotten fruits.

The forest personnel were not convinced and when they searched the vehicle, the animals and birds were found inside cartons and plastic packets.

Two persons, identified as Narsimha Reddy and Navnath Tukaram Daigude, have been detained.

During interrogation, the two persons revealed that the consignment was headed for Guwahati.

DFO Cachar forest division Sunnydeo Choudhary has directed forest range officer of Hawaiihang Range, Dholai, D Deori to investigate the matter and ensure that the health of the animals is monitored by local veterinarians.

**Cong joins Opp chorus against CM blaming lockdown violations for COVID spike**

**SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 29 JUL:** Sikkim Pradesh Congress Committee has condemned the recent statement attributed to the Chief Minister blaming the surge in COVID-19 cases on carelessness of the people.

The party states that it was very unfortunate for a people's representative to issue such statements and has countered that cases have increased not due to the people but due to lapses of the administration. In this regard, the release highlights that the State had not made any arrangements for the cremation of COVID fatalities even four months since directions for it were issued by the WHO.

The Congress party has further alleged that the State government has totally failed in checking price rise during this pandemic and that the people of Sikkim have not received any relief announced by the Centre. On the same, the party demanded the State government to take immediate action to check the price rise in the State to give relief to the people.

The release adds that due to a series of careless acts by the State government, lay people gathered in large numbers. The blame for this rests

with the government and administration, the release adds.

Congress also repeats the Opposition line that the government was quick to take credit when the numbers were low, but now that a spike has occurred, was blaming the people even though it was clear that the administration was ill-prepared.

In this regard, the release highlights that the State had not made any arrangements for the cremation of COVID fatalities even four months since directions for it were issued by the WHO.

The Congress party has further alleged that the State government has totally failed in checking price rise during this pandemic and that the people of Sikkim have not received any relief announced by the Centre. On the same, the party demanded the State government to take immediate action to check the price rise in the State to give relief to the people.

**NHPC scholarships for 10 promising sportspersons**



**SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 29 JUL:** NHPC Limited, Under its 'Sports Scholarship scheme for upcoming sportspersons,' is supporting 10 promising sportspersons with financial support totaling Rs 52.64 lakh. AK Singh, CMD, NHPC handed over the first installment of Rs 1,08,000 to the sportspersons at special

function held at the NHPC Corporate Office today, a press release informs.

Based upon the NHPC Sports policy, the selected players have been placed under 'Elite Scholar' and 'Scholar' categories as per their track record and rankings in their respective sport. The maximum tenure of the

scholarship is three years subject to annual performance review.

During this period, an 'Elite Scholar' category player will receive a monthly stipend of Rs 12,000, Rs 13,000 and Rs 14,000, while 'Scholar' category players shall receive monthly stipends of Rs 9,000, Rs 10,000 and Rs 11,000 during the 1st, 2nd and 3rd years respectively.

The players selected under individual sports such as boxing, wrestling and para sports will be entitled to an additional amount of Rs 48,000 for travel, vehicle expenses etc. while taking part in a maximum of six all-India ranking tournaments. All the players selected under the scheme shall be entitled to yearly kit expenses of Rs 5000.

**Unlock 3 guidelines: No schools, metro, cinema till Aug 31; Gyms allowed**

**NEW DELHI, JUL 29 (PTI):** The nationwide Unlock 3 guidelines were on Wednesday issued by the government, opening up more activities outside the containment zones, but schools, colleges, metro rail service, cinema halls along with bars will remain closed till August 31, the Union Home Ministry said on a statement.

However, restrictions on movement of individuals during night (night curfew) have been removed, according to the ministry.

The Unlock 3 guidelines will come into force from August 1 and strict enforcement of lockdown in containment zones will continue till August 31.

Among the prohibited activities are metro rail services, cinema halls, swimming pools, entertainment parks, theatres, bars, auditoriums, assembly halls and similar places.

After extensive consultation with states and union territories, it has been decided that schools, colleges and coaching institutions

**HAVE A STORY TO SHARE?**  
email us: [news@summittimes.com](mailto:news@summittimes.com)

**Government of India**  
Ministry of Health & Family Welfare  
(North East Division)  
Nirman Bhavan, New Delhi

Recruitment to the post of Director, North Eastern Indira Gandhi Regional Institute of Health & Medical Sciences (NEIGRIHMS), Shillong.

Applications are invited for the post of Director, North Eastern Indira Gandhi Regional Institute of Health & Medical Sciences, Shillong (NEIGRIHMS) an autonomous organization under the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, in the Pay Level 17 Rs. 2,25,000/- (Fixed) (including NPA) subject to maximum of Rs.2,37,500/.

The post is required to be filled by the method of deputation (including short-term contract) / absorption / direct recruitment. The deputation (including short-term contract) / absorption shall be made from Officers of Central / State Governments / Autonomous Organisations / Research Institutions / Universities.

The details of vacancy may be seen on [www.mohfw.gov.in](http://www.mohfw.gov.in) and [www.neigrhms.gov.in](http://www.neigrhms.gov.in)

Last date for submitting of applications is 30 days of date of publishing the vacancy in The Employment News.

Under Secretary to the Govt. of India  
davy 17102/11/0008/2021

**Specialized Dental Clinic of Siliguri (Sevoke Dental Clinic) Branch Open in Gangtok.**

**GANGTOK DENTAL CLINIC**

**NOW OPEN**

10AM to 7PM

**BOOK YOUR APPOINTMENT**

**82106 99271**

**Dr. Anjali Gupta**  
BDS, Dental Surgeon

Near Sisa Golai Below Greendale Hotel Gangtok, East Sikkim +91 8210699271 +91 8768213966

**What is Novel Coronavirus - nCoV?**

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

**Symptoms of nCoV**

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

**Precautions to Prevent nCoV**

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

**Treatment**

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

If you seek help, you may call :  
-Toll free no. 104  
District surveillance Officer  
EAST : 7029372100  
WEST : 9593287809  
NORTH : 9641957468  
SOUTH : 7407691463  
New STNM  
AMS : 9434711402

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

## Let's Pamper Our 10%

*Invest in the children for your own future*

As of 2011, exactly 64,111 members of Sikkim's population were in the 0-6 age-group, making up a neat 10.50% of its population of 6,10,577 people. The national share of population in this age-group is slightly higher at 13.1%, down from 15.9% in 2001. These figures, as per the Census of India 2011. The previous Census, that of 2001, had posted the number of children in this age-group at 78,195, making up 14.50% of Sikkim's population of 5,40,851 at the time.

There has been talk about the fall in fertility rates, with some even suggesting that Sikkimese women should bear more children. While such demands and suggestions are clearly wrong at so many levels, this section had only recently commented on such attitudes, so today, let's discuss "young age dependency", as census enumerators refer to the 0-6 age-group. Dependency ratio can be defined as the age-population ratio of those typically not in the labor force. This would mean the minors and the senior citizens, whose care rests on the shoulders of the productive/working population. Clearly then, the lower this number, the lesser the stress on the working population and better the access to available resources for the 'dependents'. At a wider, society and State level, this means that the existing infrastructure and funds can now go much further since the number of beneficiaries is fewer. Even in absolute terms, for instance, the number of minors has dropped from 78,195 in 2001 to 64,111 in 2011. Given the trend, this number must be even lower now, seven years down the line. Budget outlays have however consistently risen, and even after factoring in inflation, there should be much more available by way of funds for these children per head than was the case two decades ago.

It goes without saying that fewer number of the very young translates into an enhanced ability to invest in child development. It's simplistic, but one needs to be bear in mind that a fewer newborns now, while it might free resources to ensure better care and education for them in the immediate future, also translates as greater responsibilities on their shoulders in the longer run. As a generation ages, they will stop being active contributors to the economy and the work-place. Improved healthcare facilities will mean that they will also remain dependent for more years. The share of elderly will increase, and with fewer young coming of age down the line, the pressure on them to look after the aged will increase. China is feeling the stress of its one-child policy now. That said, today's minors will deliver on their adult responsibilities only as well as they have been groomed in the present. All the more reason why they should be exposed to the best education and groomed with a stronger sense of responsibility and belonging if the present generation wants to be looked after better when they retire and grow into the dependency of old age.

If education is genuinely touched by quality, a more confident and definitely more resourceful generation can be prepared. But Sikkim has been failing its young embarrassingly. Take the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) of 2013, for instance. Where one had hoped that fewer children would have missed improved classroom teaching, the opposite seems to be happening. Reading levels among standard III students dropped from 52% in 2009 to 51% in 2013. Agreed, the drop is marginal, but reading levels were measured as class III students being able to read standard I texts. It should have improved substantially. But it dropped. This was for government schools, and for those who think private schools must have performed better, they didn't. Combined govt and private school data registers an even sharper drop from a combined acceptable level of 61% in 2009 to a worrying 57% in 2013. In mathematics, the fall in learning quality is even more dramatic. In 2009, 60% of the standard III students could do subtraction, the basic for this age, but in 2013, barely 50% in that class could do so anymore!

Where the young should have been learning better because there are fewer of them and still the same number, if not more, of teachers attending to them, the quality of teaching has fallen!

But quality education is something everyone owes to the very young. And now it is also affordable. Think about it, if 90% of the population wakes up to its responsibilities towards the remaining 10% who depend on them for everything, they can ensure that the minors receive the best of everything. If this 90% consciously resolves to genuinely care, a much more responsive, warm and compassionate generation will take charge of Sikkim in the very near future. Unfortunately, there is no indication that the State is doing anything of consequence for its young. The pandemic has been hard on them. Thankfully, not too many of the young are contracting the virus, but they are also not figuring anywhere in the pandemic planning. The online classes, let's accept it, does not even provide a fig-leaf to cover the continued disconnectedness of things.

## COVID-19: Provinces must respect children's rights to education whether or not schools reopen in September

ANNE LEVESQUE  
THECONVERSATION.COM

Children and youth have unwittingly become hot potatoes in one of the most pressing issues our society now faces regarding coronavirus: whether and how schools will reopen in September.

Ontario is expected to make an announcement this week confirming details about its approach to reopening schools, with British Columbia's announcement expected on Wednesday.

Some parents in desperate need of respite are urging a full-time and in-person return of students. They point to the devastating economic consequences of having a large proportion of workers hamstrung by child care.

The evidence is compelling: A recent study from RBC found women are participating in the workforce at the lowest levels in three decades.

In the other camp, politicians, unions and school administrators have warned of the potential health risks that a full-time reopening would pose to staff and students.

But children and youth aren't hot potatoes, they're human beings with rights. As a member of the Interdisciplinary Research Laboratory on the Rights of the Child at the University of Ottawa, I believe that we can depoliticize the back-to-school debate by reframing it with the rights of children and youth at its centre.

But does this mean that children and youth have the right to return to full-time, in-person instruction in September?

### LEGAL OBLIGATION

Governments now face difficult decisions that involve the delicate balance of public health and economic sustainability. At the same time, all decisions must comply with international human rights law, given the fact that Canada is one of the 193 states that ratified the Convention on the Rights of Children (CRC).

This means offering quality education to our children is a legal obligation. If governments want to lessen the quality of education provided to children and youth,

they must first prove that they've given careful consideration of all alternatives and provided the maximum available resources to avoid violating the rights of children and youth.

In this regard, #SchoolsNotBars is more than a catchy hashtag trending on social media. It accurately describes the policy choices that must be made in order to limit community viral transmissions so that we can respect the human rights of children and youth to a quality education.

### CHILD- AND YOUTH-CENTRED APPROACH

The Convention on the Rights of Children is the most widely ratified human rights document globally and it represents a watershed change in how children and youth are regarded. It acknowledges them as full-fledged human beings and rights bearers, and moves away from seeing them as passive recipients of adult actions.

An overarching obligation of states under the convention is to give primary consideration to the best interests of children and youth in all matters concerning them. Canada's ratification of it means that all levels of governments must ensure that their decisions and actions comply with the convention.

The best interests of children and youth appear not to be fully considered in some pandemic policies.

For instance, Stage 2 of Ontario's reopening plan allowed for adult-specific indulgences such as drinks on patios and nail salons.

But while these openings meant adults could drink and get manicures, "playgrounds [and] play structures" were slated to "remain closed," despite the low-risk activities associated with them. The rights of children and youth to play, guaranteed by the convention and vital to their development, continued to be violated.

### RIGHTS-BASED DECISIONS

The right to education is guaranteed by the Convention on the Rights of Children and is intrinsically linked with the best interests of

children and youth. As observed by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, education is both a human right in itself and an indispensable means of realizing other human rights.

Children have a right to an education that develops their full potential, including their respect for human rights, their sense of identity and affiliation and socialization, in an environment that prepares them for all aspects of life.

Schools are where children and youth go to have a wide range of their rights fulfilled. These include the right to be protected from violence, the right to receive information, the right to play, the right to access social support and to exercise their freedom of thought and assembly.

While we are rightly called to account for historic and present systemic problems with schools as sites of injustice, discrimination or abuse, schools can also be sanctuaries for marginalized or vulnerable children and youth.

For example, children and youth with disabilities rely on schools to access technologies that will help them overcome communication barriers. Gay-Straight Alliances provide safety and confidentiality for LGBTQ2 students to affirm or educate themselves about sexual orientation, sexual identity, gender identity and gender expression.

Schools can also help counter linguistic and cultural assimilation in Canada's official language minority communities.

### MUST PROVE ALL ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

Under international human rights law, the scaling back of the quality of the education provided to children and youth ought to be avoided. It is permitted in only in very limited circumstances. Educational experts have argued that online and part-time education is insufficient, inadequate and inequitable compared to safe, full-time, in-person instruction.

If governments want to lessen the quality of education provided, they must first prove they've given careful consideration to

all alternatives and provided the maximum available resources to avoid violating the rights of children and youth.

The government must canvass all other physical locations available to hold in-person instruction to guarantee small class sizes and comply with physical distancing policies if the current infrastructure is lacking.

Accommodation plans must be made for students and teachers who are immunocompromised.

Measures must also be taken so that schools can open safely while respecting the rights of students and teachers to enjoy the highest attainable standard of health. This means that the return-to-school plan must involve efforts to limit community transmission.

A preliminary budget prepared by the Toronto District School Board shows that financial costs associated with implementing the required public health guidelines would be steep.

### IF IT IS TRULY UNSAFE

If returning to in-person instruction is truly impossible for public health reasons after considering all of these options, training and support must be provided to teachers to create and deliver quality distance education to children and youth that is adapted to their needs and accessible to those with various needs and circumstances. Developing curricula in a haphazard manner isn't acceptable.

It's not unusual that respecting human rights involves considerable financial expenses and complex logistical hurdles.

The right to vote, for example, requires the creation of 20,000 polling stations and the hiring of more than 233,000 people to tend to them.

Adults must now make similar large-scale efforts and financial expenditures in order to respect the rights of our children and youth to a quality and safe education in September.

*[the writer is Assistant professor, Faculty of Law, L'Université d'Ottawa/University of Ottawa]*

## The 'Keep It Real Online' campaign wants parents to talk to kids about porn — but where to start?

TRACY CLELLAND  
THECONVERSATION.COM

The hugely successful "Keep It Real Online" video aimed at getting parents to talk to their children about pornography has gone viral and been praised around the world. But my 16-year-old son asked an interesting question when he looked at the campaign website: "Why does it say talk 'to' your child? Shouldn't it be 'with'?"

This is why I always ask his opinion about how he makes sense of the world. As a sexuality educator for over 30 years, a university lecturer and mother of two teenage sons, it has been my privilege to listen to people's stories of sexuality and the impact on their lives.

Some have been uplifting and some are simply heartbreaking. Either way, young people and adults generally want to reflect on the complicated, messy and often irrational nature of sex and relationships. They also want to talk about joy, pleasure, intimacy and love.

### YOUNG PEOPLE WANT BETTER SEX AND RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION

So any discussion of pornography inevitably leads to a broader conversation — much like the one we imagine is about to take place in that viral video.

In case you haven't watched it, two naked porn actors arrive at an ordinary home to talk to a boy who has been watching them online. The mother who answers the door is understandably surprised and a little lost for words. But in the end she tells her son they need to talk about the difference between the online and real worlds.

The video provides an excellent starting point for parents and children to have conversations about our understanding of sex, relationships and gender.

As the research continues to show, young people want better sexuality education from the adults in their lives. But what does better sexuality education look, sound and feel like to young people?

Before parents can talk with their children, they first need to reflect on how ideas about pornography are in turn shaped by broader socio-cultural values and attitudes towards young people, sex, relationships and the digital world. Too often, parents' anxieties about the loss of



childhood innocence make them feel they need to be the expert who talks to their child about the dangers of pornography.

You might define this as a fear-based approach, and it can lead to young people having feelings of shame and guilt for being curious about sex. Very often this can be the end of the conversation.

### LISTENING RATHER THAN EXPLAINING

It's not easy, but parents should try not to let their own worries about pornography override their capacity to talk with, rather than to, their children about all aspects of sexuality. By doing so they will also help young people explore and develop their own critical thinking and media literacy.

My current research explores how 56 New Zealand parents understand and experience sexuality education with their children. Embarrassment and feeling unprepared continue to make it difficult for parents and young people to talk about sex, let alone porn.

If they do talk about pornography, we're finding it is challenging to shift from being the parent who knows and explains to the one who asks open questions, listens and invites their child to share their world view.

But the fact is, as extensive research from the New Zealand Classification Office has shown, many young people have already seen pornography. The top two reasons they give are curiosity and that they found it by accident.

As adults and parents we need to remember that young people are sexual beings who are curious about sex. They often report that

parental messaging doesn't match their own feelings and experiences.

### LETTING YOUNG PEOPLE LEAD THE CONVERSATION

For those reasons, a conversation about pornography as a social, cultural, personal and highly complex issue can be a way into a deeper discussion.

From there we can explore what it means to navigate the bumpy roads of sex and relationships. Sexuality education by parents sometimes tries to smooth out those bumps with information and advice rather than shared discussion. Yet it's through the emotional wrestle with social and cultural expectations that our sexual selves develop.

We need to allow young people to narrate their own lived experiences. At the same time, we should foster their ability to critique the wider moral landscapes in which they live.

Embrace sexuality as messy, complex, irrational, emotional and part of being human. Don't look for the "right" answers from young people. Allow them to explore the emotional complexity and joy of sexuality. In this way, online access to pornography becomes just another intersection on their sexuality journey.

That is the beauty of the "Keep It Real Online" video — it's humour allows us to ask young people open-ended questions. What should adults really be saying to young people? What do they think about pornography? What do they think constitutes a healthy relationship? Who is advantaged and disadvantaged by the porn industry?

Most of all, pause, breathe, don't judge. Young people are far more insightful than adults sometimes give them credit. They are constantly watching, learning and working out how society expects them to behave.

Sometimes parents need to be open — but keep their mouths shut!

*[the writer is Lecturer in Health Education, University of Canterbury]*

Now you can whatsapp

SummitTIMES @

9832556698

9832080753

## Bengal wears deserted look on 3rd day of biweekly total lockdown



**KOLKATA, JUL 29 (PTI):** Residents of West Bengal woke up to empty roads and deserted public places on Wednesday as a complete lockdown was enforced across the state to break the chain of surging coronavirus cases.

All public transport, government and private offices, banks and other commercial establishments, barring those dealing with essential services, remained closed as the biweekly strict restrictions were enforced.

Flight operations in and out of the Kolkata international airport were also suspended for

the day.

Long-distance trains were also rescheduled due to the lockdown.

Essential services like medicine shops and health establishments remained open as these were kept out of the purview of the complete shutdown. Petrol pumps are also allowed to remain open on the lockdown days.

Police personnel were seen patrolling major traffic intersections of the city.

Schools, colleges and other educational institutes have remained closed in the state since late March when the first phase of the nationwide

lockdown started.

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee had on Tuesday said that the biweekly total lockdown decision was taken after consulting with experts to curb the increasing number of coronavirus cases in the state.

The total lockdown will be on seven days in August.

The death toll due to COVID-19 in West Bengal rose to 1,449 on Tuesday as 38 more people succumbed to the disease, as per a state health department bulletin.

A total of 2,134 fresh cases pushed the state's tally to 62,964, it said.

## Formal complaints lodged against misappropriation & misrepresentation of Naga culture

**DIMAPUR, JULY 29 [NAGALAND PAGE]:** Online retail giants Amazon and Flipkart have acknowledged the formal complaints lodged by three Naga women against two of their vendors for misrepresenting Naga culture and hurting the sentiments of the Nagas. But formal action against the vendors has not been initiated yet.

Three Naga women, all residing in Delhi, Chunthailiu Gonmei, Ningthuliu Gonmei and Weneiu Mero had lodged formal complaints to Amazon on July 23 and Flipkart on July 22, through their lawyer K Enatoli Sema, asking both the e-commerce platforms to remove the vendors immediately for selling culturally offensive and misleading outfits claiming to represent Naga culture.

American singer and actress Selena Gomez had infamously described her Bollywood-inspired look – particularly the use of the bindi – during the performance of Come and Get it at MTV Awards as “glam-tribal.” Naturally there was hue and cry and the Spring Breakers actress had to face barbs. Misappropriation of Indian culture by the West has long been a flaring point, but even as India fusses over the “disrespectful” use of its attires and symbols, the story within has apparently been no different, vis-à-vis misrepresentation of the Northeast.

The growing popularity of Northeast as a tourism destination and emergence of fashion, music celebrities from the region in the national platform has been contributing towards bridging the gap. But the indifferent attitude of what is construed as the “mainland India” gets reflected time and again – the latest in the chain of such incidences being the “Nagaland Triple

Girl” goof-up by top e-commerce platforms Amazon and Flipkart.

For the uninitiated, in the first week of July, netizens came across cheap fancy dress costumes being peddled, as Naga traditional attire, by two vendors namely, Kaku Fancy Dresses and Chandu Ka Dukan on Flipkart and Amazon. The animal print attire, feathered headgears, etc were being sold as Naga traditional costume “fancy dresses” for children. Nagaland Page had also highlighted the blooper in its July 9 issue.

Naga traditional attires like the shawls and mekhalas, woven painstakingly by Naga women on looms, have captured the imagination of many, even internationally, and command a niche market. But most are not aware of the social, religious and cultural significances of the weaves. Each Naga tribe has its distinct colour combination and pattern of weave, and for those in the know, the tribe of a Naga man or woman can be ascertained by the weaves he or she wears or carries. The “Nagaland Triple Girl” costumes that were up for sale in the online marketplace ~ not even remotely resembled anything Naga ~ the apparels shared far striking resemblance to the stereotype reel tribal attires of Bollywood.

Speaking to Nagaland Page over phone from Delhi, Weneiu Mero, one of the three complainants, said that they found the costumes very offensive. “They (vendors) probably look at Nagas as exotic,” Mero says while adding that “it is a shame to sell such costumes to children who would be basing their knowledge about Nagas on these outfits.”

Mero feels that just removing the offensive items from their platform isn't enough, but the e-commerce giants should also remove the

vendors from the sites. “By removing them (vendors), others would be careful in future not to blatantly misrepresent Naga culture, or for that matter any other culture. Action taken by Flipkart and Amazon would also be a good way to educate people.”

Mero also informed that both Amazon and Flipkart have acknowledged the legal complaints. Amazon has also assured that action would be taken within 7 days (after July 24).

It would be pertinent to mention that in January 2017, the Government of Nagaland had announced a tie-up with Amazon India to enable Naga women entrepreneurs in the state to sell their products online.

Under the partnership, Amazon in was to conduct extensive training and skill development workshops to help women entrepreneurs in Nagaland understand nuances related to online selling.

In their complaints, the three complainants have stated, “We take umbrage at these culturally offensive and misleading outfits that have been claimed to represent the Naga culture.” “The items in question on sale are gross misrepresentations of the Naga traditional attires and have been irresponsibly manufactured and marketed as “Traditional Costume Nagaland” and “Nagaland Triple (sic) Costume” thus misrepresenting Naga culture to the wider world,” the complaint read.

The complainants also pointed out that utmost care must be taken to ensure that the attires are not misrepresented lest children and others who notice and wear these outfits are misguided and wrongly taught about the cultures of

# 91 new COVID-19 cases in Arunachal Pradesh; tally rises to 1,330

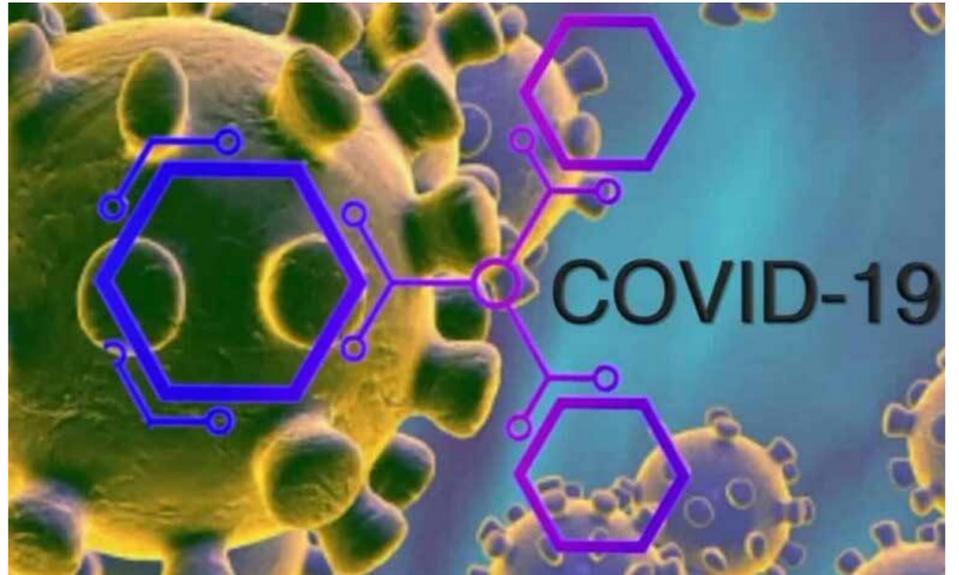
**ITANAGAR, JULY 29 [PTI]:** Ninety-one people, including 19 security personnel have tested positive for COVID-19 in Arunachal Pradesh, taking the northeastern state's caseload to 1,330 on Wednesday, a senior health department official said.

Of the total cases, 710 are active as 617 people have recovered from the disease and three have died, state Surveillance Officer L Jampa said.

The Capital Complex region reported 28 cases, followed by Changlang district (18), East Kameng (10), Tirap (8), Upper Siang (6), West Kameng (5), Lohit (4), East Siang (3), two each in West Siang, Namsai and Lower Dibang Valley districts and one each in Lower Siang, Leparada and Tawang district respectively, Jampa said.

All the fresh infections in the Capital Complex region were detected during rapid antigen tests. Of the 18 new cases reported from Changlang district, 10 were detected from Rankatu Tea Estate at Bordumsa, two were Assam Rifles personnel who have recently returned from Manipur and rest are civilians, he said.

Of the 10 fresh cases in East Kameng district, six were detected at Seppa, the



district headquarters town while four were returnees from Tawang and were detected at quarantine centres, Jampa said.

In Tirap district, out of the eight infected people, five are Assam Rifles jawans and three are Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel.

All the six fresh cases reported from Upper Siang district are Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) personnel detected from quarantine centre, while the five cases of West Kameng are returnees from Assam, Jampa said.

One ITBP personnel infected with the virus was also detected from Leparada district, he said.

The four fresh cases

from Lohit district are members of the same family who have returned to the district from West Bengal, while the three cases in East Siang district are essential commodities drivers detected in the check gate through RDT-Antigen tests, he said.

The two new cases from Lower Dibang Valley and one fresh case from Tawang are Border Roads Task Force (BRTF) personnel who have returned from outside and kept at quarantine facilities, Jampa said, adding that the two new cases in Namsai district are police personnel.

The lone case detected in Lower Siang district, had returned

from Karnataka and detected at quarantine centre, he said.

Barring two all the cases are asymptomatic and shifted to Covid care centres, he added.

Forty-three people, including 16 from the Capital Complex region, have recovered from COVID-19 and were discharged from hospitals on Tuesday, Jampa said.

Arunachal Pradesh witnessed a spurt in coronavirus cases after the residents of the state started returning from other parts of the country.

The state has recently registered a steep rise in the number of COVID-19 cases, with 1,139 people testing positive for the infection since

July 1, Jampa said.

Arunachal Pradesh reported its first COVID-19 case on April 2 and the person recovered from the disease on April 16. The state registered its second case on May 24.

The Capital Complex region, comprising Itanagar, Naharlagun, Banderdewa and Nirjuli areas, has the highest number of active COVID-19 cases at 353, followed by Papum Pare (54), Changlang (51), Namsai (38), Tirap (36), East Siang (33) and Tawang (27), the official said.

The recovery rate among the COVID-19 patients in Arunachal Pradesh is 35 per cent and 68,034 samples have been tested for the disease in the state so far, Jampa added.

the Northeastern States of India. “It cannot be stressed enough that the Nagas attach very high value to their culture, and efforts are being made even now to acquire the Geographical Indication (GI) tags for their indigenous products,” the complaint stated.

The complainants also have pointed out the violation of the terms of use as listed on e-commerce sites for vendors according to which the vendors must not use the site for any material that is ‘illegal, offensive, deceptive, misleading, ethnically objectionable, etc.’

Stating that concerned vendors are using the e-commerce platforms to display, upload, publish and transmit information which is not only incorrect and misleading but highly offensive in nature, the complainants demanded for the concerned sellers to be indefinitely suspended and their membership terminated.

Cultural appropriation, also called cultural misappropriation, of marginalized cultures/communities by the dominant ones and exploitation of their culture for economic purposes have long debated and campaigned against. In 2017, delegates from 189 countries, a part of a specialised committee within the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), had called on the UN to criminalise the cultural appropriation of indigenous peoples all over the world.



# SummitTIMES

SIKIM/SCAN | CapitalTIMES | Neighbourhood WATCH | Sports & Specials | EbnWhere | EICETERA

It's easy to relax...

When you can trust the News.

VIDEO NEWS SECTION

Facebook.com/SummitTimesOnline



To book ad-space, contact SummitTIMES at

**GANGTOK:**

For circulation details Contact: +91-9748877695, +91-9647702692

& for Advertisement booking at +91-9930427905 or at office no 03592

200670. Mail us at advertise@summittimes.com

**SILIGURI:**

Mr. Mani Rai, H/a. Space Ads, B.R. Ambedkar Building, Room No.7, 1st

floor, Opp. Bangla Hotel, Hill Cart Road, Siliguri - 03. Ph. +91-9832318644/980682989/9153035100 or mail at mani\_siliguri@yahoo.co.in.

**KOLKATA OFFICE:**

Irshad Ali/Imteyaz, Synapse, 4, Madan Street, Mezzine - 2, 2nd floor, Kolkata -

700072, Ph. 033-22124148/ fax 033-22124037/ mob. +91-9030547774/ +91-

98300397, E-mail: contact.synapse@gmail.com/irshad\_ali23@rediffmail.com

**Phone**

03592-208698

+91-9832556698

+91-9832080753

**www.summittimes.com**

news@summittimes.com

summittimes4@gmail.com

advertise@summittimes.com

**Address:**

Santa Bhawan Complex, Church Road

Near Diesel Power House (DPH)

Gangtok, East Sikkim, 737101

# Ruqsana Begum: 'My story is bigger than boxing'

DONALD MCRAE

**LONDON, 29 JUL [THEGUARDIAN]:** The tears of Ruqsana Begum, which splash down on the blue canvas of the ring, are not a sign of weakness. They are, instead, markers of the battles she has won over the years. As a young Bangladeshi woman from east London on her way to becoming a Muay Thai world champion, Begum endured an arranged marriage, panic attacks, depression, bullying in the gym and ravaging bouts of ME [chronic fatigue syndrome].

She cries during our long interview on a hazy summer afternoon in Bethnal Green but never loses her composure. Each time the former kickboxing dynamo wipes away her tears, laughs a little while saying sorry, and continues. "Those moments have led me to this moment," she says after one poignant pause, "where I now manage to not look for approval from outside. Rather, I go inwards and find strength from within."

Begum reiterates her passion for fighting and her certainty that she can still become a success in her new sport of boxing despite the odds stacked against her. "I do love it. Stepping into the ring allows you to grow because you're putting yourself in such depths of fear. And when you overcome that there's such a sense of accomplishment. I love that and the fact I'm constantly working towards my goal, and progressing, even if I sometimes lose."

She is a petite 36-year-old, a warm and reflective woman who also has a degree in architecture. At 5ft 3in, she does not look like a fighter. And so it's strange, at first, to reconcile the fact that the violent backdrop of Muay Thai and boxing have brought serenity into Begum's often turbulent world.

"I think any creative art form, whether music or dance, Muay Thai or boxing, allows you to channel emotion and express yourself," she says. "I was fortunate to have discovered Thai boxing when I had few other opportunities to express myself. I found my passion in life and realised I was good at it. But it's like anything in life - talent is nothing without sacrifice. There needs to be hard work. There needs to be discipline and focus."

"So when I had all those problems I didn't blame others. I took responsibility and said: 'OK, this is where I am. How do I move forward?' I found the best way to heal myself is through sport. So I'm really grateful for having Muay Thai and now boxing in my life."

Begum's new book, *Born Fighter*, provides an absorbing insight into the obstacles she faced. It is written with Sarah Shephard and the two women,



from Muslim and Jewish backgrounds, complement each other as we learn how Begum hid her passion for Thai boxing from her family for many years. She was torn between her desire to be a dutiful Muslim daughter and a darker yearning to discover her real self in the ring.

The KO Combat Academy, where much of the book is set, is located under an arch in a backstreet of Bethnal Green. Trains clatter overhead and it makes me think how intimidating it must have been for a teenage Bangladeshi girl to approach a gym. "The original gym was across the road," Begum explains, "and I can't believe I had the courage to walk in. This is now more a commercial gym whereas back then it was hardcore. It was just fighters."

Bill Judd, who trained Begum to her world championship, welcomes us today. He was just as accepting, if initially surprised, when the 18-year-old Begum told him she wanted to be a fighter. She could cover the bruises on her arms and legs, which she took from kicks, but she became adept at avoiding blows to her face. And when she was marked up her sister helped her hide the damage or she pulled her hijab more closely around her face.

Five years later Begum was forced to abandon Muay Thai. She was coerced into an arranged marriage by her family - who meant well in adhering to the traditions of their culture. "I was 23 and it was overwhelming," Begum recalls. "I thought: 'Whoa, I need to take a breath because I don't even know him.' I felt so much pressure to go along with it so I tried to speak to my mum. She waved me away and was very dismissive. They made it

clear this was going to happen."

Begum stresses that her husband, a banker from east London, was not a monster. Her book's most harrowing pages detail how she felt trapped and suffocated living with her husband's family who expected her to do so many chores on their behalf. "I was oppressed," she says. "I didn't have that freedom to say: 'I'm feeling a bit tired so I'll do the washing in an hour.' I was constantly trying to please them but whatever I did wasn't enough. At the same time I'd started a high-pressure job as a trainee architect. Eventually it took a toll on me."

Begum details the severe panic attacks which engulfed her after nine months. Her doctor advised her to move back to her parents. She was in a terrible state and only the eventual understanding of her parents stabilised her. What would have happened if they had insisted she return to her marriage? "I would have stood my ground and said no. But it would have been a battle to find the courage and strength - especially when I was very vulnerable. My father was in two minds. But my mum and older brother were like: 'No, she has to go back. This is the tradition.' I tried to explain it to my father after one of my therapy sessions. And his reaction wasn't good. But at that point my ex-husband filed for divorce and I was thinking: 'God, it's the biggest relief.' My parents understood then what I had been through."

"I was on antidepressants for four months and completely bedridden. But I didn't want to be on antidepressants because they numb you. The only thing I remembered enjoying was Muay Thai and so I told myself: 'Get back to the gym.'

One day I asked my parents to drop me off when they were coming to Whitechapel to shop. I then said: 'Actually, can you come in with me?' I introduced them to Bill."

The trainer outlined the discipline of the sport and stressed how Begum was so respectful, and respectable, in the gym. Her parents agreed she could return. But new problems soon emerged. Begum cries when she tells me how she was bullied by other female fighters at the gym.

"It went on for five years and Bill kept saying to me: 'Why don't you just leave and go to another gym?' I thought: 'No. I don't want to be pushed out.' Bill hated it but his focus was on that group of girls. I wish he supported me more because I just wanted equal treatment. So it really broke my heart and that's why I'm torn about this place. I've had some amazing moments here but also a lot of pain."

Begum shocked everyone in 2011 by becoming a European champion in Latvia without having anyone in her corner. A Danish trainer in the crowd ran to help her when he saw Begum was on her own between rounds.

Over the next few years Judd worked more closely with Begum and helped her become a world champion kickboxer in 2016. In the week of her defining fight against Susanna Salmijärvi, her ME was so debilitating that Begum was stunned when she passed a medical to fight. "I was bed-bound the whole week so I said to Bill: 'I'm too weak to even do a warm-up. Just put me in the ring. If anything happens, throw in the towel. But give me the first round so I have those two minutes to try and knock her out. This is an opportunity I'll never get again.' I had enough energy for two minutes which could define the rest of my life."

She came close to an early knockout but her opponent got up and, at the end of a brutal fight, Begum absorbed sustained punishment. She had done just enough to become world champion and, as she says

now, "It was a 10-year journey and my first thought was: 'Thank you, God.'"

When she got home that night, battered but carrying her world championship belt, she woke her parents. "My dad jumped out of bed and started calling his friends," she laughs. "That morning I'd been unwell and he didn't speak to me. I wanted his blessing but he tried to pretend he didn't know about the fight. I asked my mum for her blessing. She prayed and gave me a big hug. But when I got home around midnight my dad was so happy and proud."

Her parents surprised her when they did not resist her decision to accept an offer from David Haye to switch to professional boxing in 2018. It has been difficult for Begum and she has only had two bouts as a pro boxer - both against Ivanka Ivanova. The first fight was a draw and then, in June 2019, she was hurt badly and lost a decision to her Bulgarian opponent.

"She didn't hurt me in the first fight and so I was shocked the second time. There was just something unusual about her that night. When I hit her there was no reaction. That freaks me out because I've sparred with some boys, and good pros, in Vegas. I've made their noses bleed and if I hit someone there's always some reaction. But there was nothing like that in our second fight. She was like a zombie."

"It didn't help that she elbowed me in the first 30 seconds and my eye completely closed. I was fighting with just one eye and it was very hard to measure distance. Everyone wanted me to give up afterwards but I've followed my gut. It's a learning curve and the only problem with boxing is that once you lose your unbeaten record it's meant to be over. And it's far harder being a female boxer because there are no journeywomen. Any woman that goes into boxing is a serious fighter because they wouldn't get signed otherwise."

The Covid crisis has made it even more difficult but Begum is convinced she will become a world champion boxer. She is in talks with promoters in the US and says: "I'm hopeful. I feel like my story is bigger than boxing and these challenges will make me a better fighter and a better person. For me it's nothing new. I've already gone through so many challenges in a different sport and in my life."

Begum stands up and curls one of her fighting hands into a fist. The world outside is reeling and we have our masks at the ready before we leave the gym. But it feels right that this born fighter should stretch out her hand and bump her fist lightly against mine. "Phew, it was emotional," she says simply as she reflects on the story of her life, "but it was good."

## Lanka Premier League to kick off on August 28: SLC



**COLOMBO, JUL 28 (PTI):** The inaugural Lanka Premier League T20 tournament will kick off on August 28, the Sri Lanka Cricket Board (SLC) said.

The board gave its approval to the tournament during its executive committee meeting on Monday. Five teams will compete for the title over 23 games.

"Sri Lanka Cricket Executive Committee at the meeting held today (27th July) granted approval to conduct the inaugural Lanka Premier League T20 Tournament from 28th August to 20th September 2020," SLC said in a statement.

The tournament will be played on the "four international venues of R Premadasa International Cricket Stadium, Rangiri Dambulu International Cricket Stadium, Pallekele International Cricket Stadium and Suriyawewa Mahinda Rajapakse International Cricket Stadium."

"5 Teams named

after the cities of Colombo, Kandy, Galle, Dambulla and Jaffna will participate in the League."

The Board said that "over 70 International players and 10 top notch coaches have already confirmed their availability for the tournament along with leading Sri Lankan national players."

In the tournament, each franchise will be allowed to pick a maximum of six foreign players in the squad with only four in the final eleven.

The Board will come out with a schedule for the tournament later and said "the bidding for the event's Title Holder is due to close on July 30th".

SLC, which had conceived the league in 2018, was earlier optimistic of conducting the event from August 8 to 22, pending government's decision to open the country's border for foreign arrivals.

## If something is not done soon, you will see smaller countries playing less: Holder

Manchester, Jul 29 (PTI): West Indies captain Jason Holder feels "relevant" authorities need to ensure that smaller teams get to play regular international cricket as in a world scarred by COVID-19, only India, Australia and England have the resources to stage games in bio-secure bubbles.

The cricketing fraternity has lauded the West Indies' decision to tour England amid the pandemic. The three Test-series, which England won 2-1 on Tuesday, marked resumption of international cricket.

The series was played in a bio-secure environment increasing organisational costs significantly and Holder said teams like the West Indies are likely to struggle to create a similar environment.

"If something doesn't happen soon we'll see less international cricket being played by smaller countries because we simply can't afford it. We've gone from having four, five-match series, down to two and three," Holder said after the conclusion of the third Test here.

"And it's very difficult to host any more than that for us, particularly the Caribbean. So yeah, it is a serious dilemma that we're faced with. I think the relevant personnel really need to sit down and have a look at it," he added.

The West Indies were confined to just two venues -- Manchester and Southampton -- during the eight-week tour. Both teams stayed on site.

Holder hopes that England too will reciprocate their gesture and tour the Caribbean soon.

"We only really make money from England, and I think India. We break even with Pakistan and Australia, and all the rest of the series we play are losses. But in these trying times only England, Australia and India can probably host cricket," he said.

"Outside of that, the smaller territories are struggling financially to get cricket on...if there's an opportunity for England to come over to the Caribbean before the end of the year, I'm sure that would help

significantly for Cricket West Indies' financial records."

The West Indies players and staff have had to take pay cuts due to the financial impact of COVID-19 on their board.

"It's been a tough couple of years in West Indies cricket financially. We've pretty much had to take a pay cut, so if it's possible to host a tour before the end of 2020, it would probably keep us afloat as an organisation," Holder said when asked about the current situation.

Despite the challenges posed by this tour, Holder said it was enjoyable.

"I've thoroughly enjoyed the experience. It's the first time I've had the opportunity to mingle with, more or less, the A-team players, because I haven't played much first-class cricket in the last couple of years."

"I'm not sure right now if Cricket West Indies could afford to have an academy, or something similar to Loughborough here in England, but that is definitely something that would help CWI," he added.

## Anand suffers seventh loss in Legends of Chess tourney



**CHENNAI, JUL 29 (PTI):** Former world champion Viswanathan Anand crashed to his seventh defeat in the USD 150,000 Legends of Chess online tournament, going down 0.5-2.5 to world No.3 Ding Liren in the eighth round.

Going into the match against the Chinese after ending his six-match losing streak, Anand surrendered the first game in just 22 moves late on Tuesday.

The duo settled for a 47-move draw in the second before Liren sealed victory in the third game with black pieces in 41 moves.

Anand lies last in the table with six points with Liren and Peter Leko.

The 50-year old Indian takes on Vasyil Ivanchuk in the ninth and final round.

World No.1 Magnus Carlsen overcame the

challenge of Russian Ian Nepomniachtchi after the four-game contest ended at 2-all.

The Armageddon (a tie-break) also ended in a stalemate but the Norwegian won and picked up three points because he played black.

The Norwegian player maintains his position at the top of the table with 22 points followed by Nepomniachtchi (19) and Anish Giri (15). Carlsen has won all the eight matches he has played so far.

Giri lost 2-3 to veteran Ivanchuk but is in line to qualify for the last four.

Legends of Chess is a unique event where Carlsen, Liren, Nepomniachtchi and Giri, semifinalists at the Chessable Masters (part of the Magnus Carlsen Tour), received an automatic

invite and are up against six legends aged 40-52, who have been at the top of world chess at various points in their career.

The tournament is part of the Magnus Carlsen Chess Tour. The winner of this event will qualify for the USD 300,000 Grand Final scheduled from August 9 to 20.

Results of Round 8: Ding Liren (China) beat Viswanathan Anand (India) 2.5-0.5; Magnus Carlsen (Norway) beat Ian Nepomniachtchi (Russia) 2.5-2.5 (Carlsen won after drawing Armageddon with black); Peter Svidler (Russia) beat Vladimir Kramnik (Russia) 2.5-1.5; Vasyil Ivanchuk (Russia) beat Anish Giri (the Netherlands) 3-2; Boris Gelfand (Israel) beat Peter Leko (Hungary) 3-2.

## China under Xi has become very aggressive, bullish: Nikki Haley

WASHINGTON, JUL 29 (PTI): China under President Xi Jinping has become more aggressive and bullish, former US Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley said on Tuesday, asserting that such a behavior is unlikely to last long.

Indian-American Haley, in an interview to Fox News, said the Chinese were quiet and strategic during her tenure at the UN. They moved and made sure that they were trying to get positions in certain areas, and trying to get things done behind closed doors, she said.

"Then once President Xi kind of named himself king, they got very aggressive. They got very bullish. They started to kind of point their fingers in countries' faces saying, you'd better vote with us. They started to be very aggressive at the UN in wanting positions and wanting to have leadership roles. And they started talking down to everyone," Haley alleged.

With their Belt and Road initiative, the Chinese started really trying to buy up these infrastructures or partnering with smaller countries on infrastructure projects, she said.

"But yet they go in, they wouldn't assimilate with the countries. The



countries didn't like their attitude when they were coming in. Now we look at it, it's getting more aggressive in tone," said Haley, who resigned as UN ambassador in 2018 after nearly two years in the post.

"But this can't last. You know, any country that is not letting its people be free, there will be a time when the people rebel. So right now they're continuing to push, they're continuing to put pressure on Hong Kong, as we've seen. We're starting to see the pressure go to Taiwan, the South China Sea, in India. All of this is them playing kind of a king of the mountain scenario," Haley said.

She said the US needs to "let them know we're on to them, we need to actually follow through on the intellectual

property measures that were in that trade deal that we had and hold them accountable".

"We need to make sure we continue to let them know we're building up our military so that they know not to mess with us. We need to make sure that our American companies understand that when you do business in China, you are required to work with the Chinese military. That is a national security threat to America. And we really need to have those conversations with those Americans," Haley said in response to a question.

Supporting President Donald Trump's decision to close the Chinese consulate in Houston, Haley alleged that these consulates have been "spy centres" for a long

time.

"I mean there's no question that they had some illegal activity going on in those consulates. So I was thrilled to see them close down the one in Houston, which was known to be kind of the epicentre of where all of this was going on. And I think, you know, when you have Chinese officials being hidden at consulates, it goes to show you're doing something wrong," she said.

"This is where we really have to crack down on the spying. Whether it's the intellectual property, whether it's the theft that they're trying to do with our research with the vaccine and with what's going on with the coronavirus, we have to really start cracking down. I was glad to see them do that," Haley said.

## Very different, symbolic hajj in Saudi Arabia amid virus

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP): Muslim pilgrims, donning face masks and moving in small groups after days in isolation, began arriving to Islam's holiest site in Mecca on Wednesday for the start of a historically unique and scaled-down hajj experience reshaped by the coronavirus pandemic.

The hajj is one of Islam's most important requirements, performed once in a lifetime. It follows a route the Prophet Muhammad walked nearly 1,400 years ago and is believed to ultimately trace the footsteps of the prophets Ibrahim and Ismail, or Abraham and Ishmael as they are named in the Bible.

The hajj, both physically and spiritually demanding, is intended to bring about greater humility and unity among Muslims.

Rather than standing and praying shoulder-to-shoulder in a sea of people from different walks of life, pilgrims this year are social distancing — standing apart and moving in small groups of 20 to limit exposure and the potential transmission of the coronavirus.

The pilgrimage is a journey that Muslims traditionally experience with relatives. In past years, it was common to see men pushing their elderly parents around on wheelchairs in order to help them complete the hajj, and parents carrying children on their backs. The communal feeling of more than 2.5 million people from around the world — Shiite, Sunni and other Muslim sects — praying together, eating together and repenting together has long been part of what makes hajj both a challenging and rewarding experience like none other.

This year, however, pilgrims are eating prepackaged meals alone

in their hotel rooms and praying at a distance from one another. The Saudi government is covering all the pilgrims' expenses of travel, accommodation, meals and healthcare.

While the experience is starkly different, it remains an opportunity for pilgrims to wipe clean past sins and deepen their faith.

Ammar Khaled, a 29-year-old Indian pilgrim who was born and raised in Saudi Arabia, said although he's alone on the hajj, he's praying for those he loves.

"Words aren't enough to explain how blessed I feel and how amazing the arrangements have been," Khaled said. "They have taken every possible precaution."

For the first time in Saudi history, the government barred Muslims from entering the kingdom from abroad to perform the hajj in order to limit exposure of the coronavirus.

Instead, as few as 1,000 people already residing in Saudi Arabia were selected to take part in the hajj this year. Two-thirds are foreign residents from among the 160 different nationalities that would have normally been represented at the hajj. One-third are Saudi security personnel and medical staff.

The pilgrims, who were selected after applying through an online portal, were required to be between the ages of 20 and 50, with no terminal illnesses and showing no symptoms of the virus. Preference was given to those who have not performed the hajj before.

Pilgrims were tested for the coronavirus, given wristbands that connect to their phones and monitor their movement and were required to quarantine at home and in their hotel



rooms in Mecca ahead of Wednesday's start of the hajj. They will also be required to quarantine for a week after the hajj concludes on Sunday.

Mecca was sealed off for months ahead of the hajj, and the smaller year-round Umrah pilgrimage was suspended earlier this year, with pilgrims already in the city at that time flown back home.

International media were not permitted to cover the hajj from Mecca this year. Instead, Saudi government broadcast live footage from the Grand Mosque on Wednesday showing limited numbers of pilgrims, moving several feet apart, circling the cube-shaped Kaaba in the first rituals of the hajj.

The Kaaba represents the metaphorical house of God and the oneness of God in Islam. Observant Muslims around the world face toward the Kaaba during their five daily prayers.

During the hajj, women forgo makeup and perfume and wear loose-fitting clothing and a head covering in order to focus inwardly. Men dress in seamless, white terrycloth garments meant to emphasize the equality of all Muslims and prevent wealthier pilgrims from differentiating themselves with more elaborate garments.

During the first rites of hajj, Muslims circle the Kaaba counter-clockwise seven times while reciting supplications to God, then walk between two hills where Ibrahim's

wife, Hagar, is believed to have run as she searched for water for her dying son before God brought forth a well that runs to this day.

This year, pilgrims will only be able to drink water from this Zamzam well that is packaged in plastic bottles. Pebbles for casting away evil that are usually picked up by pilgrims along hajj routes will be sterilized and bagged ahead of time.

Pilgrims have also been given their own prayer rugs and special attire to wear during the hajj laced with silver nano technology that Saudi authorities say helps kill bacteria and makes clothes water resistant. They were also provided with umbrellas to shield them from the sun, towels, soaps, sanitizers and other essentials, as well as online sessions in different languages about what to expect on the hajj and the regulations in place.

"The kingdom of Saudi Arabia needs to put these measures in place so we can learn from this experience," said Saudi infectious disease expert and World Health Organization official, Dr. Hanan Balkhy.

"The kingdom and the world will learn together what are the best ways to mitigate transmission during these types of events," said Balkhy, assistant director-general for the antimicrobial resistance division at WHO's headquarters in Geneva who has worked on past hajj missions.

## Brazil virus payout cuts extreme poverty to least in decades

BRASILIA, JUL 29 (AP): Brazil's extreme poverty has plunged due to a monthly federal handout during the coronavirus pandemic, but threatens to bounce back once the government ceases the stopgap welfare programme, a report said Tuesday.

The study by the Getulio Vargas Foundation, a university and think tank, said the number of Brazilians living in extreme poverty fell to 6.9 million in June, or 3.3 per cent of Brazil's population the lowest level since the late 1970s. As this year began, 6.2 per cent Brazilians were in extreme poverty, the study said.

Although we can't directly compare the figures because of recent methodological changes on the government's database, we can say it's one of the lowest proportions ever recorded, Daniel Duque, the study's author, said by phone from Rio de Janeiro.

He used the World Bank standard that classifies anyone earning less than USD 1.90 a day to be in extreme poverty. The federal government since April has doled out USD 115 monthly to informal-sector workers and micro businesses affected by the pandemic, with single mothers receiving double.

Duque and other experts say that helped alleviate poverty in a nation riven by inequality, with average monthly income last year at USD 280, according to the statistics institute.

The experts warned, however, that the relief



is temporary and the number of impoverished Brazilians will rise after the last payment, currently slated for August.

No question we are in a transitory situation. We won't have this volume of income transfer forever," Duque said.

"I think it is very likely we will return to the previous poverty levels. I fear we can go back to even worse levels if the labor market doesn't recover.

The payments have already cost the government more than USD 32 billion and President Jair Bolsonaro's economy minister, Paulo Guedes, has said its coffers can ill afford to maintain the program much longer.

Loose fiscal policy and rising government debt as a percentage of GDP prompted a slew of credit rating downgrades in recent years, and Guedes assumed his position with pledges to slash spending and shore up government accounts.

We can't continue for long. It's 50 billion reais per month (around USD 10 billion). It's not money we have to spare. We are increasing our debt with it, Bolsonaro

said early in July.

The benefit was initially planned to last until June, but the president extended it by two months.

Bolsonaro's political allies have started pressuring for another extension, arguing the payments help prevent further loss of support stemming from the president's handling of the COVID-19 crisis. Latin America's largest nation has confirmed more than 2.4 million infections and 88,000 dead the second highest totals in the world.

Bolsonaro has consistently downplayed the virus' severity, arguing that the impact of restrictions on economic activity will prove far more damaging.

Economists surveyed by Brazil's central bank expect the economy to shrink 5.8 per cent this year.

Without controlling the epidemic there is no economic recovery, Marcelo Medeiros, a visiting professor at Princeton University's Brazil LAB who specializes in inequality, said by phone from New Jersey.

Brazil hasn't controlled the disease,

so now the recovery will take much longer and the damage will be greater.

While the rollout of the social program was marred by widespread difficulties for beneficiaries in accessing the funds, today the payout directly or indirectly reaches half of Brazil's population of 210 million, according to the citizenship ministry, which is doling out the amounts.

Rog rio Barbosa, an economic inequality researcher at the University of Sao Paulo, said the coronavirus crisis is still punishing the poor who may soon find themselves unassisted.

When the benefit is over, there will be no work for them, Barbosa said in a phone interview.

Official data say nearly 8 million people lost their jobs during the pandemic's first three months, and the statistics institute hasn't yet published employment data for June.

The economy minister has said he intends to launch a new social program to substitute for the temporary benefit, but the plan and the amount of money it would entail have yet to be detailed.

**DONATE BOOKS FOR NOBLE CAUSE  
TO BUILD LIBRARY**

*If anyone willing to donate books or  
support through  
Finance, than you are most welcome*

**"GIVING IS NOT JUST  
ABOUT  
MAKE A DONATION,  
ITS ABOUT MAKING  
DIFFERENCE"**

For more Details Contact ; 6294745117,8768809862

Email ; chitishchettri7@gmail.com

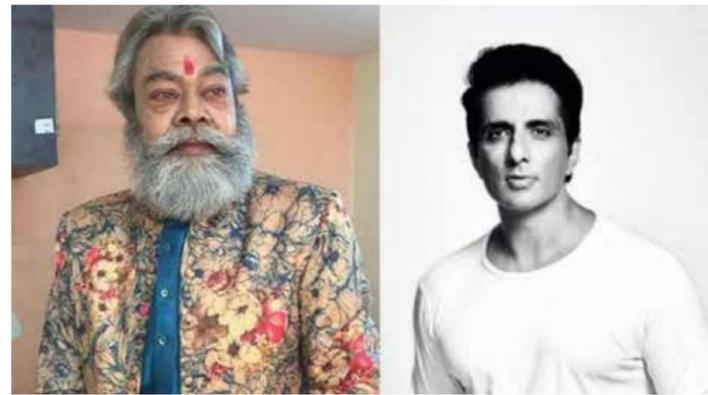
**SummitTIMES**

## Sonu Sood has now stepped forward to help veteran actor Anupam Shyam financially after Shyam got admitted to the ICU following a kidney infection

Actor Sonu Sood has again stepped forward to help the needy. Recently, Sood showed his support to actor Anupam Shyam, who is admitted to the ICU ward of Lifeline Hospital in Goregaon, Mumbai, due to kidney infection. The family has reportedly asked for financial aid.

Recently, it was reported that actor Anupam Shyam is going through a difficult time as he is battling a kidney infection in the ICU of a Goregaon-based hospital in Mumbai. His family is seeking financial aid for his treatment from the film industry. In order to help the veteran actor, CINTAA, Cine and TV Artistes' Association has come forward and appealed to the people to help the actor and his family.

Now, on July 29, 2020, Sonu Sood took to his official social media handle and wrote, "In touch with them", as he shared a photo by CINTAA, which asked for monetary help from people for the actor's treatment. Sood shared a Twitter post by S Ramachandran, who is trying his best to help the veteran



actor. He had previously reached out to Aamir Khan and Sonu Sood, via his official social media handle.

The 62-year-old actor was at first admitted to a Malad-based hospital, but after his condition deteriorated and he reportedly collapsed during a dialysis session, he was moved to an ICU ward of Lifeline Hospital, which is situated in Goregaon.

Anupam Shyam is known for

movies like Bandit Queen, Golmaal: Fun Unlimited, Nayak: The Real Hero, Hazaar Khwaishein Aisi, Shakti: The Power, Hazaar Chaurasi Ki Maa, and others. He has also played antagonist in several television shows. He has featured in shows like Mann Kee Awaaz Pratigya, Doli Armano Ki, Heena 1998, and others. Fans of the actor are wishing him a speedy recovery and showing their support.

## Chateau Marmont to be converted to members-only hotel

**LOS ANGELES (AP):** The Chateau Marmont, a Hollywood hotspot and hangout for nearly a century, will be converted into a members-only hotel over the next year, according to a newspaper report Tuesday.

The hotel owner, Andre Balazs, confirmed his plans to turn the 91-year-old building into a hotel where a select group of members buy into "a piece of a portfolio of the best real estate in the world," the Los Angeles Times reported.

Members will own shares of the property and pay regular fees to cover management costs. In exchange, they'll get the use of a private dining area, a personal butler and the freedom to leave their belongings and come and go during extended stays, according to a statement obtained by the Times.

"Members will be able to sell their shares back to the management company or other approved members, as they would with any other real estate investment," the statement said.

The famed hotel in West Hollywood has nearly operated as a members-only property, she said, given that before the coronavirus pandemic 70% of guests were repeat customers.

Like other hotels, the Chateau Marmont has been hard hit by the pandemic, forcing management to abruptly fire most of its staff in March with no severance pay and only a brief



extension of health benefits, the newspaper said.

The castle-like hotel was originally built as an apartment complex in the 1920s before it was converted to a hotel in 1931. It has been a favorite haunt of actors and celebrities including Greta Garbo, Hunter S. Thompson, Howard Hughes, James Dean, John Belushi and Lindsay Lohan.

## David Rubin gets second term as Film Academy president

**Los Angeles, Jul 29 (PTI):** David Rubin has been reelected as the president of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS).

This will be the second one-year term for Rubin, who earlier in the day was nominated for an Emmy for his casting work on HBO series "Big Little Lies".

Rubin had succeeded cinematographer John Bailey as the Film Academy president in 2019, becoming the first casting director to head the film body that hosts the Oscars every year.

In addition to his second term as president, this will mark his eighth year as a governor representing the casting directors branch, according to The Hollywood Reporter.

Academy board members may serve up to three consecutive three-year terms, while officers serve one-year terms, with a maximum of four consecutive years in any one office.



**TROUSER TIME!** The model, Emily Ratajkowski looks trendy in a pair of oversized pants, sports bra and sneakers in Brooklyn, NY.

## Lucy Hale to lead survival thriller 'Borrego'

**LOS ANGELES, JUL 29 (PTI):** "Riverdale" star Lucy Hale will top line the upcoming survival thriller film "Borrego".

The movie will be directed by Jesse Harris from his own script and also feature "Good Doctor" actor Nicholas Gonzalez, according to The Hollywood Reporter

Hale, 31, will essay the role of a young botanist who relocates to a small desert town to study an invasive plant species. While out on research, she comes to the aid of a downed plane only to find herself taken captive by an inexperienced drug mule who forces her to lead a trek across the sweltering desert to his drop.

Local sheriff (Gonzalez) is drawn into the hunt as his rebellious daughter sets out to find the missing botanist, all the while being pursued by a local drug receiver.

The film's cast also includes actor



Leynar Gomez, Jorge A. Jimenez and Olivia Trujillo.

Harris will produce the movie along with Black Magic's Greg Lauritano and Tucci & Company's Damiano and Tiziano Tucci.

### ARIES:

Spending time indoors has given you perspective on so many things, your interpersonal relationships included. There are always two sides to every story: yours, and that of the other person. When we're up in our heads, which tends to happen a whole lot, we convince ourselves that our truth is the ultimate truth. Today, without bringing hurt, pain, and judgement into the equation, have a conversation with your loved one(s) about how you felt disrespected.

### TAURUS:

Everything works inside out—a truth you have made peace with over the past few months. Today, the cards are urging you to engage in a vibe check. Make two lists at the start of your day: one consisting of all the things you are worried about, and the other consisting of things you are grateful for. Shifting your gaze to all that is working for you will strip your troubles of their power. Engaging in body work is also an excellent way to alleviate your troubles.

### GEMINI:

What do you do when you realise the cross is too heavy to bear? Unhealed trauma from your childhood could be resurfacing at this moment. Confront your demons instead of choosing the path of denial, Gemini. Work with a healer, a shaman or psychotherapist if you need somebody to hold space for you as you go through your catharsis. Remember, it's not your fault. It never was. Forgive yourself before you get to the other person.

### CANCER:

The past few months have been healing and cathartic on so many levels. But that doesn't mean they haven't been painful or that you haven't been tempted to give up halfway. Thursday finds you simultaneously mourning your past self, and expressing gratitude for this journey. You understand that things had to turn out a certain way in order to teach you important life lessons. But that doesn't mean it's all doom and gloom, Cancer.

### LEO:

At any point of time you have two options: to continue to live a mundane existence, or to strive for greatness. If the mysterious smile on your face is anything to go by, you are not in the mood to settle. The cards are urging you to look beyond the illusion of your current reality and believe in the impossible. Yes, there will be people who try to convince you that now is not a time to take chances, or that you are being unrealistic.

### VIRGO:

There are conversations that make you want to sing and dance in public, and then there are exchanges that make you wish you never got out of bed. Notice the people who constantly make you feel drained. The people who do not consider your joy as their own. Who taint your relationship with the lower vibrational energies of envy and competitiveness.

### LIBRA:

What comes to your mind when we say the word 'tribe'? Your blood ties are important, Libra, as you are bound

together by shared history. But, in some ways, the bonds you forge outside of the home are even more sacred, as you invest in them out of free will rather than necessity. Today, you're being asked to notice the people who are showing up for you despite their own trials and tribulations and celebrating your victories like their own.

### SCORPIO:

Consent is a tricky territory. You may say 'yes' to one thing, but you may not be prepared for everything that comes with it. Statutory warning: your partner could be in a rather kinky mood today. But if their kinks don't match yours, feel free to draw boundaries. Your body, your rules, Scorpio. Some of you may even come to the realisation that you have been putting up with an abusive relationship (one that may or may not be romantic).

### SAGITTARIUS:

Ayurvedic texts reveal Chyawanprash as the fountain of youth, while Chinese medicine promotes herbs like Zhi Shi and Shan Zha as the key to longevity and good health. But your soul knows that elixirs and potions are merely supplements. The secret to a robust life is inner peace and happiness—qualities that are present to you in abundance. But here's the catch: every time you notice that mysterious glow, you could recede into a space of guilt and shame.

### CAPRICORN:

The things that are not working out are giving you a clue

as to what you need to let go of in order to align yourself with the truth. Instead of resisting the process, which will only cause chaos, become receptive to where you are being redirected towards. Going with the flow is so much easier than trying to swim upstream, right? Some of you may feel inspired to get another degree or go back to your books. As a Capricorn, the lack of financial security can be disconcerting.

### AQUARIUS:

Expansion is big on your agenda right now, especially if you have your own business. This is an opportune time for you to reach out to a new audience and widen the scope of your work. Be both a dreamer and a doer, Aquarius. Some of you may be in a long distance relationship at this point. The past few months may have been challenging, but that doesn't mean you weren't blessed with moments of bliss. If you believe in the strength of this bond, do what it takes to make things work.

### PISCES:

The road to here hasn't been easy, but you displayed courage in the face of adversities, which has brought you where you are today. The Universe is applauding you for your strength, Pisces, and preparing you to receive the fruits of your labour. Both fame and recognition are right around the corner. This may also be a time of signing contracts and agreements.