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SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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All primary contacts of COVID patient test negative

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 26 MAY:

The Health Secretary, Dr PT Bhutia today informed that all primary contacts of the COVID patient have tested negative. He also informed that the confirmatory gene test for the Viral Research and Diagnostic Lab could not be conducted today.

In his daily bulletin, Dr Bhutia informed that North Bengal Medical College, Siliguri, had sent the samples for testing but could not send the test kits because they had run out of the tests. An order has been placed for the test kits in Kolkata, he added. "After the kits arrive and we pass the confirmatory test, the lab here

will be able to function," said Dr Bhutia.

The Secretary also said that photos of poor quality PPE being worn by hospital staff that surfaced online are old photos meant to mislead the public. He added that police complaint has been filed against the person who shared such photos online.

Eateries now open from 8am-8pm

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 26 MAY:

The state government has further relaxed rules for eateries in the state allowing them to operate from 8am to 8pm but only for take away and home deliver.

In an order issued by the Home Department today, it is mentioned that two-wheelers engaged in home delivery of food are exempt from the odd-even rule.

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Locusts move near Rajasthan-UP border

JAIPUR, MAY 26 (PTI):

Swarms of locust have moved towards Karauli district and other areas near the Uttar Pradesh border in Rajasthan on Tuesday after the locust-control teams conducted operations in Dausa.

"Operations were conducted at two places in Dausa district on Monday night by spraying pesticide. Remaining

swarms moved towards Karauli and other nearby areas today," Om Prakash, commissioner of the Agriculture Department, said.

Prakash said Jaipur and Dausa had been cleared of the swarms.

The locusts can travel up to 150 km a day with a speed of 15-20 kmph. They are targeting trees and other available vegetation since there is

no standing crop in the fields, according to the officer.

Non-availability of standing crops is also a main reason why the swarms have travelled to such distance from Pakistan.

The swarms entered some residential area of Jaipur, and settled on trees and walls. After few hours, the swarms moved towards Dausa on Sunday.

Delhi records hottest day in May since 2002

NEW DELHI, MAY 26 (PTI):

Delhi recorded the hottest day in May in the last 18 years as the maximum temperature at the Safdarjung observatory rose to 46 degrees Celsius on Tuesday.

The people sweltered under a scorching heat wave as most places recorded their maximum temperatures six notches above normal and the mercury soared to 47.6 degrees Celsius in Palam area.

The Safdarjung Observatory, which provides representative figures for the city, recorded a maximum of 46 degrees Celsius.

The last time the mercury at the Safdarjung weather station touched the 46-degrees-Celsius mark was on May 19, 2002, said

Kuldeep Srivastava, the head of the regional forecasting centre of the India Meteorological Department (IMD).

The all-time record for Safdarjung in May is 47.2 degrees Celsius, recorded on May 29, 1944.

The last time the Palam Observatory recorded such a high temperature in May -- 47.6 degrees Celsius -- was on May 18, 2010, Srivastava said.

The IMD said the weather stations at Lodhi Road and Aya Nagar recorded their respective maximum at 45.4 degrees and 46.8 degrees Celsius.

In large areas, a heat wave is declared when the maximum temperature is 45 degrees Cel-

sus for two consecutive days and a severe heat wave is when the mercury touches the 47 degrees-mark for two days on the trot.

In small areas like Delhi, heat wave is declared if the temperature soars to 45 degrees Celsius even for a day, according to the IMD.

Srivastava said some respite from the stifling heat was expected on Thursday due to a fresh western disturbance and easterly winds at lower levels.

Dust storm and thunderstorm with winds gusting up to 60 kilometres per hour is likely over the National Capital Region on Friday and Saturday, the official added.

All 4 districts get new SPs in major Sikkim Police reshuffle

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 26 MAY:

In a major reshuffle in the Police Department, perhaps necessitated by a recent spate of promotions in the senior ranks, the State Government today appointed new SPs for all the four districts.

Following an office order passed on Tuesday, Tashi Wangyal Bhutia is the new SP for West district, Dr Shiva Prasad moves from 1st IRBn, New Delhi, to take charge as SP-East, Ongmu Bhutia moves to Mangan as the new SP-North while Thakur Thapa has been repatriated from his current posting as Additional Secretary, Raj Bhawan, and transferred as the new SP-South.

The incumbent SP-East, Hari Chettri, moves to Special



Branch, SP-West Tenzing Loden Lepcha takes charge as SP CID exchanging offices with SP Ongmu Bhutia.

Senior SP Sonam Gyatso Bhutia moves from his charge as Sr SP-North to Reserve Lines. SP-South Prawin Gurung, it may be recalled had recently been

promoted as DIG-Range.

At still more senior levels, IGP, Armed Police, Sonam Tenzing Bhutia, will now hold additional charge of Home Guards and Civil Defence in place of DIG DB Giri who has been posted as OSD, Mines & Geology.

The State Government ap-

pears to favour the post of OSD, Mines & Geology, for police officers because there was one at the post till the latest transfer order. OSD, Mines & Geology, Linda Palmo Bhutia, has been repatriated and will now take charge as CO, 3rd IRBn.

DIG, Headquarter and Checkpost, Bhim Kr Tamang, moves to Special Branch, his charge at the Headquarter being taken over by Khilburna Gurung who has been repatriated from his current posting as MD, STCS.

Meanwhile, former Chief Minister Pawan Chamling gets a new PSO in ASP Kharga Bdr Gurung.

The Department of Personnel office order issued today carried a list of 26 transfers of police officers from the ranks of DSP to IGP.

Chess moves online with NE State-Level tourney

SAGAR CHHETRI

GANGTOK, 26 MAY:

With the aim to provide a more productive engagement to chess enthusiasts from the gloom of the lockdown, the Department of Sports & Youth Affairs has announced plans to organize the North East State Level Online Chess Tournament in collaboration with Sikkim Chess Association on 29 May.

The day-long tournament carries a total prize

money of Rs 50,000 with prizes for the top-20 winners and 18 others in different categories.

Secretary, Sports & Youth Affairs Department, Kuber Bhandari, stated that since online chess was possible in these times of social-distancing, the department decided to explore the idea with technical support from Sikkim Chess Association.

He added that the department wants to

boost the morale of players with the tournament and reach some cheer to them during the lockdown.

He stated that tournament will also help people cope with mental stress brought on by the lockdown.

SCA general secretary, Mahendra Dhakal, who is also an international arbiter, in turn mentioned that when sports activities on hold, the De-

partment has taken the appreciable initiative in organizing the north-east level online chess tournament.

"We are introducing this system for the first time in the northeastern region. Interested players need to download Lichess App to participate in the tournament," he informs.

He added that each player will get 1:30 hours and the player with the

highest points will be declared winner.

Mr Dhakal thanked the department for coming forward for the development and progress of chess despite the current situation and urged all interested to contact Sikkim Chess Association or visit its website for other details.

He expressed that the game of chess will also give relief to mental stress of the people in this lockdown.

Cyclone Amphan: Parts of Kolkata limp back to normalcy

KOLKATA, MAY 26 (PTI):

Drinking water and electricity supply have been restored in large swathes of Kolkata ravaged by Cyclone Amphan even as some parts of the city witnessed protests over lack of essential services.

According to Kolkata Municipal Corporation (KMC) sources, the restoration work is on at a war footing and they are hopeful that all the roads will be cleared of uprooted trees either by tonight or Wednesday morning.

"Our job is almost complete. Now the issue of power restoration is being looked into by CESC. They have assured us that the power would be restored in remaining areas by Wednesday morning," a senior KMC official said.

Lakhs of people were rendered homeless as cyclone Amphan cut a path of destruction through half-a-dozen districts of West Bengal, including state capital Kolkata, on May 20, blowing away shanties, uprooting thousands of trees and swamping low-lying areas.

Large areas of the city continue to remain without power as electric poles and communication lines had been blown away by gusting winds.

Unlike the last five days, the city reported scattered protests on Tuesday.

Agitators at Garia and Behala in south suburban

day morning," a senior KMC official said.

Kolkata blocked roads with branches of uprooted trees and placed barricades to restrict the movement of vehicles to press for their demands.

"Six days have passed, but electricity is yet to return to our area. We don't know when it will return," said a resident of Garia.

People blamed the Calcutta Electric Supply Corporation (CESC) for not being able to restore power supply, and claimed that no official of the private utility had visited the locality so far.

"We have contacted the local administration and the local police station to apprise them of our problems. No help is forthcoming from any quarter so far," another

resident said. People in Behala also demonstrated against increased water prices amid rising mercury levels.

At Seoraphuli town in Hooghly district, Congress leader Abdul Mannan took to the streets protesting against CESC's failure to restore power supply. He blocked the arterial G T Road.

Police tried to convince the Congress leader to lift the blockade but Mannan said, "I will not leave the area till CESC officials come and rectify the situation".

"Diabetic patients who are dependent on insulin are not being able to get their daily dosage of shots as refrigerators are not working due to

no electricity," a protest-

er said. The Army was deployed in Kolkata and its neighbouring districts on Saturday, hours after the West Bengal government sought its help for immediate restoration of essential infrastructure and services in the state.

Contending that 80 per cent of all essential services have been restored in West Bengal, Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday sought the cooperation of people for bringing the cyclone-hit state back on its feet.

Mobile and internet services are yet to be restored in several parts of South and North 24 Parganas and East Midnapore districts.

Meghalaya has registered 14 cases. Nagaland has reported three cases of the infection, Dadar and Nagar Haveli and Arunachal Pradesh have reported two cases of the virus each, while Mizoram and Sikkim have reported a case each till now

"2,970 cases are being reassigned to states," the ministry said on its website, adding, "Our figures are being reconciled with the ICMR."

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

Over 6,500 new coronavirus cases in India, death toll climbs to 4,167

NEW DELHI, MAY 26 (PTI):

The death toll due to COVID-19 rose to 4,167 in the country, while the number of cases climbed to 1,45,380, registering an increase of 146 deaths and 6,535 cases since Monday 8 am, the Union Health Ministry said

The number of active COVID-19 cases climbed to 80,722. As many as 60,490 people have recovered and one patient has migrated, it said.

"Thus, around 41.61 per cent patients have recovered so far," a senior Health

Ministry official said

The total confirmed cases includes foreigners

Of the 146 deaths reported since Monday morning, 60 were in Maharashtra, 30 in Gujarat, 15 in Delhi, 10 in Madhya Pradesh, seven in Tamil Nadu, six in West Bengal, four each in Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan, three in Telangana, two each in Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir and Karnataka and one in Kerala.

Of the total 4,167 fatalities, Maharashtra tops the tally with 1,695

deaths followed by Gujarat with 888 deaths, Madhya Pradesh with 300, West Bengal with 278, Delhi with 276, Rajasthan with 167, Uttar Pradesh with 165, Tamil Nadu with 118 and Andhra Pradesh and Telangana with 56 deaths each.

The death toll reached 44 in Karnataka and 40 in Punjab

Jammu and Kashmir has reported 23 fatalities due to the disease, Haryana has 16 deaths, while Bihar has registered 13 and Odisha has seven deaths

Kerala and Himachal Pradesh have reported five

deaths each so far, while Jharkhand and Assam have recorded four deaths each so far

Chandigarh and Uttarakhand each have recorded three COVID-19 fatalities each, while Meghalaya has reported one fatality so far, according to the ministry data.

More than 70 per cent of the deaths are due to comorbidities, according to the ministry's website.

According to the ministry data updated in the morning, the highest number of confirmed cas-

es in the country are from Maharashtra at 52,667 followed by Tamil Nadu at 17,082, Gujarat at 14,460, Delhi at 14,053, Rajasthan at 7,300, Madhya Pradesh at 6,859 and Uttar Pradesh at 6,532.

The number of COVID-19 cases has gone up to 3,816 in West Bengal, 3,110 in Andhra Pradesh and 2,730 in Bihar. It has risen to 2,182 in Karnataka, 2,060 in Punjab, 1,920 in Telangana, 1,668 in Jammu and Kashmir and 1,438 in Odisha

Haryana has reported 1,184 coronavirus infection

cases so far, while Kerala has 896 cases. A total of 526 people have been infected with the virus in Assam and 377 in Jharkhand

Uttarakhand has 349 cases, Chhattisgarh has 291, Chandigarh has reported 238 cases, Himachal Pradesh has 223, Tripura has 194 and Goa has registered 67 cases so far

Ladakh has reported 52 COVID-19 cases, Puducherry has 41 instances of the infection, Manipur has 39 while Andaman and Nicobar Islands has registered 33 infections

Meghalaya has registered 14 cases. Nagaland has reported three cases of the infection, Dadar and Nagar Haveli and Arunachal Pradesh have reported two cases of the virus each, while Mizoram and Sikkim have reported a case each till now

"2,970 cases are being reassigned to states," the ministry said on its website, adding, "Our figures are being reconciled with the ICMR."

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

Sanitisation drive held at Bermiok Tokal

NAMCHI, 26 MAY [IPR]: A day-long sanitisation drive was organized by Gram Panchayats of Bermiok Tokal GPU under Temi Naphing constituency today.

The drive had the participation of SKM CLC president Temi-Namphing constituency, Gopal Chettri, alongside the panchayats of the said area. The areas disinfected during the drive were Bermiok Tokal PHC, Gram Prashashan Kendra (GPK), fair price shops and all the premises of people under home quarantine.



Various IEC activities were also conducted as part of the program and distribution of face

masks and sanitizers to the senior citizens was also done during the course of the day.

The GPU will continue such timely activities in their areas in view of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We have completed one successful year in power: Agri Minister

**ARPAN PRADHAN
GANGTOK, 26 MAY:**

"The SKM Government has completed one successful year since government formation and we would like to remember the day we won the election and thank all the people of Sikkim who voted SKM to power," said senior SKM leader and Agriculture Minister, Lok Nath Sharma.

Mr Sharma has congratulated all the SKM functionaries, party workers, party supporters and everyone who voted and supported Sikkim Krantikari Morcha.

It may be mentioned here that Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM) overthrew the 25-year-



long Sikkim Democratic Front government in the 2019 elections and formed government on 27 May last year.

"We were able to dethrone the 25-year long SDF government creating history in the state. People wanted to bring change in the state so they voted for SKM," said Minister Sharma.

Mr Sharma has highlighted various achieve-

ments of the government and especially the achievements of his Department in particular.

He said that during this one year the government has faced many challenges and problems but the PS Golay led government has been successful in tackling all kinds of situation.

"We believe in inclusive politics and policies and that is why the faith

of people in our party and government is increasing," he said.

Mr Sharma stressed that the SKM Government is successfully tackling the COVID-19 situation and maintained the zero COVID status till the fourth phase of lockdown.

The Government is doing everything it can to treat the coronavirus positive patient and hopefully he will get well soon he said.

The Agriculture Minister has thanked each and every one for their support to the party as well as the party president and Chief Minister, PS Golay for providing him the opportunity to serve the people of Sikkim.

"The management is not taking action for residents, instead they are calling us cowards and kamchor (shirkers), which is so not the case, especially when we are the ones risking the lives and doing all we can despite all the odds," he said.

He also said patients in 60 wards of the 1,200-bed COVID hospital are not kept isolated from each other, and space between their cots is not enough, making them prone to increased viral load.

"No one from the hospital management has bothered to at least call us for our condition. It is difficult to work in non-COVID duty rather than to work in COVID duty, where you have proper PPE kits," he said in the letter

closed). Despite that, we were neither given PPE kits nor N-95 masks. Even proper gloves not available to conduct normal delivery. Excuses were given that all indent material is sent in 1200-bed (COVID) hospital," he said in the letter.

The letter added when some doctors at the hospital tested positive for coronavirus, the management did not bother to either test remaining doctors or trace their contacts, and instead went on to criticise and warn them that they will be tested only if they have high temperature and breathlessness.

"On the day I was tested positive, I conducted three normal deliveries and one C-section, and almost came in contact with 20 patients directly and their new-

borns. There has been no contact tracing done for the same. No authority has inquired about it," he wrote.

"At the age of 25 nothing much will happen to me. I turned out to be negative within five days without any treatment but it is not the same for pregnant females and neonates. They are immune-compromised i.e. if they encounter the virus, they can be in big trouble," he said.

"If the condition remains same in the civil hospital, doctors working here will be super spreaders of COVID19," he said, adding not even 10 per cent of 700 resident doctors working in the hospital were tested for COVID-19 despite all of them staying in a common hostel and working together.

SPCC thanks Assam MP for speaking against attacks on special trains

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 26 MAY:**

Sikkim Pradesh Congress Committee [SPCC] has thanked All India Congress Committee general secretary and Assam Lok Sabha MP, Gaurav Gogoi for writing to the Union Railways Minister, Piyush Goyal

on the incidents of attack on trains carrying people of north-eastern region at Patna. The state Congress has thanked the MP for taking the incident seriously by writing to the Union Minister with a request to take stringent action on the perpetrators.

SPCC has strongly condemned the attacks on the train carrying stranded people of north east states coming back from Haryana by local people at Patna. The party has said that such incidents on north-eastern people amidst the COVID-19 situation

is very sad, uncivilized and highly condemnable. SPCC has demanded that the Union Railways Minister take the incident seriously and take action against employees involved in the incident to give justice to affected passengers of the region.

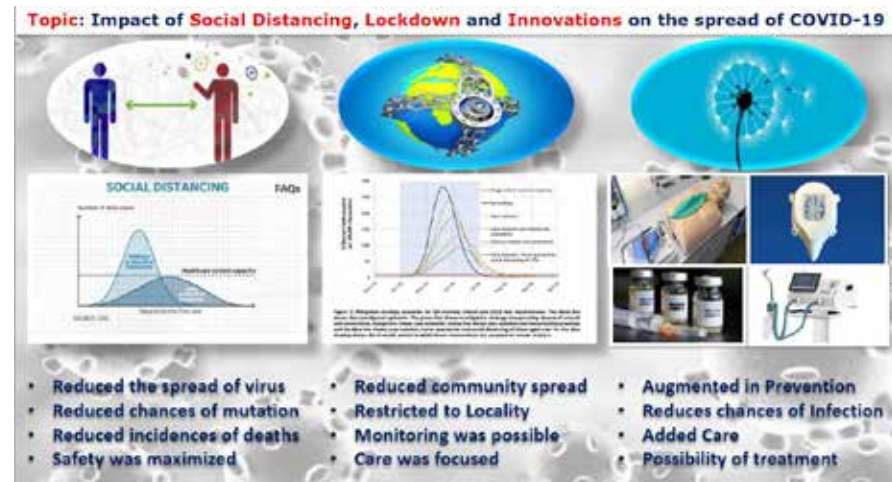
Zuventus pharma unit head wins e-poster contest

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 26 MAY:**

Poster designed by unit Head Zuventus Healthcare Limited, Bhasmey Sikkim, Deepak Kumar Varma, was judged as the best in a nationwide Poster Competition related to COVID-19 organized by Society of Pharmaceutical Education & Research, a press release informs.

The National E-Poster Competition was held on the theme, Impact of Social Distancing, Lockdown & Innovations on the spread of COVID-19 wherein 2869 entries from 27 states of the country were registered.

The judges panel an-



nounced the poster by Deepak Kumar Varma, Sikkim as the winning poster of the competition, Sakshi Bhardwaj from Krupanidhi College of Pharmacy, Bengaluru was the runner-up while Jyoti Saini

from PGIMER, Chandigarh was the second runner-up.

All the entries were presented with certificates of participation, duly signed by Adjunct Professor, Faculty of Medicine, University of

OTTAWA, Canada, Dr HS Buttar, President Society of Pharmaceutical Education & Research, Prof Dr GD Gupta, and Secretary Society of Pharmaceutical Education & Research, Dr Upen-dra Nagaich.

RELIEF PROVIDED TO MIGRANT WORKERS

**SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 26 MAY:**

Childline Melli Sub Centre under Turuk Development Society (NGO) conducted a relief package distribution programme at Namthang, South Sikkim on 25 May. On behalf of NGO, Bikendra Lepcha, Joint Secretary of TDS, H.J. Rai, Director of TDS & Childline team members were present, a press release informs.

The Child Line Project under Turuk Development Society (NGO), South Sikkim distributed relief package to eight families of stranded labourers at Namthang.

The relief package included 25Kg Rice, 5Kg Potato, 2Kg Dal and 2 Litre Parmatma oil. The migrant workers were from Bihar, West Bengal and Nepal who were stranded here at Maneydara, Namthang, South Sikkim.



5 more districts flooded in Assam; 1.95 lakh affected

GUWAHATI, MAY 26 (PTI): The number of districts affected by flood in Assam rose to seven from five, submerging over 1,000 hectares of cropland and impacting around 1.95 lakh people on Tuesday.

The people affected by the first wave of flood in Goalpara and Tinsukia districts have already been provided shelter in 35 relief camps, the Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA) said.

The Brahmaputra was flowing above the danger level in Jorhat district, while Jia Bharali was over

the danger mark in Sonitpur district, the Central Water Commission said.

Goalpara has the highest number of 1.68 lakh flood-hit people, followed 10,943 in Nalbari and 7,897 in Dibrugarh, according to an ASDMA bulletin.

There are 3,455 people affected by flood in Tinsukia, 2,970 in Lakhimpur, 845 in Darrang and 610 in Dhemaji, it said.

The swirling waters have breached an embankment and submerged a road in Nalbari, besides overtopping a road and eroding another in Dhemaji.

4 new COVID-19 cases in Tripura, total rises to 198

AGARTALA, MAY 26 (PTI): Four more persons tested positive for COVID-19 in Tripura, taking the state's total to 198, officials said on Tuesday.

All the new cases were of people who have returned from Mumbai recently, they said.

Of the total 198 COVID-19 cases, 165 people have recovered so far while 33 are under treatment, the officials said.

Chief Minister Biplob Kumar Deb on Monday night tweeted "990 samples have been tested today in Tripura for COVID-19. Among them 4 persons

found COVID19 positive. All of them have returned from Mumbai, Maharashtra by train.

Meanwhile, a press statement from the state COVID-19 control room said that 16,349 out of 26,943 people who were placed under surveillance for coronavirus till date have completed their 14 days observation period and were discharged.

At present 10,594 are currently under surveillance including 300 people in different quarantine centres across Tripura and 10,294 people under home quarantine.

Karnataka to open temples from June 1

BENGALURU, MAY 26 (PTI): Temples in the state that were closed for devotees for over two months due to the COVID-19 induced lockdown will be opened for public from June 1, State minister Kota Srinivas Poojary said on Tuesday.

"We have had discussions with the Chief Minister regarding Muzrai department, during which it was decided to open temples from June 1," Poojary, the minister for Hindu religious institutions and charitable endowments (Muzrai), said.

Speaking to reporters after meeting Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa, he said the plan is to allow all 'sevas' (rituals) at the temples once they open, but depending on the situation, they may limit it

to a few.

"We will decide on it," he added.

According to him, as trains, flight services, vehicular movements have started, and hotels likely to resume shortly, several devotees have been demanding opening of temples to offer prayers.

"The temples will be opened to offer pooja and daily rituals, we are not permitting temple fairs and events," the minister said.

There are over 34,000 temples in the state that come under the Muzrai department.

Though the temples are holding daily poojas and rituals, they are not open to public for now, with COVID-19 induced lockdown restrictions in place.

Officials had recently told PTI that the depart-



ment was planning to have a standard operating procedure (SOP) in place, that needs to be followed at temples in a post lockdown scenario, once they are opened for the public.

Poojary said all temples will be opened and instructions have been given to take preventive measures and make necessary preparations to

ensure social distancing before June 1.

"I will discuss with officials and decide on what other measures should be taken so that things go on smoothly, ensuring safety of devotees," he said.

The minister also said that sevas at select 52 temples in the state can be booked online from tomorrow, and the Chief

are quite popular, he pointed out.

Recently the Commissioner of Hindu religious institutions and charitable endowments had written to deputy commissioners of 15 districts, also executive officers and administrators of 'A' grade temples, seeking information on sevas offered at temples under their jurisdictions and those for which option can be provided for devotees to do advance booking online.

This was aimed at development of app and web based software for the purpose of advanced booking of sevas, the letter said, adding conditional approval had been given to Spiritual Products Private Limited, Mysuru to develop both free of cost.

Minister has given a go ahead for this.

He clarified that all rituals at the temples like poojas and aartis will continue as per traditions, but booking for sevas that can be offered by devotees, can be done online from now on.

Such facilities for online booking of sevas are already available at certain temples and

~ SummitTIMES ~ CLASSIFIEDS

GENERAL LAND FOR SALE

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

Contact: 9800201335

LAND FOR SALE

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

LAND FOR SALE

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

Agri Minister chairs coordination meeting

GANGTOK, 26 MAY (IPR): Minister for Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services, Lok Nath Sharma chaired a coordination meeting with the Scheme In-charge of the Agriculture Department at his chamber at Tashiling Secretariat, today.

The meeting also had the presence of the concerned Secretary, Rinzing C. Bhutia, senior officials and Additional Directors who have been entrusted with the responsibilities of implementation of various schemes and programmes.



The meeting deliberated on the achievements and progress made by the agriculture department during the first year of government formation, since 27th May 2019. Further, the Minister detailed on the preparation of strategic action plan of the department to be carried out in the upcoming years.

Minister Sharma interacted with the in-charge of various schemes and programmes including State Agriculture Management Extension Training Institute (SAMETI), National Food Security Mission (NFSM) Rashtriya Krishi Vigyan Yojana (RKVY), Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sichi Yojana (PMKSY),

Integrated Nutrient Management (INM) Integrated Pest Management (IPM), Sikkim Organic Mission (SOM) and further discussed on various components in detail.

Minister Sharma also took stock of the current account and stressed to ensure complete utilisation of allocated funds

within the stipulated time period.

During the meeting, the Minister also underlined the improvement achieved in the agriculture sector and emphasised on further strengthening of working mechanism to manifest a paradigm shift in active involvement of the department and the farmers as well. Subjects like, crops insurance, training for unskilled manpower, monitoring and reporting, financial incentives to the farmers, procurement of required materials and its stock maintenance were also discussed at length.

84 people recover from COVID-19 in Odisha

BHUBANESWAR, MAY 26 (PTI): Eighty-four people recovered from COVID-19 in Odisha on Tuesday, the Health and Family Welfare department said.

With the recovery of 84 more people, the total number of COVID-19 recovered persons in the state was 733, it said.

Of the 84 recovered persons, 24 are from Ganjam, 18 from Jajpur, 11 from Balasore, 7 from Cuttack, 6 from Bhadrak, 5 from Kendrapara, 4 each from Khordha and Puri, 2 each from Nayagarh and Mayurbhanj, and 1 from Sundargarh.

On Monday 99 people had recovered from COVID-19, the official said.

With the recovery of 84 patients, the number of active cases in the state has come down to 777 from 861. Seven persons, three each from Khurda and Ganjam and one from Cuttack district, have died of COVID-19.

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Modernites provide relief to underprivileged students



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 26 MAY:

Alumni Association of Modern Senior Secondary School, Gangtok distributed ration to 125 underprivileged

students' families on 25 May, 2020. The association distributed rice, dal, onion, salt, potato, oil.

The programme was also attended by the Principal of the School,

SMC Chairperson and Advisor of the Association. Along with ration hand sanitizers sponsored by Rotary Club of Gangtok South were also distributed.

Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 26 MAY:

The Government of India has introduced Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana (Modified -2020), with modified rate of pension for citizens aged 60 years and above, a press release informs.

LIC of India is solely authorised to operate this scheme. Pradhan Mantri Vaya Vandana Yojana (Modified- 2020) is a Non-Linked, Non-Participating, Pension

Scheme subsidized by the Government of India.

This plan will be available for sale commencing from 26/05/2020 for three financial years i.e. upto 31st March, 2023. This scheme can be purchased offline as well as online from LIC of India at www.licindia.in

The policy term is of 10 years and for policies sold during the first financial year i.e. up to 31st March 2021, the Scheme will provide

an assured rate of return of 7.40% p.a. payable monthly (i.e. equivalent to 7.66% p.a.) for the entire duration of 10 years. For the policies sold during the next two financial years, the applicable assured rate of interest, at which the pension payment shall be made, will be reviewed and decided at the beginning of each financial year by Ministry of Finance, Government of India.

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Air passenger from Chennai tests COVID-19 positive

COIMBATORE, MAY 26 (PTI): An air passenger

who had arrived here from Chennai on May 25 tested positive for COVID-19 on Tuesday, making him perhaps the first case of coronavirus since resumption of domestic flights after two months.

The 24 year-old man, who arrived by a private carrier, has been since shifted to the ESI Hospital here for further treatment, officials said.

Though the other passengers tested negative, they are likely to be

home quarantined for 14 days, officials said.

On Monday, over 130 passengers arrived here from Chennai and Delhi after the Centre allowed resumption of domestic flight services and all of them underwent the necessary test for coronavirus in line with the health protocol guidelines of the Tamil Nadu government.

Swab test results on Tuesday revealed that the 24-year old man tested positive for the deadly virus and he was immediately shifted to the ESI Hospital.

He was working in the room service wing of a star hotel in Chennai.

Though Coimbatore witnessed a positive case after a gap of 21 days with the latest one, it will be added to the Chennai count, health department officials said.

Domestic air services resumed in the country on Monday, after a gap of two months when a coronavirus-induced lockdown was enforced in the country on March 25, shutting down various sectors, including rail and aviation.

NGT resumes functioning, premises sanitised

NEW DELHI, MAY 26 (PTI): The National Green Tribunal sanitised its entire premises here and resumed its functioning on Tuesday, days after an official was found Corona positive.

As the corona positive case came to light, the NGT followed the necessary protocols and the entire staff has been asked to strictly follow all protocols, guidelines, instructions, advisories, directions, etc. issued by the government from time to time.

The NGT (Principal Bench) premises were sanitised and high-risk exposure contacts were asked to quarantine themselves for 14 days, while the low-risk exposure contacts were directed to closely monitor their health and to follow all applicable protocols.

"In terms of the guidelines issued by Directorate General of Health Services, Minis-

try of Health and Family Welfare, Govt. of India, the NGT shall resume its functioning with effect from May 26," an office order said.

According to a notification issued by the NGT, the staff coming to the office shall continue to get themselves thermally scanned at the entry gate, wear face-masks throughout, wash/sanitize hands frequently and maintain social distancing strictly.

"In case any staff member is unable to physically attend office on the ground of Corona-related health/risk issues, intimation about the same be immediately given to their section-heads and Administration Section of the Office (through email) as well as the concerned health authorities, wherever applicable, as per the extant protocols.

"All regular updates about their health be

sent to the Office and health authorities for proper verification, monitoring, contact tracing and follow up. No laxity or negligence in this regard be shown by any such staff member for his own safety and that of his family, neighbourhood and staff at workplace," the notification said.

It further said that section-heads should remain in touch with the staff working under them and modify the duty rosters in such manner that staff falling in 'safe' and 'low-risk' categories is physically called to the office initially.

While the staff members in 'high-risk' and 'moderate-risk' categories are duly accommodated and physically called subsequent to their coming out of these categories, while making endeavour for 50 per cent physical attendance as per earlier instructions to the extent possi-

ble, it said.

"The remaining staff not so physically called, shall continue to work from homes," the notification said,

According to a notification issued by the NGT on May 22, the official, posted in General Administration section of the Principal Bench here, had last attended the office on May 19 and was hospitalized.

"All necessary protocols are being followed. Contact tracing is in progress and high risk contacts shall be asked to self quarantine for 14 days. The NGT (PB) premises shall remain under deep sanitization and with effect from May 23, 2020, no officer/staff/lawyers/litigant s/ public shall be permitted to have access to the NGT (PB) premises. Further decision shall be taken as per the advice of health authorities on May 25, 2020," a notification is-

sued by the tribunal had said.

The NGT had earlier issued instructions regarding its functioning stating that the Chairperson, Members and officers (Deputy Registrars and above) will attend the Office with 100 per cent attendance.

As for the remaining staff, up to 33 per cent of the strength will physically attend the office as separately notified from time to time, the NGT had said.

According to the office order issued by the NGT, the section heads/incharge of all sections shall prepare rosters of staff required to attend office physically by rotation and the staff members not required to present physically at the office.

It had said that only online filing (e-filing) of cases will be allowed and no physical filing is permitted.



What is Novel Coronavirus - nCoV?

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

Symptoms of nCoV

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

Treatment

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

Precautions to Prevent nCoV

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



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District surveillance Officer
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WEST : 9593297809
NORTH : 9641957468
SOUTH : 7407691463
New STNM
AMS : 9434711402

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

Understanding News

Seek information, not entertainment or rabble-rousing

Never has the debate over what constitutes proper journalism been as frenetic as it is nowadays with the multitude of 24-hour news channels from diverse backgrounds addressing diverse audiences with their own spin on reportage. Be it Opinion Polls or stilted opinions being foisted as news, there is much that repulses in what television presents as news nowadays. Someone should probably tell our telle-journos that national news channel does not mean “nationalistic” propaganda mediums, because that is what they are increasingly becoming. Journalistic ethics are not flexible – the same rules apply whether we are reporting on soldiers or Kashmiris or India or Pakistan. Wolf whistles (read TRP ratings) are no proof of good journalism.

‘National’ news channels discussing issues, reporting ‘incidents’ or raising issues and the coverage of public meetings in local newspapers or scandalous claims by inconsequential fringe elements lend to feverish discussion over who provided balanced reports and who has been too sensational or which news report subverted journalistic ethics. The debates will never resolve because journalistic ethics are not codified enough to throw absolute answers on what is right and what wrong. In fact, journalism is essentially concerned with reportage and not with the greater disputes of rights and wrongs. These are concerns which require application of serious thought and a reporter, by virtue of her/ his job-description is not expected to be the expert with all the solutions.

That does not go to say that reporters cannot help in resolving issues. In fact, this is what a good journalist should be committed to. They do not, however, resolve conflicts by suggesting remedies. They do so by providing information since conflict exists in the absence of information. Once all sides have access to information, they are also equipped to work out solutions. This is where journalists differ from politicians. Politicians, given the paranoia that comes with the post, hold their cards very close to their chests. They also thrive on misinformation and a committed journalist is expected to play a crucial and constructive role here - by disbursing information.

To disburse information, however, a journalist is required to procure it first and on this path are the most pitfalls. Since information has to be sourced, there is always the danger of a “plant”. People with personal vendettas on their agenda are known to dish out selective information causing many journalists to stumble. While the general argument goes to say that information is information irrespective of where it came from, a journalist is expected to glean through it carefully. If at all someone needs to let off a shot, why should it be from the shoulders of a newspaper. Whenever journalists speak of “self-censorship,” this is what they mean. Information, at the end of the day should serve the needs of the public and not individuals. The self-censorship mentioned here deals only with deciding on what needs to be delivered in the public domain and not whether it is palatable or not. Any news, good or bad, which needs to be broken, should be, and the news bearer should not be blamed for it. As for the audience, they should understand that news is about information first and not all information can be sensational.

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How Mumbai's poorest neighbourhood is battling to keep coronavirus at bay

ISHITA CHATTERJEE
THECONVERSATION.COM

Informal settlements are experiencing a greater surge in COVID-19 cases than other urban neighbourhoods in Mumbai, India. Their high density, narrow streets, tight internal spaces, poor access to water and sanitation leave residents highly vulnerable to the spread of coronavirus.

One of Mumbai's poorest and most underdeveloped neighbourhoods, Shivaji Nagar, is one of three informal settlements I have been studying. More than a month before the Indian government imposed a national lockdown, Shivaji Nagar residents, supported by the NGO Apnalaya, adopted their own measures to counter the pandemic.

Here, 600,000 people, 11.5% of Mumbai's informal settlement population, are crowded into an area of 1.37 square kilometres next to Asia's largest dumping ground. There is one toilet for every 145 people and 60% of residents have to buy water. There is a severe lack of health facilities.

Unsurprisingly, residents' health suffers. The settlement is a tuberculosis hotspot. Respiratory illness makes COVID-19 even more threatening for residents.

By April 13, Shivaji Nagar had 86 COVID-19 cases – an increase of 30 in two days – making it one of Mumbai's hotspots. As the virus started spreading rapidly, COVID-19 data for individual areas became hard to get. The release of cumulative data for the entire city was much less useful for understanding the growth in cases.

THE LOCKDOWN BEGINS

On March 24, the Indian government announced a national lockdown. Barricades were installed on

Shivaji Nagar's main streets to curb people's movement. TV and radio broadcasts urged residents to stay at home, practise good hygiene and regularly sanitise shared toilets and main streets.

Once the first few COVID-19 cases were detected in Shivaji Nagar, the government shifted patients and their families to isolation facilities outside the settlement. Fever camps were set up in parts of the settlement to screen people with symptoms. While the lockdown allowed essential services to continue, vegetable markets were shut down as cases increased.

After facing a backlash for not considering the impacts on the poor, the government eventually announced a nationwide relief package. Residents could receive free food by producing their ration cards.

Some measures worked while others created new problems. Quarantining people outside the settlement was effective (since home quarantine was not possible), as was setting up fever camps. However, the stigma and fear of being COVID-19-positive stopped many people from coming forward.

The sudden lockdown and market closures left most residents without food, water and medicines. Some 35% of Shivaji Nagar residents didn't have the ration cards needed to get free food. Enforcing social distancing and stopping people from venturing out of their homes, by beating them, didn't work either.

NGO FILLS THE GAP

The lack of official figures on case numbers and testing rates made it hard to track the spread of the virus in Shivaji Nagar. Volunteers working for

Apnalaya kept track on the ground.

As early as the second week of February, before India's borders closed, Apnalaya had decided to drastically reduce contact between the residents and outsiders. The aim was to minimise residents' risk of contracting the virus.

Apnalaya enrolled 40-50 volunteers from the neighbourhood to distribute relief supplies instead of bringing in staff. It arranged a year's health insurance for all volunteers. Elderly and pregnant women were encouraged to stay home and contact the volunteers for help with their daily needs.

Even before the government announced its relief package, Apnalaya was providing food and essentials to residents. Distribution began within the containment zones, but later extended to the entire settlement.

Funds for these activities were raised in several ways: a crowdfunding campaign, an alliance between multiple organisations and collaboration with the government.

A dashboard was used to document, plan and monitor the distribution of relief supplies. As the government's relief scheme excluded one in three residents, Apnalaya's door-to-door relief delivery ensured no family was left behind.

Apnalaya's permanent staff members were now managing everything from outside. The telephone became a medium to reach families who didn't have a TV or a radio and to monitor the situation. Staff regularly phoned residents to give advice on hygiene and how to get essentials and contact doctors for other ailments.

Not everyone was in their database, but this didn't matter. The residents played their part too.

COMMUNITY COMES TOGETHER

As residents, the volunteers were committed to their community even when facing extreme hardships. Relief distribution was particularly tricky in areas where drains had overflowed on streets and foundations built on garbage had slipped. Yet these volunteers reached all residents, knowing they relied on their efforts.

The community even found a temporary way to deal with the water shortage. Parts of the settlement with piped water shared it with neighbours who previously had to buy water from private suppliers. One supplier, a resident of the settlement, now provided water free of charge.

LESSONS FROM SHIVAJI NAGAR

Shivaji Nagar's story offers some important lessons. While the government acted pre-emptively, it failed to consider local conditions and needs. Apnalaya filled the gaps.

But the NGO's reach was limited, too, and the resident volunteers became the missing link. Acting as community leaders, they took stock of the situation on the ground and reported back to the NGO's office.

Some of the strategies that have worked have been tailored to local conditions and adapted to the evolving crisis. But the shortage of health facilities and lack of data transparency pose a great challenge.

Mumbai's M East Ward, which includes Shivaji Nagar, now has the highest COVID-19 death rate in Mumbai. At 9.7%, it's more than double the city's overall rate. Can Shivaji Nagar withstand the storm?

[the writer is PhD Candidate, Informal Urbanism (InfUr-) Hub, University of Melbourne]

Crucible: The science behind why watching others playing video games has become so popular

CRAIG WEIGHTMAN
THECONVERSATION.COM

Amazon has taken a step into the highly lucrative world of gaming by releasing its first title, Crucible. A team-based action shooter, it hopes to rival industry giants like Fortnite. What makes the game unique is that it was developed to be as fun to watch as it is to play. This is because it was created with the company's gaming live-streaming platform Twitch in mind.

Twitch was acquired by Amazon in 2014. It has become the major platform for gamers around the world to show off their skills and acquire massive fanbases, even rivalling YouTube. In 2019, it attracted 17.5 million average daily users and more than 600 billion minutes of game-play were watched.

It is easy to understand why it is fun to battle your way across fictional lands but a bit confusing why so many people enjoy watching someone else do it. However, the reasons they do are not so far removed from their own gameplay.

MIMICRY

The logic behind the growing popularity of simply watching others play games can be found in the phenomenon of mirror



neurons. These are specialist brain cells that seem to play some role in an animal's ability to mimic.

There is increasing evidence that babies use mirror neurons to copy and learn facial expressions, and to mimic sounds. The idea is that when we see, for instance, a facial expression for the first time, mirror neurons fire in our brains giving us a map of how to copy that same expression through the neural connections to our faces.

There is also some evidence of mirror neurons' involvement in areas such as

empathy. These mirror neurons appear to contribute to a brain system that helps us relate what we observe in others to our own experiences.

This could be key to understanding why so many are driven to watch others play games. When we are watching the action being streamed to our screens, it would be these circuits that fire up and make us feel the highs and the lows, as if it were us playing. This kind of passive psychological involvement is also seen with spectators of traditional sports, such as football.

LEARNING FROM WATCHING

Many Twitch viewers watch so they can increase their knowledge and improve their own playing experience. This was found in a study looking at the behaviours of Twitch users specifically. Users reported that they would watch gamers playing to discover new strategies for gameplay and to find out how good certain games are before purchasing them. That second point suggests that Twitch makes a fantastic marketing platform.

What's more, the study found that social factors were also major drivers for

using the service. The more hours that a person spends watching game streams, the greater the opportunity for them to interact with other like-minded members of the online community.

However, the strongest motivator for using the service, by far, was found to be the release of tension. Viewers sought to use the platform for escapism and diversion from their day-to-day lives. This was found to be a major driver behind the number of individual streams that are accessed in one sitting.

It seems likely, then, that we are not only hard-wired to enjoy watching other people play, particularly if we play games ourselves, but also psychologically driven to see streaming platforms as a way of fulfilling our informational, social and escapist needs. This phenomenon creates a demand that Twitch is well placed to supply.

In light of this, it seems an obvious and natural step to begin crafting games that make effective streaming of play to audiences easier, as is the case with the aptly named Crucible. These are the ingredients from which gaming legends will be made.

[the writer is Lecturer in Games and Visual Effects, Staffordshire University]



Department of Information & Public Relations
Government of Sikkim



One Year Of Good Governance

(27TH MAY 2019 - 26TH MAY 2020)

Sikkim completes a glorious year of progress under the altruistic governance and transcendentalism of the Hon'ble Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang (Golay)

Achievements and initiatives of the SKM Government 27th May, 2019 to 26th May, 2020

1. Disbursement of 100% pending pay fixation arrears to Government employees and pensioners at one go.
2. Allocation of fund in the budget for the payment of salaries of OFOJ employees.
3. Government sanctioned Rs 20.00 crore for establishment of Institute for Civil Service Officers and Government employees.
4. Discontinuation of promotion screening committee applied in the previous Government.
5. Granted Maternity Leave benefits of 180 days to Home Guards.
6. Enhanced the salary of MGNREGA from Rs. 177 to Rs. 320 for semi-skilled workers and Rs. 335 for skilled workers.
7. Establishment of first Viral Diagnostic Laboratory at STNM Hospital, Sochyangang.
8. Medicine and consumable items budget enhanced from 13.41 crores to 40 crores.
9. Health insurance scheme under Ayushman Bharat extended to Rs. 31,552/- for poor and needy people of Sikkim.
10. Government introduced a new scheme "Chief Minister Rural Health Insurance scheme" for the poor and needy people of Sikkim through Chief Minister Relief Fund which provides the benefit of cashless treatment upto 2 lakhs at Central Referral Hospital, Tadong. Till date 1202 poor people have been covered under this scheme.
11. Withdrawal of Party based Panchayat Election by amending Section 129 of Sikkim Panchayat Act 1993 which was imposed for long 25 years of the previous Government.
12. In a new housing scheme "Sikkim Garib Aawas Yojana" for all constituencies' rural poor and the needy people of Sikkim, a house value of Rs 17,61,682/- with additional 97.5 Sqft space, one TV set and furniture is provided. This scheme was previously named as CMRHM.
13. Housing scheme for all urban poor and the needy people of Sikkim under "Sikkim Urban Garib Aawas Yojna". Rs 17.00 lakhs valued house for urban poor under this yojna.
14. Government encouraged women entrepreneurs in contract and supply works with the following benefits.
 - i. No earnest money for contractual works upto Rs. 5 crores
 - ii. 50% earnest money for contractual works of Rs. 5 crores to 10 crores.
 - iii. Above 10 crores works full earnest money and TDR to be submitted.
15. Sikkim has been now bestowed with an Independent BSNL Administrative Control Center by the Government of India which was an unresolved problem being faced by the State for long three decades.
16. Eligibility age criteria for widow women pension reduced from 40 years to 21 years.
17. 7914 farmers included in farmers' pension scheme under PM Kisan Samman Nidhi.
18. Government reviewed and revived various Stalled Tourism projects delayed due to non-payment of land compensation, forest compensation, fund constraint and other issues by allocating requisite budgetary provisions.
19. Government support provided for completion of various incomplete religious institution such as Thakurbari Mandir project, Paru Hang Saptan Manghim (Mangkhim Rai Culture cum Tourist centre, Ranka), Devi Mandir at Adharsh Goan, Temi Namphing, South Sikkim etc.
20. For Guru Rimpoche statue at Lachung and Lachen, requisite budget provision made by the Government.
21. Requisite fund earmarked by the Government for the construction of "Magarzong Historical complex" at Mangsari, West Sikkim.
22. Three Sikkimese Girls Football Players selected in India Team Camp for FIFA U-17 World Cup.
 - i. Ms. Shri Devi Subba -Karmatar Busty, Dentam, West Sikkim
 - ii. Ms. Laxmi Thatal -Hee Bazaar-Dentam, West Sikkim
 - iii. Ms. Muskan Subba -Soreng, West Sikkim
23. Government acquired 11 acres of land at the cost of Rs 5.50 crores for the construction of Science Government College at Chakung.
24. Long pending land issues of Gyalsing Degree College settled, provided Rs. 4.4 crores for immediate completion of 1st phase construction and also agreed in-principal to add the additional infrastructure like Academic Block, Hostels, Auditorium, Sports complex etc. in the second phase.
25. Acquired 100 acre of land for National Institute of Technology (NIT), Sikkim at Khamdong East Sikkim at the cost of Rs. 26.4 crores.
26. Sectoral allocation to different departments for State Share of Centrally Sponsored Schemes and State funded schemes/projects increased to Rs. 818.43.00 crores which is an increase of 221% from the previous allocation.
27. Sikkim Government reduced registration fees for sale/purchase/lease of lands and buildings from 10% to 5% for the Residential Certificate holders of Sikkim.
28. Declared production incentive of Rs. 8 per litre on the price of Milk as Minimum Support Price (MSP) for Milk Producing farmers of Sikkim.
29. Rs. 25 crores fund allocated for Skilled Youth Start-Up Programme (SYSUP) for the unemployed youth.

Rafael Nadal the beacon of sport's old power despite new normal



JONATHAN LIEW
LONDON, 26 MAY [THEGUARDIAN]: One of the most refreshing aspects of sporting lockdown, in the absence of watching athletes do things, has been watching athletes talking. Properly talking, I mean. Most of the time, what normally passes for athletes talking is actually just athletes making noises: contrived and arbitrated noises, synthetic to the point of worthlessness.

Here, sweaty athlete at your most distracted and dishevelled: please summarise your many as-yet unprocessed emotions in a pithy, uncontroversial 30-second soundbite to a live audience of millions in front of a bit of sponsored cardboard, before you've even had a chance to see your loved ones. What's that? Great to get the win, you say? Illuminating stuff. Back to the studio.

But strip away the artifice, cordon off the agents and handlers, give the athlete a webcam and all the free time in the world, and it turns out – who knew? – that they can formulate thoughts just as cogently as anyone else.

Now and again, you

even learn something. Sergio Agüero, playing a game of Fifa on Twitch over the weekend, impulsively decides to ring Lionel Messi, who immediately demands to know why Agüero has called. "I was bored," a sheepish Agüero replies, "and, well, it was nine in the morning."

That little exchange, I would proffer, reveals more about the relationship between two of Argentina's greatest strikers than any number of heatmaps, thinkpieces or 8,000-word interviews with their cousins on the Athletic.

Observing the world's best men's tennis players offers a subtly different flavour of insight. What's striking is the warmth and affection they seem to have for each other: something more reverent than simple banter, more profound than professional regard. Novak Djokovic and Andy Murray share childcare tips. Rafael Nadal tries to let a beaming Roger Federer into his live chat but instead spends several minutes staring quizzically into his phone. "Brilliant," Murray wryly observes in the comments. "He can win 52

French Opens but not work Instagram."

There's a kinship to these exchanges that's as poignant as it is instructive. Instructive because it reminds us that for all their differences, their rivalries, their silly warring fandoms, the Big Four (or Big Three and Murray, if these distinctions are important to you) have grown more alike over time, not less. Poignant because what should have been the first week of Roland Garros is instead a bleak warning of their dwindling collective window of opportunity.

Naturally it is Nadal whose absence is felt most keenly right now: the forehands not ripped, the roars not roared, the red footprints not made. He would have been the strong favourite to claim a 13th crown, which he yet might when the rescheduled French Open is played in September. But somehow, even sport's surest guarantees no longer feel like guarantees of very much. "I don't believe in the new normal," Nadal said in a video interview with El País this month. "I like the old normal, with adaptations."

It's a nice thought, this idea that when tennis emerges from its summer hibernation, the hierarchy of the jungle will soon reassert itself, just as it always has. Besides, Nadal is one of those players who seems to have been "on the way out" for a decade or more: a career in perpetual autumn.

There is a famous New York Times profile that describes his explosive, injury-prone style as a "poetic self-immolation, the glorious athlete pushing himself resolutely toward[s] his own undoing". That was in 2009. Nadal has spent a good part of his adult life reading his own premature obituaries.

If Federer marks time and Djokovic chases it down, then Nadal stretches it. This is as true on the court as off. Great players often have the ability to slow the clock on their signature moments, lending them an effortlessly epic quality. For Nadal, it is the instant before he winds up that immense forehand, that broad torso recoiling, a moment of perfect stillness that also carries an implication of irresistible power.

For all this, it is Nadal who has also changed the most over time. His serve, particularly his second serve, has developed new layers of brutality in the last couple of years. He is more confident at the net than ever.

When you have achieved all he has, how do you remain so open to the possibility that your best years still lie ahead? A form of stubbornness, I suppose: a wilful myopia bordering on masochism. "I learned during all my career to enjoy suffering," Nadal has said and this is the axiom that sustains his most ardent fans as he waits impatiently in his Mallorcan palace, watching time tick slowly away.

The old get older. The young merely mature. The world the Big Three bestrode before the pandemic may not necessarily exist after it. Federer will be 39 in August, Nadal 34 next week. Djokovic has just turned 33. After almost two decades of untrammelled dominance, a new order feels impossible to envisage; like much else that felt unimaginable a few months ago.

And yet. Perhaps a little time away from the daily grind of the tour will work to Nadal's advantage. Time for niggles to clear up, for aches to heal, for the mind to refresh and for the body to recharge. And then, as if awaking from a deep sleep, he will return: the old fire in his belly, a new trick or two up his sleeve, ready to suffer and conquer all over again. Not a new normal but an old normal, with adaptations.

FIFA suspends Haiti football chief accused of rape



PORT-AU-PRINCE (HAITI), MAY 26 (AFP): FIFA has suspended the president of Haiti's football federation for 90 days pending an investigation into allegations he sexually abused teenage girls at the national training center.

Yves Jean-Bart, 73, categorically denies accusations that he raped several young female footballers at a training facility outside Port-au-Prince over the course of the past five years.

"In accordance with articles 84 and 85 of the FIFA Code of Ethics, the investigatory chamber of the independent Ethics Committee has provisionally banned Mr Yves Jean-Bart, President of the Haitian Football Federation (FHF), from all football-related activities at both national and international level, for a period of 90 days," FIFA

said Monday in a statement.

"This sanction has been imposed in connection with ongoing investigations concerning Mr Jean-Bart. Mr Jean-Bart was notified of the decision today. The provisional sanction comes into force immediately." Haitian police have launched a probe into the allegations, first revealed late last month, and a judge has already summoned several federation employees to answer questions.

According to young women quoted in an article published by The Guardian in late April, Jean-Bart raped multiple underage players over the years.

Saying they had been pressured to remain silent, the alleged victims told the newspaper on condition of anonymity that at least two under-

age players had to get abortions after Jean-Bart assaulted them.

"We think that this is a good decision by FIFA because we realized that Yves Jean-Bart and his cartel can overshadow any judicial investigation," said Marie-Rosy Auguste Ducena of the National Network for the Defence of Human Rights (RNDDH).

Criticizing the code of silence that she says hangs over the sports industry, Ducena noted that "rumors of sexual bargains for football benefits have been circulating in the country for a long time." Jean-Bart has led the country's football federation for two decades. His re-election in February for a sixth term was a mere formality -- he ran unopposed.

When contacted by AFP for comment, he did not respond.

Mitchell Starc raises fears of 'boring' cricket during spit-polishing ban

SYDNEY, 26 MAY [THEGUARDIAN]: The Australia paceman Mitchell Starc has raised concerns that the recommendation of a temporary ban on using saliva to shine the ball could hand batsmen too much of an advantage.

The coronavirus pandemic means spit-polishing to produce movement through the air has been deemed too great a risk by the International Cricket Council but the use of sweat will be allowed.

Starc suggested bowlers could require some assistance to get the ball swinging and ensure equal competition. "That contest between bat and ball, we don't want to lose that or get further away from that even contest. So there needs to be something in place to keep that ball swinging."

"They mentioned the other day that it's only going to be there for a period of time and then once the world gets back to a relatively normal situation then saliva can come back into shining the ball."

Nowhere in the world is more associated with the swinging ball than England and nobody in the history of the game has used it as effectively and prolifically as Jimmy Anderson. It could be fascinating to see how the bowlers manage should the Test series against West Indies and Pakistan go ahead later this summer.

The Australian manufacturer Kookaburra has developed a wax applicator that would allow cricket balls to be shined without using sweat or saliva and believes it could be ready to use within a month.

The laws of cricket explicitly state that fielders must not use "artificial substances" to alter the condition of the ball but the idea that umpires would oversee the process, or even use the sponge applicator on behalf of the bowling team, provides a possible solution.

Starc suggested cricket authorities may also need to issue guidance on pitch maintenance to ensure bowlers had a fair

chance of taking a wicket. He said: "If there's going to be a window of time, whether they instruct people to leave more grass on the wickets to have more contests..."

"If they're going to take away a portion of maintaining the ball there needs to be that even contest between bat and ball, otherwise people are going to stop watching and kids aren't going to want to be bowlers. There are some pretty flat wickets and if that ball is going straight it's a pretty boring contest."

Starc also said he would "certainly" welcome a return to county cricket if he was asked in the future. The Australian fast bowler played in 2012 for the club, where he learned to swing a Dukes ball after growing up bowling Kookaburras. "I loved my time there," Starc said. "I would have loved to have played some more championship cricket – I played a lot of white ball initially – but I learnt a lot while I was there. If a window arose and there was an opportunity, I'd certainly go."

Lost a big name: Pakistan's hockey fraternity mourns death of Balbir Singh Sr

KARACHI, MAY 26 (PTI): Balbir Singh Sr's death evoked emotional tributes from Pakistan's hockey community, which described the legendary centre-forward's demise as a big loss to the sport in general and the subcontinent in particular.

The 96-year-old three-time Olympic gold-medallist, considered one of the best centre-forwards of all time, died on Monday in Mohali.

"He had amazing flexibility, speed and lithe-ness in his game. His

sprints were a treat to watch," former Pakistan captain Samiullah said.

Samiullah was nicknamed the "The Flying Horse" for his speed and won three Asian Games and one World Cup gold during his career.

"Hockey has lost a big name as Balbir Singh was someone who enabled India to win three consecutive gold medals in the 1948, 1952 and 1956 Olympics because of his outstanding game," Samiullah added.

The Secretary General of the Pakistan Hockey Federation Asif Bajwa also condoled the death of Singh

and said he was one of the greatest.

"Never saw him play but we heard so much about him from our seniors that it is clear he was a striker in a different class," Bajwa said.

Former Pakistan captain and coach, Hasan Sardar, an outstanding centre-forward himself, said he took a lot of inspiration by hearing stories and anecdotes about Singh.

Islahuddin Siddiqui, one of the big names of Pakistan hockey, recalled meeting Singh several times in the '70s and '80s in international events.

Kvitova would 'rather cancel' Grand Slams than play without fans

PRAGUE, MAY 26 (AFP): Two-time Wimbledon winner Petra Kvitova has said she would prefer Grand Slams did not take place as opposed to playing them behind closed doors due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Speaking on the eve of her court return in an all-Czech tournament the 30-year-old echoed the thoughts of Roger Federer, who said last week he would be against the idea of an empty Roland Garros or Flushing Meadows.

"I have my age and of course I would like to play another Grand Slam, but if it's like this, I'd rather cancel them," Kvitova said.

"Playing a Grand Slam is the greatest thing there is and playing without fans who are our engine doesn't look nice to me and the Grand Slam doesn't deserve it," she



added.

This year's French Open has been moved to September, Wimbledon has been cancelled and the WTA tour will not resume until at least July 20 due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

This week's competition in Prague has eight men and eight women in separate draws but there will be no spectators or

handshakes.

There will be referees and ball boys at the tournament, but they will not hand towels to those on the court.

"It's not ethical not to shake hands and just give a racquet bump, I think that's the most unpleasant thing I'm in for," Kvitova said.

Sports came to a halt in Kvitova's homeland, where

the virus has claimed 300 deaths from 9,000 confirmed cases, in mid-March.

"We are here to reintroduce tennis not only to the Czech Republic, but also to the world," Kvitova said.

"The hardest thing will be to find the rhythm, we haven't played a match for a very long time," said Kvitova, who faces doubles specialist Barbora Krejčíková in her opening contest on Tuesday.

"I hope nobody expects us to play fantastic tennis, because it may happen or it may not," added the world number 12, wearing a face mask which, she said, had a good thing about it.

"I don't have to wear a make-up."

- 'NOT THE SAME THING' -

World number three Karolina Pliskova has pulled out of the wom-

Playing in bio-secure environment is unrealistic, feels Dravid

NEW DELHI, MAY 26 (PTI): Former India captain Rahul Dravid feels the ambition to resume cricket in a bio-secure environment is "unrealistic", giving a thumbs down to the concept primarily floated by the England and Wales Cricket Board.

Seeking to restart its cricket season after weeks of inactivity owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, the ECB recently announced that it would have in place bio-secure venues to host Pakistan

and the West Indies later this summer.

But batting great Dravid is not convinced with the concept.

"It is a bit unrealistic to have things at the level, the ECB is talking about. Obviously, the ECB is very keen to conduct these series because they have had no other cricket...," Dravid said during a webinar conducted in support of YUVA, a non-profit organisation.

"Even if they are potentially able to create a bubble and manage it in

that way, I think it will be impossible for everyone to do it with the kind of calendar that we have, with the travelling that you do on tours and the number of people involved," he added.

Not just the ECB, even South Africa has suggested that the scheduled tour by India can be tried out in a bio-secure environment.

"All of us are hoping that things will evolve with time and get better once we have better medication.

"In case of the bio-bubble, you do all the testing, the quarantine and then on day two of the Test match, what if one player tests positive? What happens then? The rules, as they stand now, will see the Public Health Department coming in and putting everyone in quarantine."

That will mean an abrupt end to proceedings in the Test match.

"...that ends all the expenses that were made to get everyone there and create that environment.

"We're going to have

Singapore warns of worst economic contraction since independence

Singapore's virus-hit economy could shrink by as much as seven percent this year -- the worst reading since independence -- the government said Tuesday, as it unveiled a fresh multi-billion dollar stimulus package.

The city-state is seen as a bellwether of the global economy, and the forecast historic contraction highlights the extreme pain being wrought on countries by the killer disease.

The warning came as Singapore's deputy prime minister unveiled a fresh support package worth Sg\$33 billion (\$23.2 billion) for the troubled city, which has been crippled by months of lockdowns around the world.

The trade ministry's forecast -- which was a downgrade from the maximum four percent contraction predicted in March -- came as official data showed the economy shrank 0.7 percent on-year in the first three months of the year, while it reduced 4.7 percent from the previous quarter.

The financial hub is one of the world's most open economies, and is usually hit hardest and earliest during any global shock.

The ministry said the new estimate was made "in view of the deterioration in the external demand outlook" and the partial lockdown imposed domestically. A contraction of seven percent would be the worst since the city's independence in 1965.

Shutdowns in major markets such as the United States, Europe and China have crippled demand for exports, and a halt in international air travel has hammered Singapore's key tourism sector.

Singapore has ordered the closure of most businesses, advised people to stay at home, and banned large gatherings. While officials say they may start relaxing the rules from early June, many restrictions will remain in place.

Deputy Prime Minister Heng Swee Keat, who is also the finance minister, announced in parliament the new package largely aimed at helping companies save jobs.

The government has so far earmarked more than Sg\$90 billion, or 20 percent of GDP, to cushion the economic fallout from the virus, which has infected over 32,000 people in the city-state, the highest in Southeast Asia.

"It has been an unprecedented crisis that is still changing rapidly," Heng said, adding Singapore has the "fiscal resources to mount this response".

Song Seng Wun, an economist with CIMB Private Banking, said he expects the second quarter to bear the full brunt of the fallout, with GDP expected to contract 15-20 percent.

"Singapore is a small and open economy whose trade is three times the size of GDP. The sharp contractions are a reflection of its external vulnerability," he told AFP.

Biden makes 1st in-person appearance in more than 2 months

NEW CASTLE (US), MAY 26 (AP): Joe Biden made his first in-person appearance in more than two months on Monday as he marked Memorial Day by laying a wreath at a veterans park near his Delaware home.

Since abruptly canceling a March 10 rally in Cleveland at the onset of the coronavirus pandemic, the presumptive Democratic presidential nominee has waged much of his campaign from his home in Wilmington. When Biden emerged on Monday, he wore a face mask, in contrast to President Donald Trump, who has refused to cover his face in public as health officials suggest.

Biden and his wife, Jill, laid a wreath of white flowers tied with a white bow, and bowed their heads in silence at the park. He saluted.

Never forget the sacrifices that these men and women made," he said after.

Never, ever, forget. I feel great to be out here," Biden told reporters, his words muffled through his black cloth mask. His visit to the park was unannounced and there was no crowd waiting for him.

But Biden briefly greeted a county official and another man, both wearing face masks and standing a few feet away. Biden also yelled to another, larger group standing nearby, Thank you for your service.

His campaign says Biden has gone to the



park for Memorial Day often in the past, though services were canceled Monday in the pandemic.

Though low-key, the appearance was a milestone in a presidential campaign that has largely been frozen by the coronavirus outbreak. While the feasibility of traditional events such as rallies and the presidential conventions are in doubt, Biden's emergence suggests he won't spend the nearly five months that remain until the election entirely at home.

Trump, eager to project a country coming to life even as the pandemic's death toll approached 100,000, presided over back-to-back events at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia and Fort McHenry in Baltimore.

After a wreath-laying ceremony at Arlington, Trump mourned the fallen in remarks at the Baltimore historic site and praised the contribution of service members on the front lines of our war against this terrible virus.

The coronavirus has upended virtually all aspects of American life and changed the terms of the election. Trump's argument that he deserves another term in office because of the strong economy has evaporated as unemployment rises to levels not seen since the Great Depression.

As a longtime senator and former vice president, Biden is trying to position himself as someone with the experience and empathy to lead the country out of a crisis. Trump counters that he is the leader who can preside over an economic rebound later this year or in 2021.

Biden has adjusted to the coronavirus era by building a television studio in his home, which he's used to make appearances on news programs, late-night shows and virtual campaign events. Some of those efforts have been marred by technical glitches and other awkward moments.

Some Democratic

day sooner.

Trump has not resumed the large rallies that were the hallmark of his 2016 campaign and presidency but has begun traveling outside Washington in recent weeks. He visited a facility producing face masks in Arizona and a Ford plant in Michigan that has been converted to produce medical and protective equipment.

Trump even played golf at his club in Virginia on the weekend, hoping that others will follow his lead and return to some semblance of normal life and gradually help revive an economy in free fall.

It was the president's first trip to one of his money-making properties since March 8, when he visited his private golf club in West Palm Beach. The World Health Organization declared the coronavirus a pandemic on March 11, and Trump followed with the national emergency declaration two days later.

Biden's campaign wasted little time producing an online video offering blurry, faraway footage of Trump on the golf course, imposed over images evoking the virus ravaging the nation as the number of Americans dead from the pandemic approached 100,000.

The video concluded by proclaiming: The death toll is still rising. The president is playing golf.

Trump is traveling to Florida Wednesday to watch to U.S. astronauts blast into orbit.

strategists have openly worried that Biden is ceding too much ground to Trump by staying home. The president himself has knocked Biden for essentially campaigning from his basement.

Biden's advisers say they plan to return to normal campaign activities at some point, including travel to battleground states. But they're in no hurry, preferring to defer to the advice of health experts and authorities' stay-at-home and social distancing recommendations.

At 77, Biden is among the nation's senior population thought to be especially vulnerable to the effects of the coronavirus though so is Trump, who turns 74 next month.

We will never make any choices that put our staff or voters in harm's way, Biden campaign manager Jen O'Malley Dillon said recently, adding that the campaign would resume more traditional activities when safety allows, and we will not do that a

Hong Kong leader tries to reassure investors rattled by China law

China's plans to impose a new security law on Hong Kong will not erode freedoms, the city's leader said Tuesday, as she tried to reassure international businesses and foreign governments alarmed by the proposal.

Chief Executive Carrie Lam said the controversial law would "only target a handful of law-breakers" but she would not be drawn on what actions and opinions would be deemed illegal once the legislation is passed.

Her comments came as the commander of China's military garrison in Hong Kong warned the law would "punish any acts of separatism".

"Garrison officers have the determination, faith and capacity to defend national sovereignty," Chen Daoxiang told state-run CCTV.

Beijing wants to enact legislation banning secession, subversion, terrorism and foreign interference in the international finance hub after months of massive, often-violent pro-democracy protests last year.

Many Hong Kongers, business groups and Western nations fear the proposal could be a death blow to the city's treasured liberties and usher in an end to the semi-autonomous city passing its own laws.

The announcement of plans for the new law -- which will be written by Beijing and bypass Hong Kong's legislature

-- sparked the biggest drop on the city's stock exchange in five years on Friday.

But Lam said fears the city's business-friendly freedoms were at risk were "totally groundless".

"Hong Kong's freedoms will be preserved and Hong Kong's vibrancy and the core values in terms of the rule of law, the independence of the judiciary, the various rights and freedoms enjoyed by people, will continue to be there," Lam told reporters.

The proposed law, she added, "only targets a handful of law-breakers... it protects the vast majority of law-abiding, peace-loving residents."

- Mainland agents? -

Hong Kong was upended last year by seven months of huge and often violent pro-democracy protests, fuelled by years of rising fears that Beijing is chipping away at the city's freedoms.

Millions took to the streets for rallies that routinely ended with clashes between riot police and smaller groups of militant protesters wielding petrol bombs.

Beijing portrays the protests as a foreign-backed plot to destabilise the motherland. Protesters say their rallies are the only way to voice opposition in a city with no universal suffrage.

Thousands protested on Sunday after the security law announcement and were dispersed by tear gas and water cannon in

the worst clashes in months.

The precise wording of the security law has yet to be revealed but China's rubber-stamp parliament previewed initial details last week.

It is expected to approve a draft of the law on Thursday and analysts say it could be implemented in the summer.

One concern is a provision allowing Chinese security agents to operate in Hong Kong, with fears it could spark a crackdown on those voicing dissent against Beijing.

Subversion laws are routinely wielded against critics on the mainland.

- Anthem law -

Asked by a reporter whether mainland officials could arrest protesters in Hong Kong, Lam dismissed the question as "your imagination".

She said anti-government protests would continue to be allowed "if it is done in a legal way", but she did not elaborate on what views would be considered illegal under the new law.

A common chant at protests over the last year has been "Free Hong Kong, revolution of our times", a cry that encapsulates frustration with Beijing's rule since the city's 1997 handover by Britain.

Activists fear such calls might be considered illegal given the broad definition of subversion.

Macau casino tycoon Stanley Ho dies aged 98

Stanley Ho, the Hong Kong-born tycoon who made billions transforming neighbouring Macau from a sleepy Portuguese outpost into the world's biggest gambling hub, died on Tuesday at the age of 98, his family said.

Known as the "godfather" of Macau's casinos, Ho was instrumental in turning the semi-autonomous city on China's southern coastline into a gambling boomtown.

He fathered at least 17 children and speculation about how his vast fortune would be divided among his offspring has long occupied Hong Kong's tabloid media alongside public family feuds.

Family members said Ho passed away shortly after 1.00 pm local time in hospital.

"My father will live in our family members' hearts forever, and the hearts of all the people who benefited from him and were encouraged by him," daughter Pansy told reporters.

China's state-run CCTV described Ho as a "patriotic entrepreneur".

Ho monopolised the gaming industry until 2002, when the government introduced foreign investors sparking a boom which saw casino takings contribute around 80 percent of Macau's annual revenue and overtake Las Vegas.

His Sociedade de Jogos de Macao Holdings (SJM) empire remains a major player in Macau, the only place in China where casinos are allowed.

The company took a hit alongside its competitors after China's President Xi Jinping launched a high-profile corruption crackdown in 2014, triggering a dramatic decline in high-rollers to Macau.

Gaming revenues bounced back until earlier this year when the coronavirus pandemic emptied casino floors and hammered the industry.

Most operators, however, including SJM, have ample cash reserves built up from the boom years

to weather a prolonged downturn.

While many of Hong Kong's tycoons have rags to riches backstories, Ho initially had a gilded start to life.

He was the great-nephew of one of Asia's first tycoons, Robert Hotung, an influential Eurasian businessman and philanthropist who was among Hong Kong's wealthiest individuals at the turn of the 20th century.

- Smuggling, casinos and children -

But Ho's family fortunes collapsed during the depression years, and when World War II came he fled to Macau virtually destitute.

The war allowed him to make his first fortune -- smuggling luxury goods into China from Macau -- before securing the only gaming licence in the then-Portuguese colony in 1962.

Ho said he had never wagered a bet, even while his casinos continued to rake in billions in revenues annually. He also added to his wealth through a property and shipping empire.

A flamboyant entrepreneur, philanthropist and keen ballroom dancer, Ho first married in 1942 but subsequently had three other partners with whom he had children.

Local media said it was unclear whether or not he had married all the women he called his "wives".

Bloomberg estimates his family empire is worth \$14.9 billion and a spat between rival factions in 2011 became front page news before it ended with an agreement.

Like many of Hong Kong's magnates, Ho was reluctant to retire and only officially stepped down from SJM in 2018 at the age of 96, handing over the reins to his daughter Daisy and Angela Leong, his fourth "wife".

One of his sons, Lawrence, runs rival casino and hotel operator Melco International in Macau.

VIDEO NEWS SECTION

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New COVID-19 Protective Suit Designed Specifically for Concerts and Festivals

Featuring a N95 filter, LED lights, and a snap-in canister for drinking and vaping

As government officials begin planning how to reopen their states amid the coronavirus pandemic, music fans everywhere are wondering when, if at all, it will be safe to attend concerts again. While drive-in concerts and socially distanced shows, seem like sensible short-term alternatives, one company has taken upon itself to invent a more catch-all solution.

Production Club usually spends its days working on “stages and experiences” for clients in gaming, technology, and music industries. After seeing news reports about people flooding to beaches without proper protection, though, the creative studio began brainstorming ways to help out their communities directly. They came up with the Micrashell, a protective suit people can wear to music festivals and clubs to prevent the spread of COVID-19 — no Wu-Tang Clan hand sanitizer needed.



In an interview with NBC Los Angeles, Miguel Risueno, head of inventions for Production Club, said the Micrashell is “a solution for bringing people togeth-

er” while still looking out for one another. “It’s a half suit that kind of takes your safety and your security — in terms of being close to airborne particles or viruses — to the next level,” he explained. “We said we still need to find a solution because people are still going out. People are still going to party and still skipping social distance measures... With our solution, we are trying to make space available for everyone because our solution depends on your own footprint rather than distancing yourself.”

A sketch of the Micrashell makes it look like a neon-striped space suit of sorts, like a cross of Buzz Lightyear and Tron. There’s a N95 filter, an air ejection system, a “cell link pouch”, and even snap-in canisters for drinking and vaping. The way they see it, the latter was a necessary inclusion in the product. “It’s another thing you don’t need to remove the helmet for,” explained Risueno, “because if you remove the helmet and the shield you are now compromised.”

Michael Moore film Planet of the Humans removed from YouTube

British environmental photographer’s copyright claim prompts website to remove film that has been condemned by climate scientists

YouTube has taken down the controversial Michael Moore-produced documentary Planet of the Humans in response to a copyright infringement claim by a British environmental photographer.

The movie, which has been condemned as inaccurate and misleading by climate scientists and activists, allegedly includes a clip used without the permission of the owner Toby Smith, who does not approve of the context in which his material is being used.

In response, the filmmakers denied violating fair usage rules and accused their critics of politically motivated censorship.

Smith filed the complaint to YouTube on 23 May after discovering Planet of the Humans used several seconds of footage from his Rare Earthware project detailing the journey of rare earth minerals from Inner Mongolia.

Smith, who has previously worked on energy and environmental issues, said he did not want his work associated with something he disagreed with. “I went directly to YouTube rather than approaching the filmmakers because I wasn’t interested in negotiation. I don’t support the documentary, I don’t agree with its message and I don’t like the misleading use of facts in its narrative.”

Planet of the Humans director Jeff Gibbs said he was working with YouTube to resolve the issue and have the film back up as soon as possible.

He said in a statement: “This attempt to take down our

film and prevent the public from seeing it is a blatant act of censorship by political critics of Planet of the Humans. It is a misuse of copyright law to shut down a film that has opened a serious conversation about how parts of the environmental movement have gotten into bed with Wall Street and so-called “green capitalists.” There is absolutely no copyright violation in my film. This is just another attempt by the film’s opponents to subvert the right to free speech.”

Planet of the Humans, which has been seen by more than 8 million people since it was launched online last month, describes itself as a “full-frontal assault” on the sacred cows of the environmental movement.

Veteran climate campaigners and thinkers, such as Bill McKibben and George Monbiot, have pointed out factual errors, outdated footage and promotion of myths about renewable energy propagated by the fossil fuel industry. Many are dismayed that Moore — who built his reputation as a left-wing filmmaker and supporter of civil rights — should produce a work endorsed by climate sceptics and right-wing thinktanks.

Several have signed a letter urging the removal of what they called a “shockingly misleading and absurd” documentary. Climate scientist Michael Mann said the filmmakers “have done a grave disservice to us and the planet” with distortions, half-truths and lies.

On Moore’s official YouTube channel, the usual link to the film has been replaced by a page noting “Video unavailable. This video is no longer available due to a copyright claim by a third party.” On the Planet of the Humans website, the link to the full movie is also dead, though the trailers and other video material are functioning as normal.

The Taylor Swift Cover On ‘Killing Eve’ Might Not Be What It Seems

It seems T-Swift isn’t going to go down without a fight. A cover of Taylor Swift’s hit single Look What You Made Me Do was featured on Sunday night’s latest episode of Killing Eve, however, there may be more to this endeavor than meets the eye. The singer took to Twitter prior to the episode to express her excitement over the cover’s big Killing Eve debut. “VERY STOKED about this cover of lwyymm on @KillingEve by Jack leopards & the dolphin club!!” Swift wrote. But who is this band and why have we never heard of them before? After a little digging, fans have since realized that the band doesn’t seem to have existed prior to April, leaving many to believe this could be the singer’s way of getting back at her rival and former boss, Scooter Braun.

As many Swift fans already know, Braun bought the back catalogue of the singer’s work last year, including the albums Taylor Swift, Fearless, Speak Now, Red, 1989 and Reputation. Swift



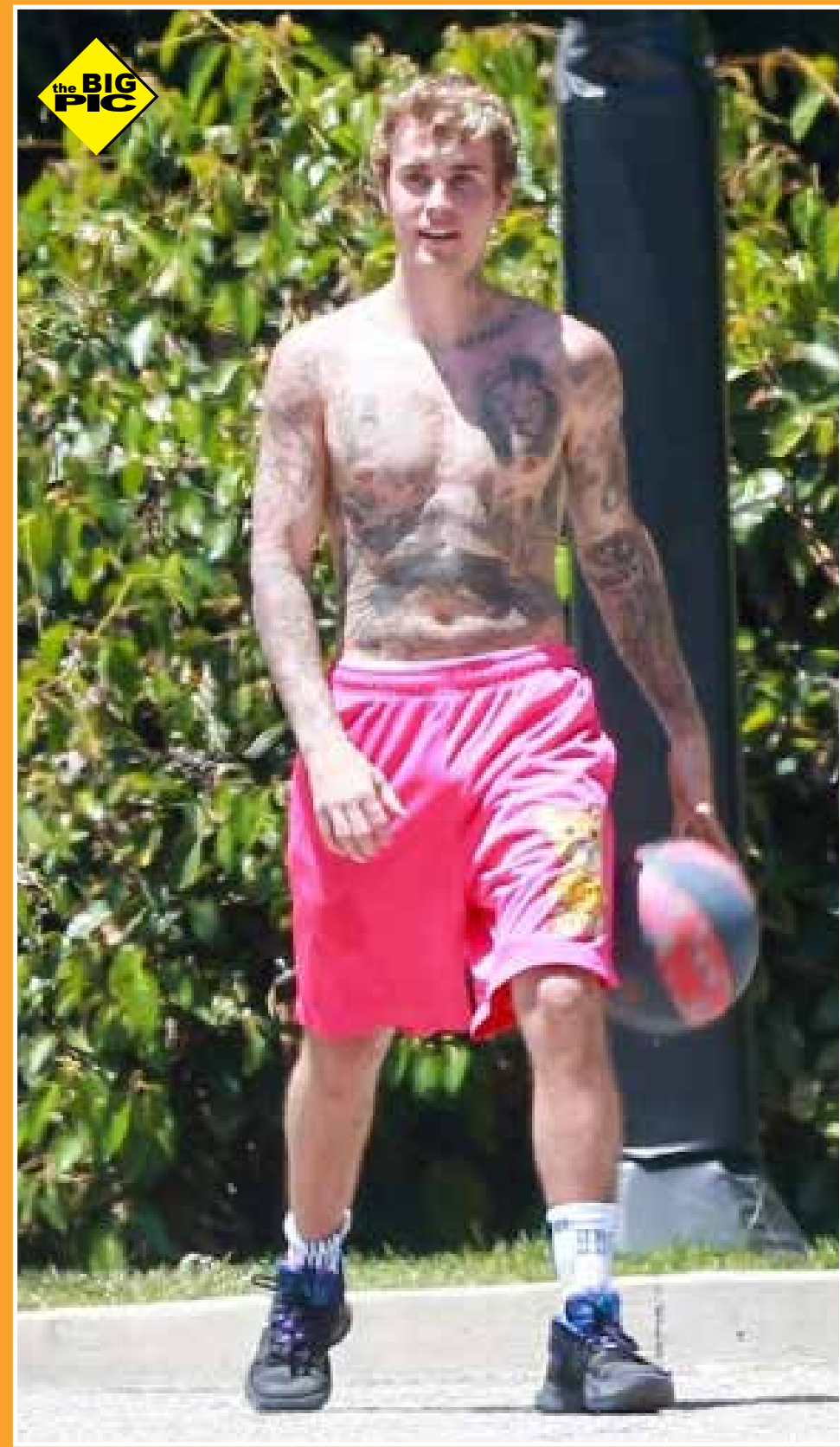
was upset at the time and claimed to have never been given the chance to purchase the masters herself, which led to a lot of controversy between her and Braun. The good news is that Swift will be able to start re-recording some of her songs in November 2020, however, this Killing Eve cover may suggest that the 30-year-old artist has found a way to display her songs the public without Braun being able to financially benefit from it.

After hearing the cover and doing a little research, fans believe that the mystery band’s vocals in the song be-

long to Swift’s brother, Austin, who once named his Twitter account “The Dolphin Club.” Additionally, two of the producer credits for the track were given to Jack Antonoff, who helped Swift write the original version of Look What You Made Me Do, and Nils Sjoberg, a songwriting pseudonym that Swift has been known to use in the past.

This would indicate that Swift went through all of the trouble of recreating the song just so Braun wouldn’t be able to claim any royalties from it — a bold move on the singer’s part and her fans can’t help but stan.

Swift has yet to address these fans suspicions, so for now it’s all just mere speculation, though she did reportedly ask Killing Eve producer Phoebe Waller-Bridge to let her brother sing on the show earlier this year, as per The Daily Mail. Could that request have come to fruition? It certainly seems possible. Braun, look what you made Swift do.



B BALL! The singer, Justin Bieber takes some time to shoot some hoops while showing off his abs.

Jason Bourne Franchise Producer Wants to 'Restart' Film Series With New Filmmaker



Bourne and a new filmmaker. We are looking."

Doug Liman directed The Bourne Identity before the acclaimed action filmmaker Paul Greengrass took over for The Bourne Supremacy and The Bourne Ultimatum. He then returned for the series' fifth entry, Jason Bourne, while the Jeremy Renner-led spin-off, The Bourne Legacy, was directed by Tony Gilroy.

The fourth instalment, The Bourne Legacy, was set in the same universe as its predecessors but the 2012 action-thriller did not star Matt Damon in the lead role. Instead, the story centred around black-ops agent Aaron Cross, an original character played by Renner.

It is not yet known whether Damon or Renner would be returning for the prospective sixth film in the franchise, though Damon previously expressed a lack of interest in returning to the series without Greengrass in the director’s chair.

ARIES:

Make sure that you aren’t giving too much money to your friends. It’s not such a bad thing to lend someone some money once in a while, but be careful to avoid financing any of their new projects or schemes. It’s a complication you don’t need right now. It’s not about being selfish. It’s about not creating a situation in which misunderstandings could result. Keep things simple and social and leave money out of it.

TAURUS:

Getting your emotional health in check is always important, but it’s even more important now. You need to balance things out and get a better sense of what really matters and what you should let roll off your back. You’re may already feel good about your life, but once you start sharing your affection with friends and family members, your happiness will grow exponentially. Spread the love and pass out hugs like they’re going out of style.

GEMINI:

You’ll have plenty of patience today, which makes this the perfect time to talk to someone who always tests it! If you’ve been dreading a confrontation or difficult conversation, today is the day to finally go through with it. Patience gives you perspective, and this perspective will give you the courage you’ve been lacking. But the best part of this day is that you’ll soon discover that you had nothing to fear in the first place.

CANCER:

You could have a strong urge to initiate a conversation with someone you don’t usually talk to, and it’s an urge you should follow! Even if you don’t always see eye to eye with this person, you two could reach an agreement today. Listen to them and work hard to respect what they say. Thinking the best of this person is suddenly easier to do. Together, you are going to come up with a powerful idea that solves a lot of problems.

LEO:

Acclaim has been handed out, and your reputation now shines more brightly than ever, and justly so. Other people in your life are going to start looking to you for answers, so be prepared to be in demand! But instead of handing out answers left and right, empower the people who come to you to find their own answers. Your encouragement will help them follow in your footsteps and become more successful.

VIRGO:

Are your goals set in stone? They’d better be! The more solid they are, the faster you’ll be able to reach them. A lot can be achieved today, but only if you know exactly what you need to do. Write everything down if you need to. This isn’t the day to just go with the flow or follow your mood. There’s too much at stake for you to just do whatever you feel like doing, whenever you feel like doing it. Tip: ‘Playfulness’ is the magic word.

LIBRA:

You’re projecting an aura of calm today. So what if deep down inside you’re frazzled and frayed? Focus more on

what people perceive you to be and not on who you really are, especially since what they’re going to perceive will be so helpful to your reputation! Accept all compliments, and don’t even think about making any self-deprecating jokes. As far as you’re concerned, you believe that you’re as big a rock star as everyone else says you are.

SCORPIO:

You’re feeling even more passionate and intense about an issue that matters a lot to you, and this focus will help you make a lot of headway in defending or promoting it. You haven’t always wanted to try and win other people over to your way of thinking, but today you’ll see that they might finally be willing to admit that they aren’t on the right side of things. Be gentle when you talk to them, and don’t try to push them to change too much too quickly. Just plant a seed.

SAGITTARIUS:

Today, it might be a good idea to adopt a more analytical attitude, especially when it comes to dealing with people you don’t like. If they rub you the wrong way, so what? They don’t have an impact on your life, so skip past them and never look back. If you pay attention to folks who have nothing nice to say, you’re giving them more power over your life than they deserve. Your time and energy should be devoted to the people who bring out the best in you.

CAPRICORN:

You know you need to get a little more disciplined

in your life, and today brings a great opportunity for you to find a way to do it without depriving yourself of anything. You’ll be much happier if you live your life with guidelines. You know the rules. You know what to do and what not to do, and you need never again wonder if you’re doing something right. Challenge yourself to be more disciplined and you’ll impress yourself with how strong you can be.

AQUARIUS:

Business as usual will leave you bored as usual today. But the good news is that you’ll have someone on your side who’s just as bored as you and just as eager to find a fun way to mix things up! Skip past all your right-brain thinking and focus on more creative ways to get things done. Team up with this person today and it could be the beginning of a beautiful relationship. Turn on the music and take off your shoes. Relaxation is always a good way to start the brainstorming.

PISCES:

Being attracted to beautiful things doesn’t make you shallow, so don’t feel guilty if you show a preference for pretty things today. When you’re surrounded by things that make you feel good, you’re apt to start experiencing some more romance in your life. The world is a beautiful place to share with someone else. This is a wonderful day to take a stroll outside or even just sit and look out the window with someone you really care about. Enjoy the beauty together..