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Summit **TIMES**

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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With one more death, Sikkim's Covid-toll reaches 109

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 30 Nov: Sikkim recorded one more COVID-19 death with the passing away of a 73-year-old lady from Lingtam, East District, on Monday. With this, the COVID-toll in Sikkim has now reached 109.

In the daily health bulletin on Monday, Health Department State IEC Officer, Sonam Gyaltsen Bhutia, informed that the patient was found positive for COVID-19 in RT-PCR screening and admitted to STNM Hospital on 27 November.

She passed away at around 5:45 AM this early morning. The patient had no co-morbidities and her passing away is being recorded as a COVID-death.

In the meantime, 26 more patients were discharged from isolation on Sunday to improve the figure of discharged COVID-19 patients in Sikkim to 4,544.

Likewise, four fresh cases of novel coronavi-

rus were reported in the last 24 hours taking Sikkim's tally of confirmed cases to 4,989 on Monday.

The number of active cases of novel coronavirus has come down to 248, of whom four are currently in the ICU at the COVID-dedicated STNM Hospital.

The four positive cases were picked up in rapid antigen testing of 29 samples. No RT-PCR tests were conducted in the VRD Lab since it is closed on Sundays.

Of the four new cases in the State, three were reported from East District and one from West Sikkim.

While providing details of the new case, Mr Bhutia informed that one person from above Durga Mandir in Rumtek, one from the housing government quarters in Deorali and one from Forest Colony in Baluwakhani in East District and one person from Lower Laso in Tashiding in West District tested positive for COVID-19 in RAT.

CM lays foundation stone of Vrindavan Dham at Dodak

RUDRA KAUSHIK GYALSHING, 30 Nov: Chief Minister PS Tamang [Golay] on Monday laid the foundation stone of Vrindavan Dham project at Dodak in West Sikkim today. The project is being developed as an eco-tourism pilgrimage complex with the aim to promote religious tourism in the district.

The Dham is being developed by the Tourism Department on a 10.78 acre expanse, land for which has already been acquired.

Speaking at the event, the Chief Minister highlighted the foundation stone laying ceremony was a historic moment for the people of West Sikkim and pointed out that although the project was promised during the previous SDF Government, it never pursued it in earnest.

He went on to allege the SDF government



had made it a habit of announcing ambitious projects for the people of West Sikkim but never fulfilling them.

He shared that he had promised himself that he would see through the Vrindavan Dham construction project if SKM ever formed the govern-

ment, adding that Vrindavan Dham was his dream project and a long-pending aspiration of the people of West Sikkim.

He stressed that there should be no compromises in the quality of the construction work and work completed within the stipulated time.

"Unlike what used to happen under the former state government, construction of public centric projects should not get delayed," he said.

The CM also spoke about the various developmental programmes and policies of the KM government.

Rohit Raj Maharaj,

Advisor to the Chief Minister, who is also the chairperson of the Vrindavan Dham Samiti, in his brief address, reflected on various aspects of the project construction.

He added that it was a proud moment for the people of West Sikkim that the project was fi-

nally being initiated.

He thanked the people involved in Vrindavan Dham construction project for their dedication and commitment.

Additional Chief Secretary, Tourism, K Jaya Kumar, placed the detailed project report of the project.

Dr Yogesh Verma is new Medical Superintendent at CRH

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 30 Nov: Dr Yogesh Verma, who retired as Medical Superintendent, STNM Hospital, some years back, has been appointed the Medical Superintendent of Central Referral Hospital.

He has also served as Principal Chief Consultant, Department of Pathology, STNM Hospital and since 2014, has been attached to Sikkim Manipal Institute of Medical Sciences (SMIMS) under Sikkim Manipal University (SMU) as a Professor, Department of Pathology.

An avid researcher with WHO and ICMR grants



and numerous publications under his name, Dr Verma is actively involved in providing patient care and health services to the people of the State.

Dr Verma has done his MBBS from Medical College, Calcutta, and MD in Pathology from AIIMS, New Delhi.

SPYF to take demand for improved health services to the streets

SAGAR CHHETRI
GANGTOK, 30 Nov:

Sikkim Progressive Youth Forum today announced that it will now launch a movement on the streets taking out demonstrations and rallies and also leveraging cultural, literary and creative options to press their two-point demand that hospitals in Sikkim meet IPHS guidelines to provide medicines and other medical services free of cost to patients here.

The SPYF decision announcing a change of course came when the 30 November deadline served by it to the State Government to deliver on



these demands passed unfulfilled.

Addressing a press conference here this afternoon, SPYF member, Shankar Sharma, highlighted that the organization has been raising the demand for improvements in the health sector in the State since

2018 with only the best interests of the lay people in mind.

"Those who supported our movement in the past are now in government so they can bring change. We have seen some changes brought by the present government in the health sector

but more still needs to be done as the general people continue to face problems to receive the best health facilities and services," he said.

He added that the organization did not have any personal or political agenda behind the demands

turn to pg 02

Moderna says vaccine 100% effective in severe cases, seeks clearance

WASHINGTON, 30 Nov [REUTERS]: Moderna Inc will apply for US and European emergency authorization for its COVID-19 vaccine on Monday after full results from a late-stage study showed it was 94.1% effective with no serious safety concerns, the company said. Moderna also reported that the vaccine's efficacy rate was consistent across age, race, ethnicity and gender demographics as well as having a 100% success rate in preventing severe cases of a disease that has killed nearly 1.5 million people.

The filing sets Moderna's product up to be the second vaccine likely to receive US emergency use authorization this year following a shot developed by Pfizer and BioNTech which had a 95% efficacy rate in trials. "We believe that we have a vaccine that is very highly efficacious. We now have the data to prove it," Moderna Chief Medical Officer Tal Zaks said.

"We expect to be playing a major part in turning around this pandemic."

Of the 196 volunteers who contracted COVID-19 in the trial with more than 30,000 people, 185 received a placebo while 11 got the vaccine.

Moderna reported 30 severe cases -- all in the placebo group -- which means the vaccine was 100% effective in preventing severe cases.

"As the numbers of cases reported grows,

confidence grows that this amazing protection will be maintained in a product that can be rolled out to protect the public," said Alexander Edwards, associate professor in biomedical technology at Britain's University of Reading.

In addition to filing its US application, Moderna said it would seek conditional approval from the European Medicines Agency, which has already begun a rolling review of its data, and would continue to talk with other regulators.

Pfizer has already applied for emergency use authorization in the United States and Europe, putting it about a week ahead of Moderna.

Moderna said it was on track to have about 20 million doses of its vaccine ready to ship in the United States by the end of 2020, enough to inoculate 10 million people.

Both of the vaccines use a new technology called synthetic messenger RNA (mRNA) whereas others, such as Britain's AstraZeneca, are using more traditional methods to develop their vaccines.

AstraZeneca has announced an average efficacy rate of 70% for its shot and as much as 90% for a subgroup of trial participants who got a half dose, followed by a full dose.

But some scientists have expressed doubts about the robustness of the 90% efficacy figure for the smaller group.

turn to pg 02

GLOBAL SOLIDARITY SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

WORLD AIDS DAY

1st DEC 2020

SIKKIM STATE AIDS CONTROL SOCIETY, GANGTOK

R.O No. is 69/IPR/Pub/Dis/2020-21 Dated: 25.11.2020.

Dambudara youth organize awareness prog on POCSO Act



SUMMIT REPORT

RANGPO, 30 Nov:

Dambudara Youth of Namchi organized an awareness programme on Protection of Children from Sexual Offences [POCSO] Act 2012, substance abuse, moral values and HIV/AIDS today.

The programme had State Commission for Protection of Child Rights

(SCPCR) Chairperson, Roma Tamang as chief guest and Deepak Rai of SIRD as resource person while Outreach Worker, District child protection office, Tek Maya Sharma spoke on child abuse and POCSO Act 2012.

Kishore Baniya, coordinator, Red Ribbon Club, spoke on moral values and health scenario in Sikkim.

Nagaland gears up for 58th statehood day celebrations

KOHIMA, Nov 30 (PTI): Nagaland is all set to celebrate its 58th statehood day on Tuesday and mark the beginning of its popular Hornbill Festival with strict adherence to the COVID-19 safety norms, officials said.

The statehood day celebrations will be a low-key affair, while the inauguration of the 10-day festival will be held virtually for the first time, amid the surge in coronavirus cases, they said.

"The main programme of the statehood day celebrations will be held with limited invitees at the Secretariat Plaza where Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio will be present," the officials said.

Raj Bhavan will also remember the sacri-

fice and struggle of the founding fathers who conceptualised the idea of Naga nationalism and sovereignty, they said.

On December 1, 1963, Dr S Radhakrishnan, then President of India, declared Nagaland as the 16th State of the Indian Union.

However, the Eastern Naga Students' Federation (ENSAF) has called for a boycott of the statehood day events, demanding reservation of six tribes and reforms in the Nagaland Service Selection Board among others.

Deputy Chief Minister Y Patton said that the state government has already requested the apex body of students from Eastern Nagaland to withdraw its boycott call.

SPYF to take...

it was raising and stressed that SPYF was fully committed to press for fulfillment of IPHS guidelines in all the hospitals of Sikkim including district hospitals, PHCs, PHSCs, CHCs and free medicines and other medical services free of cost to the general public.

He informed that the organization has submitted a two-point demand to the State government with the ultimatum of 30 November.

"Since our demands were not fulfilled by 30 November, now the organization will not follow pursue its demands through memorandums any more but we will take our movement to the streets," he said.

He added that the organization will hold demonstrations near health centers through cultural, literary and creative activities to create awareness among the people until the demands are met.

Likewise, another SPYF member, Rupen Karki, mentioned that the situation of health services in the State amid the COVID-19 pandemic made people realize the value of SPYF demands raised in the past.

He added that people were still facing difficulties with diagnostic facilities and have to wait inordinately long in receiving their reports and that even though there were more than 50 pharma companies in Sikkim, government hospitals still lacked medicines and other medical supplies.

He stressed that the state has facilities but lacks manpower.

Moderna says vaccine...

Moderna's latest efficacy result is slightly lower than an interim analysis released on Nov 16 of 94.5% effectiveness, a difference that Mr Zaks said was not statistically significant.

"At this level of effectiveness, when you just do the math of what it means for the pandemic that's raging around us, it's just overwhelming," said Zaks, who said he cried when he saw the final results over the weekend.

Both the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines proved more effective than anticipated and were far superior to the 50% benchmark set by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

The past few weeks of positive vaccine results have ignited hopes for an end to a pandemic that has battered economies and comes as new infections and COVID-19 hospitalizations are at record levels across the United States.

Independent advisers to the FDA

are scheduled to meet on December 17 to review Moderna's trial data and make a recommendation to the FDA.

They will meet on December 10 to review Pfizer's data. Shortly after gaining emergency use authorization, Moderna expects the vaccine to be shipped to distribution points throughout the United States by the government's Operation Warp Speed program and McKesson Corp, a drug distributor contracted by the US government.

Its distribution is expected to be easier than Pfizer's because while it needs to be stored in a freezer, it does not require the ultra-cold temperature needed by Pfizer's vaccine.

Moderna said the 196 COVID-19 cases in its trial included 33 adults over 65 years old and 42 volunteers from racially diverse groups, including 29 Latinos, 6 Blacks, 4 Asian Americans and 3 multiracial participants. There was one

Fake FB account case accused released on bail

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 30 Nov:

Four persons arrested by the police for sharing offensive posts through fake Facebook accounts have been released on bail. They were arrested on charges of spreading enmity between two communities using fake Facebook accounts under the name "Simran Gurung".

This was informed by their lawyers, Nawin Kiran Pradhan, Bina Rai and Sabyasachi Chatterjee in a press conference here this afternoon.

Mr Pradhan said, "We are not in favor of fake IDs, offensive posts and character assassination and such practice should be stopped immediately. Fake posts were made equally by both sides and



there are so many cases but the police worked actively for only one side."

He informed that four persons were arrested in this case and all have now been released on bail. The case is still under investigation and no one is guilty until the court pronounces its judgment, he added.

He further said that

the case should not be politicised and the police should work according to law.

Mr Chatterjee stated that the police have maligned their client by holding a press conference after their arrest and attempted to sensationalize the matter and make it political. He accused the police of engineering a media trial,

further adding that the police is never quick to hold press conferences in other cases but chose to do so in this particular case.

It is informed that they have also filed a writ petition in the High Court against the police for not following previous court rulings in similar cases. The case has been admitted by the court.

80 families from Budang Kamerey join SKM



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 30 Nov:

Sikkim Krantikari Morcha [SKM] conducted a joining programme cum coordination meeting at Block Level Party office for Budang Kamerey GPU under Rhenock constituency today, a press re-

lease informs.

The programme was attended by Area MLA cum Chairperson (STCS), Bishnu Kumar Khatiwara, as chief guest.

In the meantime, Panchayat President, Panchayat members along with 80 families left SDF

and joined SKM from Budang Kamerey GPU under Rhenock constituency.

They were welcomed by Area MLA cum senior vice president, Bishnu Kumar Khatiwara and chairpersons by offering khadas in SKM.

Delhi caps RT-PCR test at ₹ 800, down from ₹ 2,400

NEW DELHI, 30 Nov

[NDTV]: Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has slashed the price of RT-PCR tests - the gold standard for detecting COVID-19 - by two-thirds to ₹ 800 in the city.

Though these tests are being conducted free of cost in Delhi's government hospitals, they can cost up to ₹ 2,400 in private laboratories.

"I have directed that the rates of RT-PCR tests be reduced in Delhi. Whereas tests are being conducted free of cost in government establishments, this (price cut) will help those who get their tests done in private labs," Mr Kejriwal tweeted.

Many states, including Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu, capped the cost of RT-PCR tests after India's top medical research body ICMR said in May it would no longer regulate the price, and that this would now have to be done by each state individually.

The cost of an RT-PCR test has come under the scrutiny of the Supreme Court, which is hearing a plea seeking directions to cap the cost at ₹ 400 across the country.

The plea claims that different rates are being charged across the country whereas the cost of the test actually works at just ₹ 200. It said the cost of RT-PCR test was fixed between ₹ 900 to ₹ 2,800 by various state governments and Union Territories.

State-level review meeting of FPOs held at KVK Namthang



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 30 Nov:

A state-level review meeting of NABARD-sponsored FPOs was organized by NABARD, Regional Office, Gangtok at KVK South Sikkim at Namthang today.

General Manager & OIC, NABARD, Dr Diwakar Hegde, chaired the meeting as chief guest along with DGM-NABARD, G Ramesh Kumar; DDM-NABARD, Rupen Lamichaney and the Sr Scientist and Head,

Indra Prasad Shivakoti and all the scientific staff of KVK South Sikkim, a press release informs.

All the presidents and CEOs of six FPOs also participated in the review meet.

death related to COVID-19 in the placebo group.

Azra Ghani, chair in infectious disease epidemiology at Imperial College London, said Monday's details from Moderna confirmed the vaccine was highly efficient, including against severe cases. "Whilst this does not exclude some risk of severe disease after vaccination given the relatively small number of severe cases, these results suggest very high efficacy," she said.

Zaks said the vaccine has been developed during a period of "political acrimony" and having a highly effective vaccine may go a long way toward erasing some of that distrust. "This is as black and white as an effect on a population will be. Your chances of actually being sick if you've been vaccinated are decreased 20-fold," he said.

Moderna reported no new side ef-

fects since its interim analysis. Based on that analysis, the most common side effects were fatigue, injection site redness and pain, headache and body aches, which rose after the second dose and were short-lived.

Zaks said the vaccine caused significant flu-like symptoms in some participants, which, he said, "goes hand-in-hand with having such a potent vaccine." But it has not caused any significant safety concerns so far.

Moderna plans to start a new trial to test the vaccine in adolescents before the end of the year, followed by another in even younger volunteers early in 2021.

It hopes to have the vaccine available for adolescents by September, Zaks said.

Other vaccine makers have said they are studying their vaccines in young people as well.

Mega Health Camp held at Bermiok Senior Secondary School



GYALSHING, 30 Nov [IPR]:

A daylong Mega Health Camp was organised at Government Senior Secondary School, Bermiok, under Gyalshing Bermiok constituency, today.

More than 500 patients received free medical checkup from medical specialists including Cardiologist, Gynecologist, Ophthalmologist, Orthopaedic, Pediatrician, Surgeon, Medicine and ENT Specialists, Anaesthesiologist and Dentists.

They were also provided prescribed medicines free of cost.

While addressing the gathering in the afternoon, Minister Lok Nath Sharma, who is also the area MLA, extended gratitude towards the health professionals for conducting medical check-ups.

He also applauded Gyalshing Bermiok Yuva Samaj and Indian Medical Association's Sikkim chapter for taking up the initiative to organise a multi-specialty health camp and provide free medical check up to all patients and participants.

Further, he commended Bermiok Senior Secondary School for making the necessary

arrangements to ensure that medical check-ups could be provided in compartmentalized rooms in appropriate manner.

He also shared his vision to make the Bermiok Govt. Senior Secondary School one of the model schools and informed that the required infrastructure for the Science Block will be established, funds for which to the tune of Rs 20 lakh has already been sanctioned by Niti Ayog.

He added that additional infrastructure in the form of a Basketball Ground and Pavilion will also be developed.

The programme was also attended by Advisor Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services, Durga Prasad Pradhan, Principal Government Senior Secondary School, Bermiok, Pradeep Gurung and staff and teachers from feeder schools and others.

Earlier, in the morning, Minister Sharma also extended a warm welcome to the specialists and medical team members and also inspected newly upgraded infrastructures along with the dignitaries.

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An area measuring 1 acre at Sadam South Sikkim near Loretto Convent School at Gupti road. Price negotiable any one interested can contact:
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Two and half storeyed (1st to 3rd floor) complex is available for rent in the heart of Ranipool Bazaar (Opposite UCO Bank). The building area is 35'x60' appx. in each floor and is fit for offices, shopping complexes, guest houses, banks etc. Contact: 8509755220, 8348007688.

GENERAL LAND FOR SALE

General land sale at Lower Sichey, suitable for construction, good locality, near the road, Total size: 90x55ft, (30x55ft each plot). genuine person may contact@9734122366.

Building for sale

A two storey building constructed on plot area 50x40 ft. Situated at Upper Phrong near Phong SS, South Sikkim is on sale. Cost Rs 60 Lakhs (Negotiable). Interested may contact : 8145829309, 7864937800, 9749897695.

Romain Grosjean's 'life saved' by halo after remarkable escape at Bahrain GP
GILES RICHARDS

BAHRAIN, 30 Nov [THE GUARDIAN]: Romain Grosjean's remarkable escape from an enormous, violent, high-speed accident at the Bahrain Grand Prix has been hailed as a testament to Formula One's pursuit of safety. The Frenchman's Haas car, which suffered a 53G impact, had split into two and he was engulfed in a fireball before climbing from the wreckage with relatively minor injuries.

Grosjean suffered only second degree burns to his hands and was taken to hospital for a check-up. His car had speared through the metal barriers, which they are designed to prevent, but his head was protected by the halo cockpit protection device made mandatory by the FIA in 2018.

Grosjean confirmed his appreciation of the halo device in an Instagram post from his hospital bed. "Hello everyone, I just wanted to say I am OK - well, sort of OK," he said. "I wasn't for the halo some years ago, but I think it's the greatest thing that we've brought to Formula 1, and without it I wouldn't be able to speak with you today."

Lewis Hamilton, who went on to win, acknowledged that Grosjean could easily have been killed. "This was horrifying, I am so grateful the halo worked, that the barrier didn't slice his head off, it could have been so much worse," the world champion said. "This is a reminder to people watching, this is a dangerous sport. It shows what an amazing job that F1 and the FIA have done over time to be able to walk away from something like that."

Ross Brawn, F1's director of motorsport, was unequivocal that the halo, which had been criticised when first imposed, had been instrumental in saving Grosjean's life. "The positive was the safety of the car and that is what got us through today," said Brawn. "The barrier splitting was a problem many years ago and it normally resulted in a fatality; there is no doubt that the halo saved the day. The team behind it deserve credit for forcing it through. After today no one can doubt the validity of that, it was a life saver."

A variety of other factors also played into Grosjean's survival, including his fireproof suit, the cockpit survival cell, his neck and head protection in the form of the HANS (head and neck support) device and the swift action of the FIA personnel in the medical car and the track marshals. Jean Todt, the president of the FIA, praised the actions of Dr Ian Roberts and the driver, Alan van der Merwe, who attended almost immediately in the medical car.

There will be comprehensive investigations into the accident, especially to identify why the barriers sheared apart allowing the car through and how fuel escaped to catch fire.

DC-East chairs Jal Jeevan Mission meeting



GANGTOK, 30 Nov [IPR]: A meeting of members of District Water and Sanitation Mission was held at the conference hall of East District Zilla Panchayat Bhawan here at the DAC Complex today.

District Collector, East, who is also the ex-officio chairperson and CEO, DWSM, Ragul K, presided over a meeting for the implementation of Jal Jeevan Mission.

The main objective of the programme was to provide administrative

approval by members of the DWSM from line departments of the District to allow in-village water supply schemes at district level.

Government of India has restructured and subsumed the ongoing National Rural Drinking Water Programme into Jal Jeevan Mission with the expressed aim to provide Functional Household Tap Connection [FHTC] with service level at the rate of 55 litres per capita per day to every

rural household by 2024. The goal of JJM is to provide functional household tap connection to every household.

The meeting was also attended by Radha Pradhan, Additional District Collector, Development; Sonam Gyatso Bhutia, District Planning Officer and Member Secretary, DWSM; Neelam Rai, Superintendent Engineer, EDZP and other officers from line departments.

The DC-East highlighted that co-ordina-

tion of all line departments was necessary and hoped that all government institutions of the district will be involved in the project.

He directed representatives of Education Department to ensure that all schools must have continuous water supply.

Likewise, he directed the Social Justice and Welfare Department to make sure that there was continuous water supply at all the ICDS centres of the district.

In conclusion, he urged all line departments of the government to co-ordinate properly to make the mission a success.

Neelam Rai, in her brief address, apprised everyone about the 10 BACS from East District have submitted estimates for water related issues and that these will soon go to the apex committee.

During the session, the administrative approval for in-village water supply schemes at district level was approved by the members of DWSM in the meeting.

Ranka youth receive vermicomposting training



SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 30 Nov:

A six-day long 'Skill Training for Rural Youth' (STRY) on vermicomposting at Rey village under Ranka Block, East Sikkim concluded today.

The programme was attended by 25 young farmers and had begun on 25 November, organised by Agriculture Technology Management Agency [ATMA-East] in co-ordination with SAMETI-Sikkim and was funded by MANAGE- Hyderabad.

The concluding day's programme was chaired by ward panchayat, Rey, Jumthi Lepcha, accompanied by SKM's constituency convenor [Rumtek-Martam], Dawa Tshering Lepcha, as guest of honour.

The programme started with an interactive session to understand the level of skills

and understanding acquired by the trainees at the training. Positive feedback from the participants made the training successful, informs a press release issued by Geeta Sharma, Block Technology Manager, Ranka Block.

Additional Director, Agriculture Department, Bina Rai, urged participants to utilize the knowledge gained from the training in their respective areas and urged them to also train their neighbours on vermicomposting.

The SKM constituency convenor, Mr Lepcha, in his address, congratulated the participants on the successful completion of their training and requested for some more vermicompost pits in the area to meet the demand for organic manure within the village.

He cited that prepa-

ration of vermicompost as the easiest and highly beneficial option for production of agricultural and horticultural products.

The chief guest, Ms Lepcha, thanked ATMA for bringing innovative schemes to her ward. She further urged the farmers to adopt the new farming technologies to increase production in their farms.

Later, the chief guest along with Departmental representatives handed over certificates to the trainees.

Along with vermicomposting, ATMA provides training on Shivansh Compost preparations (18 days organic manure preparations) prepared by using locally available materials from the immediate locality and training for this was given on the third day of the training.



SIKKIM STATE LEGAL SERVICES AUTHORITY

"MESSAGE"

Sikkim State Legal Services Authority is organizing National Lok Adalat on Saturday the 12th December, 2020 for the following types of pre-litigation and pending cases viz:

Pre-litigation

- (i) N.I. Act cases under Section 138;
- (ii) Bank Recovery cases;
- (iii) Labour disputes cases;
- (iv) Electricity and Water Bills (excluding non-compoundable)
- (v) Other (Criminal Compoundable)

Pending in the Courts

- (i) Criminal Compoundable Offence
- (ii) N.I. Act cases under Section 138;
- (iii) Bank Recover cases;
- (iv) MACT cases;
- (v) Labour disputes cases;
- (vi) Electricity and Water Bills (excluding non-compoundable)
- (vii) Matrimonial disputes;
- (viii) Land Acquisition cases;
- (ix) Service matters relating to pay and allowances and retiral benefits;
- (x) Revenue cases (pending in District Courts and High Courts only);
- (xi) Other civil cases (rent, easmentary rights, injunction suits, specific performance suits) etc.

Any individual or any department having such matters either pending in Courts/Tribunals/Departments or in pre-litigation stage may approach directly before the Sikkim SLSA, District Lok Adalats or Taluk Lok Adalats for settlement on or before 04.12.2020 at the following address:

1. Sikkim State Legal Services Authority,
Development Area,
Gangtok, East Sikkim
e-mail: sikkim_slsa@live.com
Phone No.03592-207753

2. High Court Legal Services Committee,
Development Area,
Gangtok, East Sikkim
e-mail: sikkim_slsa@live.com
Phone No.03592-207753

3. District Legal Services Authority (East)
District Court's Complex,
Sichey, Gangtok, East Sikkim.
Phone No. 03592 284462

4. Taluk Legal Services Committee (East),
District Court's Complex,
Sichey, Gangtok, East Sikkim.
Phone No. 03592 284131

5. District Legal Services Authority (North)
District Court Complex,
Mangan, North Sikkim.
Phone No. 03592 234502

6. Taluk Legal Services Committee (North),
Court of Civil Judge-cum-Judicial
Magistrate,
Pentok, Mangan, North Sikkim.
Phone No. 03592 234383/234514

7. District Legal Services Authority (South)
District Court's Complex,
Namchi, South Sikkim.
Phone No. 03595 264356

8. Taluk Legal Services Committee (South),
Court of Civil Judge-cum-Judicial
Magistrate,
District Courts Complex, Namchi,
South Sikkim.
Phone No. 03595 263145

9. District Legal Services Authority (West)
District Court Complex,
Kyongsa, Gyalshing, West Sikkim.
Phone No. 03595 250061

10. Taluk Legal Services Committee (West),
Court of Civil Judge-cum-Judicial
Magistrate, Kyongsa, Gyalshing,
West Sikkim.
Phone No. 03595 250061

11. Taluk Legal Services Committee,
Court of Civil Judge-cum-Judicial
Magistrate, Chungthang, Sub-Division,
North Sikkim.

12. Taluk Legal Services Committee (West),
Court of Civil Judge-cum-Judicial
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Published by Sikkim State Legal Services Authority

R.O. No : 147/IPR/PUB/Classi/20-21 Date : 13/11/2020

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Gangtok, East Sikkim

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+91 8768213966



What is Novel Coronavirus - nCoV?

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

Symptoms of nCoV

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

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.



If you seek help, you may call :
-Toll free no. 104
District surveillance Officer
EAST : 7029372100
WEST : 9593297809
NORTH : 9641957468
SOUTH : 7407691463
New STNM
AMS : 9434711402

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE
GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM

Remember Ayodhya, Learn From Sikkim

Places of worship can also bring people of diverse faiths together

As the anniversary of a disturbing moment arrives, expect efforts to whip up communal passions even though one side has clearly won and gotten away with a vicious excess, and one can expect more disgusting sound-bites now that the Bengal elections are round the corner. 06 December marks the anniversary of that shameful winter day of 1992 in Ayodhya when an unresolved issue [at the time], older than Independent India, snowballed into the tragic demolition of Babri Masjid and pulled the entire nation into a vortex of communal violence. In the communal riots which came its wake, at least 2,000 lives, mostly Muslims, were lost. The downward spiral continues and throws up no victors, save at the EVMs, leaving behind only victims and an army of agent provocateurs propping up leaders in the wave of hate and paranoia that they lift.

The demolition, irrespective of what it achieved for political ambitions, left the nation scarred. It's now more two and a half decades since a 1.5 lakh strong mob stormed the mosque and pulled it down. The first title suit over the disputed land [a 47 acre tract] was filed in the Allahabad High Court way back in 1950. Several other suits and petitions followed and it was only in September 2010, sixty years later, that the first verdict was delivered. Closure, even if it is only legal and not emotional, however continues to evade this issue despite the verdict by the Supreme Court. The lesson is clear - matters of faith, even when packaged in dry legalese as a title suit, are best left out of the courts. These should be left for the believers to resolve. But when it comes to matters of faith and belief, politics monopolises the divisions and does not allow resolutions. The Babri Masjid was constructed in 1528 CE; the first officially recorded communal riots over it were in the 1850's, when, after seven years of such violence, the British fenced the area to divide the places of worship of the two faiths in question. The issue conflagrated again in 1949, when idols of Ram, Sita and Laxman were smuggled into the Babri Masjid and placed there. With the horrors of the Partition violence still fresh in everyone's minds, the Government sealed off the area. Since then, the issue has surfaced often and confrontation peaked in 1992 when the Babri Masjid structure was demolished by a mob. The destruction was a huge blow to our country's secular credentials and an oft-quoted incident used to fan passions and communal hatred by both sides. And now that the Ayodhya issue is technically closed, expect those who benefitted from it to open more fronts. This is after all the oxygen which fuelled their hate and kept people distracted and delivered BJP the jingoistic nationalism which has kept their sail puffed.

When one speaks of allowing the believers to resolve issues among themselves, the example one has in mind is the Guru Nanak Lama Sahib of Chungthang in North Sikkim. This institution has an interesting history. A Gurudwara sits alongside a patch of land which the Sikkimese believe to have been blessed by Guru Rinpoche during his travels here in the 8th Century CE. The field, marking in a way the northernmost extremity to which rice grows in Sikkim, is believed to still sprout paddy from the rice sprinkled there by Padmasambhava and there is a rock there with an eternal spring of holy water, again, blessed by Guru Rinpoche. Sitting in the Gurudwara's porch is a gnarled tree, believed to have sprouted from Padmasambhava's walking stick. Given the reverence Guru Rinpoche commands in Sikkim, it was in a sparkling gesture of confidence and harmony that the Chungthang residents apportioned a plot in this sacred tract for the construction of a Gurudwara when the army personnel posted there required one. Admittedly, this sharing was not always amiable, but it was never confrontational or spiteful either. And the arrangement that was eventually worked out is a brilliant example of confraternity. When the Assam Rifles was moving out of Chungthang many years back, the fate of the Gurudwara worried every mind, until, yet again, a remarkable resolution was worked out. The Gurudwara is now, in principle, the administrative responsibility of the Chungthang residents who used to sit on its prabandhak committee in what is loosely referred to as the Lama Committee [for a Gurudwara]. This facility was of great service in the wake of the 18 September Earthquake, accommodating a relief camp and operating an open kitchen, Sanjha Chula - a very Sikh concept and practice, for all. It continues to be a Gurudwara, one that calls itself "Guru Nanak Lama Sahib", and is managed and looked after by the Buddhist residents of Chungthang, who ensure that Granthis are hosted properly when they visit and that the prayers and sanctity of this Sikh place of worship is maintained. It is not whether the committee is effective or even functional, but the fact that the idea was mooted and promulgated which is praiseworthy.

This is a model of mutual respect that the rest of India could learn from on this anniversary of the Babri Masjid Demolition. Admittedly, Chungthang is a very small town and the Gurudwara there was never the nerve centre of communal politics and its management has changed even more, but the principle still holds. It could easily have become a communal issue in the hands of more radical minds [and attempts have been made]; but the people, the real believers, stepped up first and charted a more admirable course.



Battles Won – and Lost – Against AIDS Hold Valuable Lessons for Managing COVID-19

theconversation.com

World AIDS Day this year finds us still deep amid another pandemic – COVID-19.

The highly infectious novel coronavirus has swept across the world, devastating health systems and laying waste to economies as governments introduced drastic measures to contain the spread. Not since the HIV/AIDS pandemic of the 1990s have countries faced such a common health threat.

This explains why UNAIDS has selected the theme "Global Solidarity, Shared Responsibility" for this year's World AIDS Day.

Infectious diseases such as these remain a major threat to human health and prosperity. Around 32.7 million people have died from AIDS-related illnesses in the last 40 years. At the time of writing, 1.4 million people had already died from COVID-19 in just one year.

These diseases take incredible expertise, collaboration and dedication from all levels of society to track, understand, treat and prevent.

The HIV/AIDS response played out over a much longer trajectory than COVID-19. But it is, in some respects, a shining example of what can be achieved when countries and people work together. The work of organisations such as the World Health Organisation, UNAIDS and the International AIDS Society help to coordinate rapid sharing of information and resources between healthcare providers and communities.

The Global Fund and PEPFAR have mobilised resources that have helped to reduce morbidity and mortality in low- and middle-income regions. AIDS-related deaths have declined worldwide by 39% since 2010.

These and other groups have also fought against high drug prices that would render medication inaccessible to many in the developing world. In South Africa, the epicentre of the HIV epidemic, a day's supply of the simplest antiretrovirals cost about R250 in 2002. Today easier, more palatable treatment taken once per day costs a few rands.

Collaboration and co-ordination has also meant that medications have been developed and tested in populations across the world. And once avail-

able, global guidelines and training opportunities ensure that healthcare provision and quality is standardised.

Many of these achievements did not come without a fight. Dedicated and sustained activism, at a political and community level were required to drive down drug pricing for the global South and is constantly required to ensure inclusive distribution of resources.

The corollary is also true – areas where the world continues to struggle arise predominantly where there's a lack of solidarity and agreement. These include a lack of political support to implement evidence-based protection mechanisms for vulnerable or stigmatised populations. For example the legalisation of homosexuality. This results in continued but avoidable HIV infection and related mortality.

These lessons need to be taken on board as the world prepares for the next phase of managing COVID-19. All the interventions that helped contain and manage HIV and AIDS are critical in ensuring that no country, regardless of developmental status, and no population, especially those that face stigma and battle to access healthcare services, are left behind.

BUILDING ON EXISTING SYSTEMS

The lessons learnt from HIV and AIDS can be used to inform the COVID-19 response as the challenges are similar.

Many of the ongoing COVID-19 vaccine trials are taking place in multiple countries, including South Africa. The capacity to conduct these studies, including the clinical staff and trial sites, are well established as a result of decades of HIV/AIDS research. There are fears that developing nations might be excluded from accessing an effective COVID-19 vaccine. But global mechanisms are now in place to avoid this and to, instead, encourage and enable global solidarity, some of which were championed by the HIV/AIDS response.

The Access to COVID-9 Tools (ACT)-Accelerator, established by the World Health Organisation in April 2020 in collaboration with many other global organisations, governments, civil society and in-

dustry, have committed through the pillar known as Covax, to equitable distribution of a COVID-19 vaccine as well as diagnostic tests and treatments. These global institutions and mechanisms require continued support.

With the deployment of an effective vaccine, an end to COVID-19 might soon be in sight. For HIV, vaccine development has been more complex and disappointing. The global community needs to remain committed to promoting access and support for the many incredible prevention and treatment options that are available. The unprecedented effort on the part of private industry in the COVID-19 vaccine response shines a light on what can be achieved when all interested parties engage. The HIV and TB vaccine endeavours need a similar effort.

These are not the only pandemics the world will face. In fact, there are strong predictions that the emergence of new pandemics will increase in the future. This is due to the effects of globalisation, climate change and proximity to wildlife.

The best hope for humanity is to not lose sight of what these pandemics cost us in terms of loved ones, in terms of freedom and economically. We must prepare now collectively across countries and across all levels of society. These preparations need to be grounded in the lessons learnt from HIV/AIDS and re-learned from COVID-19.

SOCIAL SOLIDARITY

The success of the global response to current and emerging pandemics will rely on the ability of the less vulnerable to acknowledge their shared responsibility and respond to those calls.

An important truth of the HIV epidemic is that it doesn't discriminate. No infectious disease acknowledges political borders and everybody is at risk of being infected or affected. If nothing else, because of this we need to continue to work together on a global scale knowing that "no one is safe, until everyone is safe".

[Linda-Gail Bekker is Professor of medicine and deputy director of the Desmond Tutu HIV Centre at the Institute of Infectious Disease and Molecular Medicine, University of Cape Town]

Why an Antidepressant Could be Used to Treat COVID-19

COLIN DAVIDSON
theconversation.com

A commonly used drug called fluvoxamine was recently tested as a treatment for COVID-19 in the United States. The 152 patients enrolled in the trial had been confirmed to have COVID-19 using a PCR test, and had seen symptoms appear within the past seven days.

Patients who already required COVID-19 hospitalisation, or who had an underlying lung condition, congestive heart failure or other immune conditions, were excluded. The study looked only at those who at the time had a relatively mild form of the disease.

Among these patients, the study found that taking fluvoxamine reduced the incidence of developing a serious COVID-19 condition over a 15-day period. None of the 80 patients treated with fluvoxamine deteriorated, whereas six (8.3%) of the 72 patients given a placebo saw their condition get worse. Their symptoms included shortness of breath, pneumonia and reduced blood oxygen.

The second week of COVID-19 infection is when clinical deterioration is normally seen – which suggests fluvoxamine could be a useful tool in stopping mild COVID-19 from getting worse.

But what's unusual is that fluvoxamine is a selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor, or SSRI. SSRIs are the first-line medicine of choice for treating depression, not viral infections. Fluvoxamine is also commonly used to treat obsessive compulsive disorder. So why might it work in a respiratory disease?

A NOT SO SELECTIVE SSRI

SSRIs work to treat depression by blocking a protein found on brain cells called the serotonin transporter. When the serotonin transporter is blocked, the amount of serotonin floating around in the brain is increased, which is the important first step its antidepressant mechanism.

Treatment with an SSRI for a few weeks markedly reduces symptoms of depression in about half of patients. These drugs are very safe, with the most common side-effects being sexual dysfunction, constipation, headache, sleep disturbance and tiredness.

Despite their name (selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors), some of these drugs are not entirely selective. In fact, fluvoxamine also binds to another brain cell protein called the σ -1 receptor (S1R). Fluvoxamine potentially activates this protein, which has various functions, including inhibition of the production of cytokines – small signalling molecules that help direct the actions of immune cells. Cytokines are one of the most important chemical mediators of the immune response.

Thus, it is likely that the effect seen with fluvoxamine in COVID-19 patients has nothing to do with serotonin but everything to do with inhibiting the inflammatory response through the S1R. We know from studies in mice that fluvoxamine can decrease a sepsis-induced inflammatory response and the toxicity that comes with it.

And it's becoming increasingly clear that the serious complications seen with COVID-19 are primarily down to an out-of-control inflammatory response to the virus, the so-called "cytokine storm". Here, the body's defence mechanism goes into

a dangerous state, where the overactive immune system leads to a toxic inflammatory response, which can lead to death.

OLD DRUGS, NEW TRICKS?

It's not uncommon for drugs used in psychiatric illnesses to be helpful in treating other conditions.

The first antidepressant discovered, iproniazide, a monoamine oxidase inhibitor (MAOI), was initially used to treat tuberculosis. In the 1950s, doctors noticed that the mood of patients taking the drug improved, and so iproniazide and other MAOIs were tested for depression. Serendipity is quite common in drug discovery – remember Fleming's lucky discovery of the antibiotic penicillin.

More recent examples of drugs with other uses include SSRIs that can also be effective against anxiety or migraine. It's less common, though, for such a drug to be useful in a systemic illness like COVID-19.

SSRIs have, however, been found to be helpful in cardiovascular disease. These cardiovascular effects may be mediated by the SSRIs' anti-anxiety effects, through reducing blood pressure, or by reducing platelet activation and clot formation.

Another a cross-over medication currently gathering a lot of attention is ketamine. Traditionally used as an anaesthetic agent (and as a recreational drug), it's now generating considerable interest as a fast-acting antidepressant. As such, the findings of the current study perhaps aren't as surprising as they first seem.

WHAT NEXT FOR FLUVOXAMINE?

It's worth noting that the research does have some limitations. These include a relatively small sample size

and the fact that the most seriously affected COVID-19 patients were excluded from the study – we don't know whether it can help control the illness of severely afflicted patients. Certainly, the results need to be tested in a larger sample size over a longer period.

Nevertheless, in the race to find treatments to prevent and treat coronavirus infections, fluvoxamine could be a useful addition. If given during the initial fever and coughing phase of COVID-19, the drug could reduce the number of patients who develop the dangerous second phase of COVID-19, characterised by the cytokine storm and subsequent lung damage.

Given that the drug's therapeutic effects in COVID-19 may be mediated via the S1R, it would certainly be worth testing other S1R activators in COVID-19 patients. There are a variety of S1R activators already in clinical use. These include donepezil (used in Alzheimer's disease), citalopram, opipramol and amitriptyline (all used in depression and anxiety), dextromethorphan (used for coughs and colds) and pentazocine (used for pain relief).

Other anti-inflammatory drugs, such as colchicine and corticosteroids, have already been tested in COVID-19 patients with some positive effects. The potential repurposing of already approved drugs, especially cheap and orally active drugs like fluvoxamine, which we know to be safe, could speed up getting treatments to COVID-19 patients.

[the writer is Professor of Neuropharmacology and Head of School of Pharmacy & Biomedical Sciences, University of Central Lancashire]

East Bengal look to step up attack, secure maiden win

BAMBOLIM, Nov 30 (PTI): SC East Bengal will look to beef up their attack and secure a maiden win in the Indian Super League when they face Mumbai City FC here on Tuesday.

Despite heavy odds, the Robbie Fowler-coached East Bengal put up a creditable show in their first outing of ISL, against ATK Mohun Bagan even though they lost 0-2.

Last to enter the ISL, Fowler had less than a month to build the squad and if that was not enough they were pitted against their formidable arch-rivals on debut.

But Fowler's side dominated possession and their former Norwich City winger Anthony Pilkington looked threatening in the midfield. It was lack of finishing prowess with Balwant Singh up front that proved costly for them.

Fowler named a defensive formation against the well-set ATK Mohun Bagan with Balwant as the sole striker, putting the experienced Jeje Lalpekhlua on the bench, something that did not work out.

Fowler's newly-built side would need to reorganise their forward and convert their chances when they clash against the Sergio Lobera-outfit



that beat a 10-man FC Goa 1-0 with a late strike in their second round game.

Apart from Pilkington, SCEB's German midfielder Matti Steinmann looked strong in passes and held possession for long, but their Indian contingent would need to buck up.

Fowler hoped their new team would turn it around quickly and move up from the bottom spot in the 11-team table.

"It's not been the most ideal preparation. For a team that has been together for two-and-a-half weeks, I think we put

in a good performance," Fowler said of their 0-2 defeat to ATKMB.

"But we've accepted it, adapted to it. We were incredibly late coming here, so we have not trained together. But the way we played, we proved we can get better and better."

The Islanders also had started off on a losing note, going down to NorthEast United 0-1 in a match in which they looked wayward with their shots. They opened their account against FC Goa but were far from convincing.

The combination of

Adam Le Fondre and Bartholomew Ogbeche has not worked for Lobera while Mourtada Fall struggled to get going against FC Goa.

Against a team with weak finishing, Fowler would fancy his chances.

Ahead of their crucial game against SC East Bengal, Lobera said their Tuesday's opponents were new in the league but they have very experienced players.

"It is going to be a good game, because they are a very good team in defence. We need to work very well to win the game," the Spaniard said.

"Our plan is the same, always our focus is to try and improve our level and to try and learn about our mistakes, which we made in the last two games and nothing changes about what I want as a coach.

"I want to have possession of the ball, but it is not easy. They are a very organised team, it is not easy to find spaces, we need to be smart," he said, adding it was important to win the next game.

This will be Mumbai FC left-back Mandar Rao Desai's 100th game in the ISL.

UDP urges Meghalaya CM to deploy police in disputed Khanduli

SHILLONG, Nov 29 [SHILLONGTIMES]: With reports of Assam government's "provocative activities" along the disputed border areas of Jaintia Hills, UDP working president and Co-Chairman of the State Law Commission, Bindo M Lanong has urged the state government to deploy state police force along the interstate boundaries to stop Assam's aggression of encroachment.

In a letter to Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma, Lanong stated that from the ongoing confrontation in Mizoram border, now Assam has simultaneously moved to Khanduli villages of Nartiang Doloiship of West Jaintia Hills, forcibly using JCBs and other earth-cutting machines inside the paddy fields and forest areas of the people, causing fear and tension.

"While Assam has no

interest to discuss the issue across the table, on the other hand, it is aggressively encroaching inside Meghalaya. It is high time to deploy our state police forces to protect both our legitimate boundaries and our people," the letter stated.

He reminded that the government during the intervening period of the handing-taking over by the then new Government of India from the colonial rulers, the new dispensation governance of Assam in 1951, all by itself tagged to the then Mikir and North Cachar Hills District, comprising more than 350 villages of Jaintia Hills under Block I and II for administrative convenience.

Urging the state government to act decisively on the issue, Lanong stated that under the new aggressive postures of Assam, there stands a good case to get back at

least for now, Block I and II to Meghalaya.

The interstate boundary row between Assam and Meghalaya is age-old and umpteen numbers of talks at chief ministerial-level and chief secretary-level had been held and yet a solution has remained elusive.

Opposition Congress MLA from Umroi Constituency had raised the issue recently in the State Assembly and said that the Meghalaya Government is seen as relenting to the pressure of its counterpart in Assam along the interstate boundary.

It may be mentioned that the chief ministerial-level talks on boundary row is due since last year and with Assam bracing for elections, it looks uncertain when will it be held while frictions along the disputed areas have been a recurring affair.

Professor rescues turtle from fish market in Assam



GUWAHATI, Nov 30 (PTI): A turtle belonging to a vulnerable species has been saved from being sold in a fish market in Assam on Monday, thanks to the initiative of an academician, an official said.

Head of the Life Science and Bioinformatics department of Assam University Sarbani Giri had gone to the fish market when she noticed a man putting up an Indian peacock soft-shell turtle (Nilssonina hurum),

which was alive, for sale.

He wanted to cut the turtle into pieces and sell it but Giri immediately stopped him from doing so and offered to buy it alive for Rs 4,000, a forest official said.

Her gesture moved the man and he gave her the turtle.

After bringing it home, Giri called up the Cachar Forest Division in Silchar to release it in its natural habitat, the official said. Personnel

of the forest department took the turtle from the professor and thanked her for saving the life of the turtle. The forest department has decided to team up with the fisheries department to create awareness among fishermen about turtles.

The Indian peacock soft-shell turtle is found in South Asia and is listed on the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) Red list as a vulnerable species.

6 new COVID-19 cases push Andamans tally to 4,704

PORT BLAIR, Nov 30 (PTI): Six more persons tested positive for COVID-19 in Andaman and Nicobar Islands, pushing the tally in the union territory to 4,704, a health department official said on Monday. Of the six new cases, four have travel history while two were detected during contact tracing, he said.

Nineteen more people recovered from

COVID-19, taking the total number of recoveries to 4,537, the official said.

The archipelago now has 106 active coronavirus cases, while 4,537 people have recovered from the disease and 61 patients have succumbed to the infection till date, he said.

The administration has so far tested 1,27,910 samples for COVID-19, the official added.

TMC will get a taste of its own medicine: Dilip Ghosh



KOLKATA, Nov 30 (PTI): BJP state unit president Dilip Ghosh Monday hit back at TMC MP Abhishek Banerjee for calling him a 'goonda' and said the saffron party believed in standing by the people and the ruling side will get the "taste of its own medicine".

If being on the side of the people is being a goonda then BJP will continue to do so in "greater measure", Ghosh said.

Banerjee, nephew of TMC supremo Mamata Banerjee, had told a rally in South 24 Parganas district that no BJP leader, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi, had the "guts" to take his name and "use innuendos like 'bhaipo' (nephew in Bengali) or 'bhati-

ja' (meaning the same) to level charges against him.

Commenting on this, Ghosh mocked at Banerjee as "khokababu (young scion of affluent family) who got things on a platter".

"We [BJP] used to call him 'bhaipo' out of love. But now I am branding him as khokababu who has come to politics without hard work. People are watching everything," he said.

Reacting to Ghosh's comments, veteran TMC MP Saugata Roy said "Dilipbabu makes irresponsible comments in the morning hours before the media regularly. There is no merit in his statements.

3 new COVID-19 cases in Mizoram

AIZAWL, Nov 30 (PTI): Three more persons have tested positive for COVID-19 in Mizoram in the last 24 hours, taking the state's coronavirus tally to 3,826, an official said on Monday.

The new cases were reported from Aizawl district, the official said.

The three patients are from the same family and all of them have developed symptoms of

COVID-19, he said.

According to the official, there are at present 381 active COVID-19 cases in the state while 3,440 people have recovered from the disease.

The COVID-19 recovery rate in the state now is 89.92 per cent.

Aizawl district has reported the highest COVID-19 cases at 2,581, which is 67.46 per cent of the total 3,826 cases, fol-

lowed by Lunglei district, which reported 317 cases so far.

Of the 11 districts in Mizoram, Hnahthial and Khawzawl districts are COVID-19 free as of now.

Mizoram has also reported 5 COVID-19 fatalities so far.

The state has tested 1,49,379 samples for COVID-19 till date, the official added.

Elephant found dead in Bengal's Jhargram



JHARGRAM (WB), Nov 30 (PTI): A full-grown elephant was found dead in West Bengal's Jhargram district on Monday, triggering tension in the area, officials said.

Locals said the elephant was electrocuted after coming in contact with a high-tension wire in the Nischinta forest where it came to drink water from the Lepashi dam.

A number of Dalma elephants come to the reservoir to drink water and bathe, they said.

Officials said they are yet to ascertain the exact cause of the death, but

suspect it to be electrocution. After the body of the elephant was found in the morning, people gathered at the spot from far-flung villages to have a last glimpse of the animal. The body was then worshipped with flowers, vermilion and incense sticks.

In 2019, four elephants were electrocuted in Binpur's Malabati area. The villagers performed several religious rituals this year to mark their death anniversary.

Dalma elephants destroy hundreds of acres of crops in the area every year.

Objection to 'commercialisation' of Shillong's Polo Ground

SHILLONG, Nov 29 [SHILLONGTIMES]: President of Shillong Sports Association (SSA) SK Sunn has written to Deputy Commissioner of East Khasi Hills Isawanda Laloo objecting to the construction of commercial structure on the plot of land lying between the PWD road and the western portion of the final ground

of SSA, Polo Ground.

In a letter, the SSA expressed strong opposition to the construction stating that it mars the sporting atmosphere.

The SSA president has requested the DC to instruct Shillong Recreation Ground Trust (SRGT), the party undertaking construction, to immediately stop the ongoing commercialisation

of Polo Ground area.

Albeit the land at Polo Ground is leased to SRGT by the state government for its upkeep, Sunn maintained that SSA has been the custodian of the football grounds for more than 100 years.

Since the term of the lease is over, and not renewed, hence the land belongs to the government, Sunn added.



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Address: Santa Bhawan Complex, Church Road Near Diesel Power House (DPH) Gangtok, East Sikkim, 737101

Injured Warner ruled out, Cummins rested for rest of limited-overs series against India

SYDNEY, NOV 30 (PTI): In-form Australian opener David Warner has been ruled out of the remainder of the limited-overs series against India due to a groin injury that he suffered during the second ODI here, while top pacer Pat Cummins has been rested as part of his workload management.

Warner, who scored 69 and 83 in the first two ODIs, hurt himself on Sunday while fielding at the SCG in the second one-dayer which Australia won by 51 runs to take an unassailable 2-0 lead in the series.

The dashing opener has returned home to begin his rehabilitation and will be looking to get fit ahead of the opening Test at Adelaide starting December 17.

"Pat and Davie are critical to our plans for the Test series," coach Justin Langer was quoted as saying by the Australian media.

"Davie will work through his injury rehab and in Pat's case it is important all of our players are managed well to keep them mentally and physically fit throughout what is a challenging summer.

"The priority for both is being fully prepared for one of the biggest and most important home Test series we have played in recent years, especially with World Test Championship points up for grabs."

Left-handed batsman D'Arcy Short, who was the leading run-scorer in two series in the Big Bash League, has been named Warner's replacement in Australia's white-ball squad.

India and Australia will play one more ODI on Wednesday before competing in three T20 Internationals, starting Friday, followed by the much-anticipated four-match Test series.

Cummins, who was part of Australia's England tour in August and also played for Kolkata Knight Riders in the IPL, has not been at his best and went wicketless in the first game before claiming 3 for 67 in the second ODI.

Australia (296 points from 3 series) had topped India (360 points from 4 series) in the World Test Championships standings with a percentage of 82.22 compared to the India's 75 per cent after ICC's decision to alter the points system.

All-rounder Marcus Stoinis, who missed the second ODI after suffering a side strain in the opening game, will stay in the squad.

But all-rounder Mitchell Marsh, who is recovering from an ankle injury sustained while playing in the IPL, will not be playing the warm-up game between India A and Australia 'A' starting on Sunday.

He will now continue his rehabilitation and no replacement has been named for him in the 'A' squad.

Burdened by Genius: Maradona reminds us how peaking young brings its problems

VIC MARKS

LONDON, 30 NOV [THEGUARDIAN]: The death of Diego Maradona provided another reminder that life is seldom simple for the sporting superstar. Maradona was obviously a footballing genius, whose later life was, by all accounts, chaotic. In 1986, at the age of 26, the brilliance of his feet, his vision and his deception led to Argentina winning the World Cup. It doesn't get any better than that. And that surely is the problem.

It is not a common problem since it applies only to geniuses. Where do you go after scaling the highest peaks? This came to mind when I was chatting to Ian Botham recently. How could he ever hope to surpass what he achieved in the second half of the summer of 1981 at the age of 25? Geoff Hurst was never going to score another hat-trick in a World Cup final after 1966. How can Ben Stokes ever play a better innings than the one at Headingley in 2019? In the same way, how could Maradona top what he did in Mexico in 1986? I suppose one could also speculate whether Elton John was haunted by the thought that he might never produce a better track than *Your Song*, which was released in 1970. If so, it did not stop him trying.

Most of us do not have to deal with the problem of peaking early, with two-thirds of our lives still ahead, and fortunately the geniuses do not seem to waste much time fretting about this. Perhaps this is left to us constipated also-rans to mull over. Even so, it must be a dilemma for the truly great sportsperson



to move on, to escape from the past. It would not surprise me if Botham would like "Winemaker Supreme" on his gravestone.

It must be tough for the superstars to forge a new life anywhere near as rewarding as the old one. In cricket and football the most obvious pathway often involves coaching/managing teams and/or the media. However, it is well established that the best players rarely make the best managers. No doubt Jürgen Klopp, Arsène Wenger, Alex Ferguson and José Mourinho were good footballers, but they weren't great ones. In rugby I imagine that Eddie Jones was a combative and cunning

hooker, who made himself good enough to play against the best occasionally, but he wasn't one of them.

The pattern is similar in cricket. Trevor Bayliss (no Tests for Australia) and – let me just look this up – Gary Stead (five Tests for New Zealand) were the two head coaches when England and New Zealand were in the World Cup final in 2019. Duncan Fletcher, for whom there was no Test cricket when he played for Zimbabwe, was in charge of England in one of the greatest series of all time, in 2005. Chris Silverwood (six Tests and seven ODIs) holds the reins now and is doing a perfectly good job.

There are at least two good reasons for this pattern. Being in charge of a team can be a hard slog. The fixture list never ends, nor does the travelling. The superstar, who may have become used to a more comfortable existence, understandably thinks twice about taking on such grueling major posts (in cricket it is much easier to have a little gig in the Hundred). Moreover the truly great sportsperson may not have thought long and hard about how he/she achieved their greatness.

It would have been a waste of time to employ a sports psychologist to enhance the careers of Botham or Viv Richards. Both were

the most natural sportsmen and just knew how to compete; it was in their DNA and they did not need to analyse how they did it. That was more likely to be a hindrance. Nor did they spend much time worrying about their techniques. As Kevin Pietersen often explained, the secret was to watch the ball and then hit it. So it makes sense that the best coaches often come from a lower tier, from players who had to sit down and think and analyse and then to strain to get better. This experience put them in a better position to enhance others.

Then there is the well-worn path into the media, which may be the easier op-

tion even if it is unlikely to be so fulfilling as playing the game. A few transcend their playing days. I remember being taken aback when I was required to explain that Richie Benaud, the consummate broadcaster who understood the power of silence rather better than so many of his successors, had once upon a time been a cricketer himself and a charismatic one too, who had captained Australia with great distinction.

Recently a couple of Lancastrians have done well. In years to come there may well be those who gasp upon learning that Mike Atherton had actually opened the batting for England for years before becoming a much-respected, long-serving cricket correspondent. There could be thousands out there who know Freddie Flintoff as the presenter of *Top Gear* and are surprised to learn that he was once a brilliant all-rounder.

Likewise the number of fans who think of Gary Lineker as an instinctive goalscorer in short shorts rather than a crisp-eating TV presenter diminishes by the year. All seem to have moved on very successfully; they are no longer defined by what they achieved in their 20s. However they all have a way to go to surpass Imran Khan, once captain of Pakistan and now his country's prime minister.

Those above may be the exceptions. There is a natural tendency for us mortals to envy the superstars for their talent, their riches and their lifestyle. But the extreme case of Maradona suggests that they can be deserving of sympathy as well.

Edinson Cavani could face three-game ban as FA investigates social media post



JONAHAN LIEW LONDON, 30 NOV [THEGUARDIAN]: Edinson Cavani, the Manchester United striker, could face a three-game ban if the Football Association deems that he used discriminatory or racist language in an Instagram story shared from his account on Sunday evening.

The FA has confirmed it is investigating the post, which was published shortly after United's 3-2 win against Southampton, in which Cavani scored two goals after coming on as a half-time substitute.

In the post – which was later deleted – the words "gracias negro!" are used to thank a follower congratulating Cavani on his performance in the match at St Mary's.

Social media postings are covered by FA Rule E3, and if a comment is deemed to include a reference to a person's ethnic origin, colour, race or nationality, then that

will be regarded as a potential aggravating factor in any punishment. The rules also make it clear that the owners of social media accounts are responsible for any content posted from their account, whether by themselves or by a third party.

Additionally, deleting an inappropriate post does not necessarily prevent a sanction from being imposed. Last year, Manchester City's Bernardo Silva was banned for one match after posting and then deleting a tweet comparing his teammate Benjamin Mendy to the cartoon figure on a brand of Spanish chocolate.

If the FA decides to pursue the case it will write to Cavani in the next few days asking for his written observations. Any charge must be issued by next Monday.

The word in question – "negrito" – brings back into light the infamous row that took place be-

tween Cavani's friend and Uruguay teammate Luis Suárez and Patrice Evra during a game between Liverpool and Manchester United in 2011. It was the word Suárez was believed to have said to Evra; the striker later admitted he said "negro" but did so in a friendly manner that is common in Uruguay. However, the FA's disciplinary panel rejected this explanation, deeming Suárez had used the word in a derogatory manner and that while he is not a racist, he had been racially abusive to Evra. Suárez was subsequently fined £40,000 and banned for eight matches.

At the start of this season, the FA issued fresh guidelines on racist language and behaviour on social media, with offences carrying a minimum ban of three matches. Manchester United were not available for comment on Sunday night.

Napoli find truest tribute to Maradona by mirroring his magic against Roma

NICKY BANDINI

NAPOLI, 30 NOV [THEGUARDIAN]: Napoli find truest tribute to Maradona by mirroring his magic against Roma

Those words were accompanied by a giant photograph of the late No 10, beaming in his Napoli shirt. At the far end hung another graphic of Maradona's face, adorned simply by the words "The King."

A moment of silence was observed before kick-off, and the game was paused in the 10th minute so that both teams could offer up a further 60 seconds of applause. Napoli were playing in a special blue-and-white striped kit, designed to pay homage to Maradona's Argentina. Earlier in the day, the mayor of Naples had confirmed that this stadium will be re-named after the player.

Here was a city in mourning, struggling to find the right way to say farewell to a footballer who felt more like a family member. For four days, fans had come to light a candle and say a prayer before the famous mural of Maradona in via Emanuele de Deo. On Sunday morning, Corrado Ferlaino, the man who signed him as Napoli president, made his own pilgrimage there, followed by the great former Roma winger Bruno Conti.

The truest tribute, though, could only take place on the pitch. Maradona transcended football in Naples, his name becoming shorthand for exaggerated brilliance in any context – even for those who never saw him kick a ball. Yet it was through this sport that we knew him. The free-kick scored by Lorenzo Insigne after half an hour seemed to channel his talent. It was, as the club's website later put it, "not just a goal, but a citation."

The shooting angle did not look inviting from just outside the left-hand corner of the Roma box, but Insigne whipped the ball over a

two-man wall with a velocity that gave Antonio Mirante no chance, beating the keeper at his near post. Immediately, the forward turned and sprinted 50 yards towards the dugout, retrieving a shirt with Maradona's name on. He kissed it repeatedly, before holding it up for the cameras.

No player might have felt this moment as powerfully as Insigne, Napoli's captain and the only Neapolitan in their team on Sunday night. "Our idol is gone, and it hurts," he said at full-time. "Today we wanted to put on a great show and get the right result for him and this city, which is suffering. This had looked like a tricky fixture for Napoli, against opponents who had gone 16 league games without defeat. The league standings showed Roma with one loss, but that was imposed on them as punishment for an administrative error made while registering players for their 0-0 draw against Verona at the start of the campaign. They had won their last five matches by an aggregate score of 15-1."

Napoli, meanwhile, had lost to Milan in their last league fixture and were in danger of getting cut adrift from Serie A's leading pack. They were missing club record signing Victor Osimhen up front and Tiémoué Bakayoko in midfield. Only the superstitious could find some positive in the latter player's absence – he would be replaced in the side by Diego Demme, whose name was chosen by a Maradona-obsessed father.

Gennaro Gattuso had questioned Napoli's mindset after that defeat by Milan, saying his players had the talent to compete with anyone but not the killer instinct. He could not have repeated those accusations on Sunday, as Napoli pressed their advantage without mercy once Insigne had broken the deadlock.

Further goals followed from

Fabián Ruiz, Dries Mertens and Matteo Politano, with plenty of Maradona-esque magic along the way. Mario Rui launched the attack that led to the second goal with an audacious backheel volley from the edge of his own box. Politano went on a solo slalom between three defenders before rounding the keeper for the fourth.

Corriere dello Sport might have been getting carried away with a front-page headline declaring that "Maradona won". But these were goals, as the website *Napoliista* put it, "in His style", and perhaps a team performance as well.

A common recollection among Maradona's former team-mates at Napoli is how he would never reproach them for failing to match his high standards, offering only encouragement when they made a sloppy touch or missed pass. Such words came to mind as Gattuso reflected on their performance this Sunday, saying "I saw a team that helped itself, not a group of footballers telling each other to get lost."

The manager is not one to get lost in sentimentality for long. During his post-game interview on Sky Sport, he redirected another question about Maradona into an answer about the ongoing pandemic. "The air we breathe is sad," he said, "but in my opinion right now the city needs to have good sense too. There are too many people without masks."

"Maradona is a legend. Everyone in Naples knows who he is. But, in this moment, we need to be smart, or we will all pay the consequences. I understand the affection, I understand the atmosphere. But I hope that from tomorrow people will start to do what they should, because it's a shame, the city is suffering a lot."

That truth was evident in the emptiness of the stands where Insigne went to lay down flowers before the game began.

Brazil's Bolsonaro suffers wave of defeats in mayoral races

SAO PAULO (AP): President Jair Bolsonaro suffered big losses in Brazil's just-completed municipal elections, with only five mayoral candidates he supported winning their races and none of them in the most important cities.

The president's worst rebuff came in his hometown of Rio de Janeiro, where Mayor Marcelo Crivella was battered in a runoff election Sunday, losing to his center-right predecessor, Eduardo Paes, by 64% to 36%. Crivella, an evangelical pastor, repeatedly used the president in his campaign to try to turn his fortunes.

Another big defeat for Bolsonaro came in Fortaleza, Brazil's fifth most populous city, where little-known center-left candidate Sarto Nogueira topped Wagner Gomes, the president's favorite, 51.5% to 48.5%. Gomes had led opinion polls before the campaign began and often displayed Bolsonaro's support, but he sought to distance himself in the campaign's waning days.

A Bolsonaro candidate also lost in Belem, one of the capitals of the Amazon, though it was a close vote. Leftist Edmilson Rodrigues edged Everaldo Iguchi and will be the city's mayor for a third time.

The poor showing by Bolsonaro's candidates began shaping up in the first round of municipal elections two weeks ago.

Sao Paulo, a metrop-



olis of more than 12 million people that is Brazil's biggest city, gave just 10% of its vote to Bolsonaro's candidate, Celso Russomanno, who finished fourth. Sunday's runoff was between two critics of the president, and resulted in center-right Mayor Bruno Covas easily winning reelection over socialist Guilherme Boulos by 60% to 40%.

Other candidates supported by Bolsonaro also failed to make it into Sunday's runoffs in losing by wide margins in populated state capitals like Belo Horizonte, Recife and Manaus. His candidate also lost in Santos, one of the most important cities of Sao Paulo state.

Of the 78 candidates who even ran by adding Bolsonaro's name to their own on the ballot,

only one won and that was one of the president's sons, according to Brazil's top electoral court. Carlos Bolsonaro, a key member of his father's social media team, kept his seat on the Rio council with more than 71,000 votes — though that was fewer than the 106,000 he got four years ago.

"Bolsonaro is clearly the biggest loser of the mayoral races," said Carlos Melo, a political science professor at Inesper University. "He failed to start a party, he failed to make his candidates stronger. It was almost as if he ignored these elections, but they gave a lot of leverage to parties he will have to talk to in congress. He is a weaker president because of these defeats."

The five Bolsonaro

mayoral candidates who won did so in mid-size cities.

In the first round two weeks ago, two candidates endorsed by the president won outright. Francisco de Assis de Moraes Souza, better known as Mao Santa (Holy Hand), won in Parnaiba, a city of 150,000 people in the impoverished state of Piaui. Gustavo Nunes was elected in Ipatinga, a prosperous city with an iron-ore based economy and 263,000 residents.

The three who won their runoffs Sunday received the president's endorsement only after the first vote. Tiao Bocalom won in Rio Branco, a state capital of 400,000 people near the border with Bolivia. Roberto Naves was elected in Anapolis, a city of 360,000 in central

Brazil. Nelson Ruas dos Santos won in Sao Goncalo, a city of 337,000 outside Rio.

Some of the winners Sunday who weren't backed by Bolsonaro sent messages that their allies took to be aimed at the president.

"It is possible to be in politics without hatred," Sao Paulo's incumbent mayor said after his victory. "There are only a few days left for denialists and obscurantism." Sao Paulo Gov. Joao Doria, the main sponsor of Covas' candidacy, is a potential bidder for the presidency in 2022.

Eduardo Paes, the winner in Rio, said his triumph was "a victory of politics over radicalism."

After voting in Rio, Bolsonaro did not reply about the poor showing of his candidates.

Iran holds funeral for slain military nuclear scientist



TEHRAN, IRAN (AP): Iran held a funeral service Monday for the slain scientist who founded its military nuclear program two decades ago, with the Islamic Republic's defense minister vowing to continue the man's work "with more speed and more power."

An honor guard carried the casket containing the body of Mohsen Fakhri-zadeh, who reportedly was gunned down in a military-style ambush Friday that Iranian officials have blamed on Israel. An arm of Iranian state television, citing an anonymous source, reported Monday that a weapon recovered from the scene appeared to be Israeli.

Israel, long suspected of killing Iranian nuclear scientists over the last decade, has declined to comment on the attack.

Fakhri-zadeh headed Iran's so-called AMAD program, which Israel and the West have alleged was a military operation looking at the feasibility of building a nuclear weapon. The International Atomic Energy Agency says that "structured program" ended in 2003. U.S. intelligence agencies concurred with that assessment in a 2007 report.

Israel insists Iran still maintains the ambition of developing nuclear weapons, pointing to Tehran's ballistic missile program and research into other technologies. Iran long has maintained its nuclear program is peaceful.

Monday's service took place at an outdoor portion of Iran's Defense Ministry in Tehran, with officials including Revolutionary Guard chief Gen. Hossein Salami, the Guard's Quds Force leader Gen. Esmail Ghaani, civilian nuclear program chief Ali Akbar Sahebi and Intelligence Minister Mahmoud Alavi. They sat apart from each other and wore masks due to the coronavirus pandemic as reciters melodically read portions of the Quran and religious texts.

Defense Minister Gen. Amir Hatami gave a speech after kissing Fakhri-zadeh's casket and putting his forehead against it. He said Fakhri-zadeh's killing would make Iranians "more united, more determined."

"For the continuation of your path, we will continue with more speed and more power," Hatami said in comments aired live by state television.

Hatami also criticized countries that hadn't condemned Fakhri-zadeh's killing, warning: "This will catch up with you someday." Overnight, the United Arab Emirates, which just reached a normalization deal with Israel, issued a statement condemning "the heinous assassination." The UAE, home to Abu Dhabi and Dubai, warned it "could further fuel conflict in the region."

Last year, the UAE found itself in the middle of an escalating series of inci-

dents between Iran and the U.S. Though long suspicious of Iran's nuclear program, the Emirates has said it wants to de-escalate the crisis. The UAE just started passenger air service to Israel and Israelis are expected to vacation in the country over Hanukkah in the coming days.

Hatami also called the nuclear arsenal of the U.S. — and the stockpile of atomic bombs Israel long has been suspected of holding — "the most dangerous threat against humanity."

Mourners later buried Fakhri-zadeh in the courtyard of Imamzadeh Saleh mosque in north Tehran.

Just after the burial, state TV's English-language Press TV reported a weapon recovered from the scene of the attack bore "the logo and specifications of the Israeli military industry." State TV's Arabic-language channel, Al-Alam, claimed the weapons used were "controlled by satellite," a claim also made Sunday by the semiofficial Fars news agency.

Ali Shamkhani, the secretary of the country's Supreme National Security Council, separately told state TV that Iran's enemies had launched "a number of failed operations" against Fakhri-zadeh in the past.

"This time, the enemy applied a completely new, professional and sophisticated method," Shamkhani said, without elaborating.

In response to the killing, Iran's parliament has begun a review of a bill that would stop inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency. The nuclear watchdog has provided an unprecedented, real-time look at Iran's civilian nuclear program following the country's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers.

The deal has unraveled after President Donald Trump's unilateral 2018 withdrawal of the U.S. from the accord. Iran's civilian atomic program has since continued its experiments and now enriches a growing uranium stockpile up to 4.5% purity.

That's still far below weapons-grade levels of 90%, though experts warn Iran now has enough low-enriched uranium to reprocess into fuel for at least two atomic bombs if it chose to pursue them. The proposed bill reportedly also would require Iran's civilian atomic program to produce at least 120 kilograms (265 pounds) of uranium enriched to 20% — a short technical step to 90%.

Iran's 290-seat parliament is dominated by hard-liners who likely would support the bill. It ultimately would have to be approved by Iran's Guardian Council. Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei also has final say on all matters of state.

Suspected extremists kill at least 40 farmers in Nigeria

MAIDGURI, NIGERIA (AP): Suspected members of the Islamic militant group Boko Haram killed at least 40 rice farmers and fishermen in Nigeria as they were harvesting crops in the country's northern state of Borno, officials said. One said the death toll could rise to about 60 people.

The attack Saturday in a rice field in Garin Kwashabe came on the same day that residents were casting votes for the first time in 13 years to elect local councils, although many didn't go to cast their ballots.

The farmers were reportedly rounded up and summarily killed by armed insurgents in retaliation for refusing to pay extortion to one militant.

Malam Zabarmari, a leader of a rice farmers association in Borno state, confirmed the massacre to The Associated Press, saying at least 40 and up to 60 people could have been killed. Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari expressed grief over the killings.

"I condemn the killing of our hardworking farmers by terrorists in Borno State. The entire country is hurt by these senseless killings. My thoughts are with their families in this time of grief," he said.

Buhari said the government had given the armed forces everything needed "to take all necessary steps to protect

the country's population and its territory." A member of the House of Representatives, Ahmed Satomi, who represents the Jere Federal constituency of Borno, said at least 44 burials were taking place Sunday.

"Farmers and fishermen were killed in cold blood. Over 60 farmers were affected, but we only have so far received 44 corpses from the farms," the lawmaker said.

Boko Haram and a breakaway faction, the Islamic State West Africa Province, are both active in the region. Boko Haram's more than decade-long insurgency has left thousands dead and displaced tens of thousands. Officials say Boko Haram members often force villagers to pay illegal taxes by taking their livestock or crops but some villagers have begun to resist the extortion. Satomi said the farmers in Garin Kwashabe were attacked because they had disarmed and arrested a Boko Haram gunman on Friday who had been tormenting them.

"A lone gunman, who was a member of Boko Haram came to harass the farmers by ordering them to give him money and also cook for him. While he was waiting for the food to be cooked, the farmers seized the moment he stepped into the toilet to snatch his rifle and tied him up," he said.

Sri Lankan prison riot leaves 6 inmates dead, 35 injured



COLOMBO, SRI LANKA (AP): Six inmates were killed and 35 others were injured when guards opened fire to control a riot at a prison on the outskirts of Sri Lanka's capital, officials said Monday. Two guards were critically injured, they said.

Pandemic-related unrest has been growing in Sri Lanka's overcrowded prisons. Inmates have staged protests in recent weeks at several prisons as the number of coronavirus cases surges in the facilities.

Police spokesman Ajith Rohana said inmates created "unrest" Sunday at Mahara prison, about 15 kilometers (10 miles) north of Colombo, and officials attempted to control the situation.

But "the unrest situation turned into a prison riot," he said, adding that prisoners tried to take control of the prison and hundreds attempted to escape.

The inmates "reportedly destroyed most of the property including offices inside the prison," Rohana said.

The guards opened fire, and the clash left six inmates dead and 35 injured, he said. Two prison officers were critically injured.

He said hundreds of additional police were deployed to help the guards and strengthen security around the prison.

An inmate was killed in similar unrest at another prison last week. Another died in March.

More than a thousand inmates in

five prisons have tested positive for the coronavirus and at least two have died. About 50 prison guards have also tested positive.

Senaka Perera, a lawyer with the Committee for Protecting Rights of Prisoners, said the inmates at Mahara prison had been frustrated because their pleas for coronavirus testing and separation of infected prisoners had been ignored by officials for more than a month.

On Monday, about 500 relatives of inmates gathered in front of the prison and urged the authorities to provide information about the prisoners and ensure their safety.

Sujeewa Silva said her son has been detained at the facility for seven months after being arrested on drug charges. "I want to know whether he is safe. I asked the officers, please tell me the condition of my son," she said.

Sri Lankan prisons are highly congested with more than 26,000 inmates crowded into facilities with a capacity of 10,000.

Sri Lanka has experienced an upsurge in the coronavirus since last month when two clusters — one centered at a garment factory and other at a fish market — emerged in Colombo and its suburbs.

Confirmed cases from the two clusters have reached 19,449. Sri Lanka has reported a total number of 22,988 coronavirus cases, including 109 fatalities.

Eight essays put the spotlight on the journey, caused by local projects in Sikkim and the region, the cost exacted by this "development" and some of the stories it birthed, not all of which have been shared before. Also finding place in this collection is the arrival of Climate Change and its impact on Sikkim and how the State could negotiate with this new disruption.

ESSAYS ON TEESTA, HYDEL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IN SIKKIM

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COWGIRL COOL! The actress, Amber Heard looks striking in all black while horseback riding in Hollywood.

Dave Prowse, actor who played Darth Vader, dies at 85

LONDON (AP): Dave Prowse, the British weightlifter-turned-actor who was the body, though not the voice, of arch-villain Darth Vader in the original "Star Wars" trilogy, has died. He was 85.

Prowse died Saturday after a short illness, his agent Thomas Bowington said Sunday.

Born in Bristol, southwest England, in 1935, Prowse was a three-time British weightlifting champion and represented England in weightlifting at the 1962 Commonwealth Games before breaking into movies with roles that emphasized his commanding size, including Frankenstein's monster in a pair of Hammer Studios horror films.

Director George Lucas saw Prowse in a small part in "A Clockwork Orange" and asked the 6-foot-6-inch (almost 2-meter) actor to audition for the villainous Vader or the Wookiee Chewbacca in "Star Wars." Prowse later told the BBC he chose Darth Vader because "you always remember the bad guys."

Physically, Prowse was perfect for the part. Yet his lilting English West Country accent was considered less than ideal and his lines were dubbed by James Earl Jones.

Prowse donned Darth Vader's black armor and helmet for "Star Wars" (1977), "The Empire Strikes Back" (1980) and "Return of the Jedi" (1983).

He expressed some regret that, thanks to Vader's mask, "I can walk around with complete anonymity."

"All actors crave recognition and I'd like to have some like Luke Skywalker and Han Solo," he told The Associated Press in 1980. "Fortune tends to follow fame." Lucas said Prowse "brought a physicality to Darth Vader that was essential for the character."

"He made Vader leap off the page and on to the big screen, with an imposing stature and movement performance to match the intensity and undercurrent of Vader's presence," the director said in a statement on the official "Star Wars" website. "David was up

for anything and contributed to the success of what would become a memorable, tragic figure. May he rest in peace."

Prowse also worked as a trainer for other actors, helping Christopher Reeve prepare to be the Man of Steel in hit 1978 film "Superman." Prowse was also known to a generation of British children as the Green Cross Code Man, a superhero in road safety advertisements during the 1970s and '80s.

Prowse suffered from arthritis for many years and campaigned to raise money for re-



search into disease. In 1999 he was made a Member of the Order of the British Empire by Queen Elizabeth II for his services to charity and road safety.

He was a regular at "Star Wars" fan events but was banned from official conventions by Lucas in 2010 after the pair fell out.

Mark Hamill, who played Luke Skywalker in the "Star Wars" films, tweeted that Prowse was "a kind man & much more than Darth Vader." Hamill said the actor "loved his fans as much as they loved him. #RIP"

"Shaun of the Dead" director-writer Edgar Wright also paid tribute to Prowse on Twitter.

"As a kid, Dave Prowse couldn't be more famous to me; stalking along corridors as evil incarnate in the part of Darth Vader & stopping a whole generation of kiddies from being mown down in street as the Green Cross Code man," he wrote. "Rest in Peace, Bristol's finest." Prowse is survived by his wife Norma and their three children.

FIR against casting director on charge of raping TV actress

MUMBAI, NOV 30 (PTI): Mumbai police have registered an FIR against a casting director for allegedly raping a 26-year-old TV actress under the pretext of marriage, a police official said on Monday.

The FIR was registered last week after the actress submitted an application at Versova police station here, accusing the casting director of raping her at various locations in the city after promising to marry her, the official said.

The accused, also aged 26, and the victim knew each other since the last two years, he said.

The accused had assured the actress that he will marry her, but when he later refused to do so, the woman lodged the First Information Report (FIR), the official said.

"We have registered the FIR against the accused under Indian Penal Code Section 376 (rape). No arrest has been made.

We are conducting an investigation into the case," Versova's senior police inspector Raghvendra Thakur said.



'Apne 2' to release on Diwali 2021 in theatres, Karan Deol joins family for sequel

MUMBAI, NOV 30 (PTI): Actor Sunny Deol on Monday announced he is set to collaborate with his son, actor Karan Deol for the sequel of "Apne", which will also feature his father, veteran star Dharmendra and actor-brother Bobby Deol.

The film, which was officially announced by Dharmendra on Sunday, will have a Diwali 2021 theatrical release.

Sunny shared the update on Twitter and said he is looking forward to working on the film.

"With the blessings of Babaji and your love, all of us will be seen together, again. Feeling blessed to get a chance to work with my father, brother again this time with my son. #Apne2, in cinemas Diwali 2021," the actor said.

"Apne 2" will be directed by Anil Sharma, who also helmed the 2007 hit drama, and will be produced by Deepak Mukut.

Karan, who made his debut with his father's directorial "Pal Pal Dil Ke Paas"

in 2019, said "Apne 2" will be special as he is collaborating with his family.

"On the auspicious day of #Gurukul Jayanti, elated to announce #Apne2! Releasing Diwali 2021! This ones going to be extra special. Thank you so much @anilsharma_dir sir and @deepakmukut sir for making this possible," he wrote on Instagram.

"Apne" was a sports drama that featured Dharmendra as a disgraced former boxer who tries to reclaim lost respect in his career through his sons.

Its sequel will go on floors in March. "Apne" marked the first time the Deols came together onscreen.

Dharmendra, Sunny and Bobby reunited for the comedy "Yamla Pagla Deewana" in 2011.

The trio featured in two more films in the franchise, "Yamla Pagla Deewana 2" (2013) and "Yamla Pagla Deewana: Phir Se" in 2018.

AR Rahman becomes BAFTA Breakthrough India ambassador

MUMBAI, NOV 30 (PTI): Academy Award-winning music composer AR Rahman on Monday was announced as the ambassador for the British Academy of Film and Television Arts' (BAFTA) 'Breakthrough Initiative'.

The initiative, supported by Netflix, aims to identify, celebrate, and support up to five talents working in film, games, or TV in India.

Rahman said he is thrilled to work with BAFTA to discover talent that the country has to offer.

"This is a unique opportunity for promising artists to be supported by a world-renowned organisation, to not only make connections with other talented creatives across the world but to be mentored by BAFTA-winners and nominees.

"I am looking forward to seeing the brilliant talent chosen from India to be showcased on a global stage," the 53-year-old composer said in a statement.

The flagship new talent initiative, applications for which are now open, is part of BAFTA's year-round work to

support new talent, operating alongside their awards ceremonies worldwide.

According to a press statement, BAFTA Breakthrough India will help facilitate the development of relationships between British talent and India's home-grown creatives.

Amanda Berry OBE, Chief Executive of BAFTA, said Rahman shares the team's passion for identifying and nurturing new talent and they were grateful for his support.

"He is well positioned to support the initiative, with his broad spectrum of work drawing recognition across Hindi, Tamil, and Telugu films, which will help BAFTA to appeal to a wide section of the industry," Berry added.

As part of BAFTA Breakthrough India, a jury of British and Indian industry experts will select five talents from across India to take part in the year-long mentoring and guidance programme.

The participants will receive one-to-one mentoring, global networking opportunities, free access to BAFTA events and screenings for 12 months, and full voting BAFTA membership.

David Prowse made Darth Vader leap off the page and on to big screen: George Lucas

LOS ANGELES, NOV 30 (PTI): Film-maker George Lucas paid tributes to David Prowse, the man behind the Darth Vader mask in the original "Star Wars" trilogy, saying the late actor brought a physicality to the role that was essential for the character.

Prowse, an English actor and former bodybuilder, died on early Saturday morning at the age of 85 following a brief illness.

"David brought a physicality to Darth Vader that was essential for the character. He made Vader leap off the page and on to the big screen, with an imposing stature and movement performance to match the intensity and undercurrent of Vader's presence," Lucas, the creator of "Star Wars" film franchise, said in a statement to The Hollywood Reporter.

Lucas first spotted Prowse in Stanley Kubrick's dystopian crime film "A Clockwork Orange" in 1971 and asked the actor to audition for the roles of Vader and the endearing Chewbacca.

The actor chose to try out for the part of Vader, who went on to become one of the most iconic villains in popular culture, and when asked why, he replied, "Everyone remembers the villain."

"David was up for anything and contributed to the success of what would become a memorable, tragic figure. May he rest in peace," Lucas said on Sunday.

Prowse physically played Vader for much of the Sith Lord's screen time and reputedly even got to speak his lines on set, though his west country accent were dubbed over with those of American actor James Earl Jones in post-production, and many of the fight scenes featured British Olympic fencer Bob Anderson.

Prowse once claimed he was initially told that he would be seen and heard at the end of 1983's "Return of the Jedi", the final film in the original "Star Wars" trilogy, when Vader's mask was removed. Instead, British stage actor Sebastian Shaw was used by Lucas.

Aries:
2 + 2 doesn't always equal 4. Sometimes, it adds up to 17. At other times, 22. The point is, the world of mysteries cannot be quantified or explained logically. It can only be perceived by those who listen to their hearts and believe that this Universe we exist in is a magical place. So, open your eyes to miracles that surround you. Listen to the messages in the chirping of the birds and swaying of the winds.

Tip: There are messages coming through to you from the unseen realms, if only you care to listen.

Taurus:
What if we're all just living in a simulation, Taurus? What if the things we're chasing are not the things that will matter to us in the end? It's time to rethink your life. It's time to remember your sacred purpose. Most importantly, it's a time to find a balance between the 'doing' and the 'being' aspect of existence. So, allow yourself to hit the pause button and be in the moment.

Tip: Pause. Breathe. The present is where the magic is at.

Gemini:
The energy of the eclipse is likely to derail a host of plans, and that's okay. Stop. Breathe. Come back to the present. The cards want you to remember that you are where you are supposed to be, even though it may not seem so at the moment. So, trust in the divine unfolding. Trust in the divine unfolding. Trust in the divine unfolding. Everything will work out better than you could have ever imagined.

Tip: You are where you are supposed to be.

Cancer:
What if we accepted that life is but a game of trial-and-error; that whoever came up with the quote 'you win some, you lose some'

was indeed a wise one? First things first, Cancer: make peace with failure. Nay! Make love to failure. Know that unless you trip and fall, you won't learn to find your way in this big, bad world. On the upside, you are gifted with the ability to think on your feet. Remember this superpower as and when you find yourself stuck in an obstacle race.

Tip: You possess the uncanny ability to land on your feet.

Leo:
'Find what you love and let it kill you' is a big mood in the Leo headquarters. Bukowski's wisdom is inspiring you to immerse yourself in your art and become intoxicated by what you are creating. Remember, this is your prayer to the divine forces. A personal dialogue between you and existence. So, release yourself from the burden of other people's expectations and remain authentic to your message.

Tip: It's a 'find what you love and let it kill you' kind of day.

Virgo:
Hello and welcome to the Virgo show! You're really feeling yourself this week, and your inner alignment is bringing all the right opportunities to the yard. So, don't be afraid to stand in your power or own your place in this world. Learning to take initiative will take your career to a whole new level. As will putting a price on your work unapologetically.

Tip: Reclaim your power.

Libra:
Libra, you're channeling the peacock spirit today as you dance to your own tune and sing your own song. All the world is your stage, and embracing your unique gifts is what makes this play all the more delicious. Remember, what you're creating (or offering) now is your prayer to the Universe. A sa-

cred communion between you and the divine forces. So, stay authentic to your message and let go of the burden of other people's validation.

Tip: Embrace what makes you unique and different!

Scorpio:
Dreaming up a project is just as important as getting your hands dirty and delivering what you've signed up for. Today, you're being encouraged to step away from the daily grind and focus on vision boarding; consume art and cinema that gets your creative juices flowing. For those who prefer to be active, a walk in the wild is also a wonderful way to attract 'aha' moments into your experience. PS: The Universe is always communicating with us through signs and symbols, if only you care to listen.

Tip: You're dreaming a new project into being.

Sagittarius:
What if we said you can have your cake and eat it too? 'Abundance' is your magic word this week, and it comes from a deep inner knowing that the more you give, the more you will receive from Spirit. It's all about staying connected to the cosmic flow. But that doesn't mean you won't be faced with delays and difficulties, or that the people you're counting on will always come through. Make it a habit to look at the bright side. You'll give your blessings the power to multiply as you do.

Tip: 'Abundance' is your magic word, Sagittarius.

Capricorn:
Hello, and welcome to the full moon party! Things are getting wild around here—and you're loving every minute of it. This energy is giving you that much needed shot of courage and

inspiring you to step into the centre stage, where you belong. It's true that there is a lot that's predetermined. Parts of our story are written in the stars for us. But, the Universe doesn't send us here without the power of choice. So use your free will to redirect the script and know that you'll look back at this moment with joy in your heart.

Tip: It's time to step into the spotlight, baby! You so, so deserve this.

Aquarius:
We tend to look at everything in our world as transactional. There's a certain expectation attached to our actions. But, what if you chose to unlearn this pattern? What if you learned to give for the joy of giving, and nothing else? Today, you're being asked to focus on that sense of expansion within your heart, act upon your inner guidance, and bring warmth to the lives of those around you. Embracing the virtue of selflessness is the secret to raising your vibrations.

Tip: Give for the joy of giving and nothing else!

Pisces:
The trouble is, we're too hung up on success—obsessed with the idea of making it big. But, what if we chose to celebrate the journey as well as the destination? What if we chose to honour each and every experience as a life lesson? Today, you're being asked to make love to the failures. To offer them a prayer of gratitude and your utmost respect. You wouldn't have become the person you are today if it weren't for their presence. The real question is: will you give up on your dreams or continue to walk the path you have chosen?
Tip: Make love to the failures.