



ZACK SNYDER SAYS HIS 'JUSTICE LEAGUE' VERSION WILL NOT HAVE SINGLE SHOT FROM JOSS WHEDON
pg 08

TAKING POT-SHOTS AT CORRUPTION
pg 04

AMITABH BACHCHAN ON HOW COVID-19 TAKES TOLL ON PATIENT'S MENTAL HEALTH
pg 0 8



SummitTIMES

Vol 05 | Issue 176 | Gangtok | Monday | 27 July 2020

ON TOP OF THE NEWS

RNI No. SIKENG/2016/69420

Pages 8 | RS. 5

LOCKDOWN EXTENDED BY ANOTHER WEEK

GANGTOK, 26 JULY: As was being speculated in light of the increasing number of COVID-19 cases, the Lockdown in Sikkim, which was scheduled to end on Monday, 27 July, has been extended for another week and as things stand will now continue till 6AM, 01 August.

Mail us at advertise@summittimes.com or call us at :03592-208698

Sikkim reports its first COVID fatality

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 26 JUL:

Sikkim registered its first death due to Novel Coronavirus early on Sunday morning when a 67-year-old former teacher from Rongli in East Sikkim passed away at STNM Hospital at around 8:30 this morning.

The patient, it is informed had co-morbidities in the form of hypertension and diabetes.

While confirming the death, Health Department DG-cum-Secretary, Dr Pempa T Bhutia mentioned that the patient was brought to the hospital at Rongli with complaints of severe loose motion.

He added that the patient had tested positive for COVID-19 during Rapid Antigen Testing and was brought to STNM Hospital last evening at around 8:30 PM and immediately admitted.

He further mentioned that the patient

was shifted to the ICU at around midnight but his condition deteriorated and he passed away at around 8:30 AM this morning.

He mentioned that his cremation was conducted by the Gangtok Municipal Corporation in the presence of a few close family members as per the SOP for COVID-19 fatalities at Jalipool today.

The Secretary also refuted reports that had gone viral through the day that another COVID-related death had taken place at STNM Hospital.

He clarified that the patient in question, a 24-year-old had tested negative for COVID-19.

He informed that the patient was brought to the hospital at Rhenock complaining of pain in the abdomen on 23 July and returned with a prescription. The next day, she was brought back with breathing problem

and was referred to STNM Hospital.

"As she was brought from Rhenock which is a contained area, we could not keep her in the general wards so we admitted her in the suspected ward in the Isolation wing," he informed.

He mentioned that the testing of the patient could not be conducted immediately due to change of shift of doctors and staff in the COVID wing yesterday and testing was scheduled for this morning but unfortunately, she passed away overnight.

However, her sample was taken for RT-PCR testing and the result returned negative for COVID-19.

He mentioned that the body has been kept in the mortuary of the hospital until her family members or relatives arrived since the body cannot be disposed without the consent of the family as it was a non COVID-19 death.

Chamling condoles Sikkim's first COVID death

SUMMIT REPORT GANGTOK, 26 JUL:

Former Chief Minister and Sikkim Democratic Front president, Pawan Chamling expressed his heartfelt condolences to the family of Sikkim's first COVID casualty today.

Mr Chamling has said that he was "personally shaken by the news" and the person who succumbed to COVID-19 today was more than an ordinary citizen.

He stated that the deceased, a former headmaster, was an asset to Sikkim. His contribution to the education system of Sikkim will be remembered

with great appreciation, he added.

"Many of his contemporaries joined bureaucracy but he decided to serve rural Sikkim in education and remained faithful to his commitment. He was one of our dedicated school teachers who retired as headmaster. He was also known for his generous contribution to social service," said Mr Chamling.

Regarding the battle against COVID-19, Mr Chamling said, "Our wise response to this ugly reality will be to become more cautious, more courageous and more cooperative."

With 45 new cases, Sikkim's total COVID load goes past 500

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 26 JUL:

The total number of COVID-19 detected and confirmed in Sikkim today crossed the 500-mark with 45 new cases reported on Sunday. 45 new cases were reported today taking the tally of novel coronavirus cases here to 545. Of these, 397 are active cases, while the number of cured and discharged patients stands at 148. On Sunday, six more patients made full recoveries and

were discharged from hospital.

In his daily health bulletin on Sunday, Health Department DG-cum-Secretary, Dr Pempa T Bhutia detailed that 14 cases were reported from East District and 31 in South District.

He mentioned that of these 40 cases were detected through RT-PCR testing of 464 samples on Saturday.

While giving the break-up of the new cases, he informed that 30 contacts of

a COVID-positive person from Zydus Wellness from Mamring tested positive during testing of 157 samples and one more contact of a patient from Timburbong in Jorethang was detected positive during testing of 17 samples from Jorethang.

He informed that four contacts of the positive person from Arithang were tested in Bojoghari and returned positive and that three contacts at Chanatar, Rangpo

tested positive in Singtam.

Likewise, one man from Rhenock, whose two family members had already tested positive, one person from Samdong, who is the contact of Arithang patient and one nurse from the TB Ward in Namchi have also tested positive, he informed.

He informed that Namchi TB Ward has been contained and doctors and staff have been quarantined and will be tested after seven days.

He further informed that all five

samples at Singtam and one at Pakyong returned negative in RAT.

Rapid antigen testing of 51 samples were done yesterday at Rangpo including those of 29 returnees, of whom seven ITBP personnel tested positive and were returned to their quarantine facility in Siliguri. From testing of 22 contacts of positive patients from Chanatar, four from Rangpo Majhigaon tested positive, he informed.

5 more die as flood situation in Assam remains critical



GUWAHATI, JUL 26 (PTI): The flood situation in Assam remained critical with five more persons losing their lives, while nearly 25 lakh people have been affected by the deluge in 23 districts, an official bulletin said on Sunday.

Barpeta and Kokrajhar districts reported two deaths each and one death was reported from Morigaon district, according to the daily flood report of the Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA).

With this, the total number of people losing their lives in this year's flood and landslide has gone up to 128 across the state. Of them, 102 were killed in flood-related incidents and 26 in landslides.

Over 24.76 lakh persons are hit due to floods in Dhemaji, Sonitpur,

Biswanath, Darrang, Baksa, Nalbari, Barpeta, Chirang, Bongaigaon, Kokrajhar, Dhubri, South Salmara, Goalpara, Kamrup, Kamrup Metropolitan, Morigaon, Nagaon, Golaghat, Jorhat, Majuli, Sivasagar, Charaideo and Dibrugarh districts, ASDMA said.

Goalpara is the worst-hit with over 4.7 lakh people affected. In Barpeta, more than 3.95 lakh persons are affected and in Morigaon, around 3.33 lakh people.

The SDRF, district administrations and local people have rescued 188 persons during the last 24 hours by deploying 101 boats across the state.

Till Saturday, more than 26.37 lakh persons were affected by the deluge across 27 districts.

Dikchu PHC to reopen from Monday

WANGCHUK BHUTIA

MANGAN, 26 JUL:

The Dikchu PHC is set to reopen from Monday (27 Jul, 2020) after it was contained for a week due to 8 PHC staff coming in contact with a COVID-19 patient. All the 8 staff are under home quarantine.

The Niswartha Yuva Samaj, an NGO based in Lower Rakdong, East Sikkim led by Ward panchayat, CL Sharma and president, Benjamin Rai have been lending a helping hand in the area. The NGO constructed a shed at Dikchu PHC for flu clinic today.



COVID fatalities to be cremated

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 26 JUL:

In the wake of Sikkim's first COVID-19 casualty on Sunday, the need to understand the recommended procedure for funeral rites has also emerged.

The Union Health Minister has codified the standard operating procedure for the same, and in Gangtok's case, cremations appear to be the only option available irrespective of faith.

The Gangtok Municipal Corporation

had informed the Health Department on 16 July, that since the GMC does not have a separate burial ground under its control, it has decided that all COVID-19 fatalities will be cremated by the GMC irrespective of the faith of the victim.

COVID ties rakhi celebrations to post, video call

GAURAV SAINI

NEW DELHI, JUL 26 (PTI):

Nidhi Rawat has got a sweet tooth and her brother, who lives in Mumbai, brings her 'Bombay halwa' on Raksha Bandhan every year. This year, he won't come home.

Pummy Saini sent a rakhi and a letter to her Ahmedabad-based elder brother and nephew. She says the restrictions made her realise how much she loves them.

Like Rawat and Saini, many women will not be able to tie rakhi to their brothers due to the coronavirus-induced travel restrictions. Most of them have opted to send rakhi -- some hand-made or in the shape of masks -- through post or e-commerce firms.

"He is my younger brother and he knows I have got a sweet

tooth," Rawat said. "He brings me Bombay halwa every time."

The Delhi-based banker says she talks to him over video call everyday, but expressed sadness that she "won't be able to hug him" on Raksha Bandhan on August 3.

The woman visited the post office twice, but returned seeing the long queues as more and more people have been sending rakhis through post.

"So, I decided to send rakhi through an e-commerce website," she said. "I also had the option to send a gift along with it."

Having lost her father early, Delhi-based teacher Saini recalls that her brother, who is eight years older, took care of her since she was a child.

"He left the city when he got a job in Ahmedabad. He last came home in December," she said. "The restrictions due to the pandemic have made me realise how much I love him."

Nisha Yadav's brother, who has been living in Rohtak, Haryana, for the past 10 years, used to make sure he brings her a gift on the festival.

"I sent him a handmade rakhi through post. I know he will love it," Yadav said.

Rashmi Gupta, a resident of Mayur Vihar, knew her brother would not be able to travel from Coimbatore to Delhi. So, she made a mask-shaped rakhi and sent it through speed post 10 days ago so that it reaches him in time.

"He comes every year.... The Tamil Nadu government has stricter quarantine rules for

interstate travellers. So, it's 100 per cent not possible," she rued.

Gupta feels it is wise for people to wait out this period, and cause no harm to themselves and others.

The brothers, too, have been feeling nostalgic.

Vikas Tripathi says travelling to his sister's place in Allahabad is not possible due to the pandemic.

"Also, her family got affected by the virus and are under quarantine. So, I will wish her over a video call," the media professional said.

Rohit Mishra, a resident of Noida, says his sister sent him rakhi through speed post.

"It's difficult not to follow a ritual one has been following for years," he said. "But it's in everybody's interest to avoid travel during these times."

India's COVID-19 tally climbs to 13,85,522

NEW DELHI, JULY 26

(PTI): With 48,661

people testing positive for coronavirus infection in a day, India's COVID-19 tally climbed to 13,85,522 on Sunday, while the recoveries mounted to 8,85,576, according to the Union Health Ministry data.

The COVID-19 death toll in the country rose to 32,063 with 705 fatalities being recorded in a day, the data updated at 8 am showed

There are 4,67,882 active cases of coronavirus infection presently in the country. Thus, around 63.92 per cent people have

recovered so far

The total number of confirmed cases includes foreigners

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

The number of tests for detection of COVID-19 has crossed the 16-million mark in the country

According to the ICMR, a cumulative total of 1,62,91,331 samples have been tested up to July 25 with 4,42,263 samples being tested on Saturday, the highest in a day

Of the 705 deaths reported, 257 are from

Maharashtra, 89 from Tamil Nadu, 72 from Karnataka, 52 from Andhra Pradesh, 42 from West Bengal, 39 from Uttar Pradesh, 29 from Delhi, 22 from Gujarat, 14 from Bihar, 12 from Jharkhand, 11 from Rajasthan and 10 from Odisha

Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir have reported nine fatalities each followed by Madhya Pradesh with eight deaths, Haryana seven, Kerala five, Goa four, Chhattisgarh, P u d u c h e r r y , Uttarakhand and Nagaland three each, while Assam and Ladakh have registered

SKM youth build home for senior citizen

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 26 JUL:

SKM youth, on the initiative of the party's CLC Youth Convener for Rhenock Constituency, Nim Dorjee Tamang, constructed a two roomed dwelling house and cowshed for a senior citizen, Dew Kumari Pandey of Chalamthang, a press release issued by Boom Tshering Yonzon informs.

They were assisted by Ward Panchyat Devi Maya Panchayat, Damber Chhetri and Chalamthang Youth Club during the construction period.



SL No	CONTAINMENT ZONE	DATE ANNOUNCED
1	Rongli Bazaar, East Sikkim	11 July 2020
2	Rhenock Bazaar, East Sikkim	14 July 2020
3	SSB Camp, Melli Aching, West Sikkim	17 July 2020
4	GREF Camp, Chandmari, East Sikkim	18 July 2020
5	GREF Camp, Penengla, East Sikkim	18 July 2020
6	GREF Workshop, Penengla, East Sikkim	18 July 2020
7	GREF Workshop, Martam, East Sikkim	18 July 2020
8	GREF Camp, Burtuk, East Sikkim	18 July 2020
9	ITBP Camp, Lingdum, Ranka, East Sikkim	18 July 2020
10	SSB HQ, Middle Camp, 32 Mile, East Sikkim	18 July 2020
11	Golden Cross Pharma Ltd, Tarpin, Rorathang, East Sikkim	18 July 2020
12	Working Women's Hostel, Deorali, East Sikkim	18 July 2020
13	Krishi Bhawan, Tadong, East Sikkim	18 July 2020
14	Singtam Police Station, East Sikkim	18 July 2020
15	Residential building of Mani Kumar Sub-ba, Fatak Line, Rangpo, East Sikkim	18 July 2020
16	Residential building of Suklal Limbu near Mamring bridge, Rangpo, East Sikkim	18 July 2020
17	Timberbong GPU, Soreng Block, West Sikkim	19 July 2020
18	Sub Divisional Administrative Centre, Soreng, West Sikkim	19 July 2020
19	Mamring, Samardong, Jholungay, South Sikkim	19 July 2020
20	Sikkim Distilleries Ltd, East Sikkim	19 July 2020
21	IBM Area, Rangpo, East Sikkim	23 July 2020
22	Majhigaon, Rangpo, East Sikkim	23 July 2020
23	Postal Department Residential Colony, above TNA Ground, East Sikkim	23 July 2020
24	DPH Ward, Nandok Saramsa GPU, East Sikkim	23 July 2020
25	Sun Pharma Ltd, Unit 1, Setipool, East Sikkim	23 July 2020
26	Budang GPU, Soreng Block, West Sikkim	24 July 2020
27	Dorjee building near Slaughterhouse, Vishal Gaon, Upper Arithang, East Sikkim	25 July 2020
28	Gai Got area, near Dhobi Dara, East Sikkim	25 July 2020
29	TB Ward, District Hospital Namchi, South Sikkim	25 July 2020
30	Miraj Building, Kazikothi area, Namchi bazaar, South Sikkim	25 July 2020
31	Block E & F, Class II Government Quar-ters, Syari, East Sikkim	26 July 2020
32	Residential building of Santosh Prasad, 3rd Mile, Bojoghari, East Sikkim	26 July 2020
33	Sheela Residential building, Hidden For-est, Sichey, East Sikkim	26 July 2020
34	Titan Company Ltd. Majhitar, East Sikkim	26 July 2020
35	Upper Turung, Turung Mamring ward, South Sikkim	26 July 2020
36	PK Enterprise building, Jorethang Bazaar, South Sikkim	26 July 2020

Israelis continue protests against PM's handling of pandemic

JERUSALEM, JUL 26 (AP): Thousands of Israelis held several demonstrations across the country against their prime minister Saturday, with the main protest taking place in Jerusalem outside the official residence of Benjamin Netanyahu.

The protests have been going on for the past few weeks, sparked by what critics see as a government failure to handle the coronavirus crisis after initially keeping the threat of the virus at bay. Corruption charges against Netanyahu have further fueled the

demonstrations.

Bibi, go home, read one sign held by a protester. Another placard read Everyone can see that the emperor has lost his clothes. Hundreds of protesters Saturday also gathered outside Netanyahu's beach house in the upscale town of Caesarea. Last week, police used water cannons to disperse crowds in Jerusalem.

After what has been called a hasty and erratic reopening of the economy in May, infections shot up with the average number of new cases daily at

2,000.

The country's economy has been battered by virus restrictions and the unemployment rate has skyrocketed to nearly 20%.

Protesters say the government's offers of financial assistance have been nowhere near enough.

The protests came in the shadow of Netanyahu's corruption trial which resumed this month. Hearings will start in January. He is charged with fraud, breach of trust and accepting bribes in a series of scandals.

Cong urges Govt to get serious about COVID situation

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 26 JUL:

Sikkim Pradesh Congress Committee has conveyed its heartfelt condolences towards the family of the person who died due to COVID-19 in the State today.

An SPCC press release asserts that the State government should take initiative to distribute essential commodities to the people to tide over the lockdown.

The release adds that instead of running away from its responsibilities, the government should provide enough essential

commodities to last a month to the people.

The release contends that Sikkim was not self-reliant in any way and depends on supplies from outside and that the present situation has complicated matters.

The party has asserted that it was important for the government to get more serious and alleges that although the people were following government guidelines sincerely, infection has been increasing in the state due to the carelessness of the administration.

China reports 46 new cases on opposite ends

BEIJING, JUL 26 (AP): China reported 46 new COVID-19 cases on Sunday, the highest daily tally in more than a month, as it took steps to stem recent outbreaks that have infected more than 160 people at opposite ends of the country.

A u t h o r i t i e s confirmed 22 cases in Urumqi, a city in the Xinjiang region in the country's far west, the official Xinhua News Agency said. That raised the total in the local outbreak to 137 since the first case was detected 10 days

ago.

Another 13 cases were confirmed in Liaoning province in the northeast, bringing the total there to 25, almost all in the city of Dalian.

The National Health Commission also reported 11 imported cases in the latest 24-hour period, in people who had arrived from overseas.

China has recorded 83,830 cases and 4,634 deaths since the pandemic began. The Health Commission said that 288 patients remain in treatment, including 18 in critical condition.

Sangakkara backs Ganguly for ICC top post, says “astute brain” makes him suitable candidate

NEW DELHI, JUL 26 (PTI): Sri Lanka cricket legend Kumar Sangakkara has backed Sourav Ganguly for the ICC chairman's post, saying the BCCI president's “astute cricket brain” and vast experience as an administrator make him a “very suitable” candidate for the role.

Admitting that he is a big fan of Ganguly, Sangakkara said the former India captain has an international mindset which is necessary to remain unbiased in an important position.

“I think Sourav definitely can make that change. Quite a big fan of Dada not just because of his stature as a cricketer but I think he has a very astute cricket brain,” Sangakkara, who is currently the Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) Chairman,

told 'India Today'.

“He has the best interests of the game at heart and that should not change just because you are the BCCI president or the ECB or SLC or any other cricket board when you are at the ICC.

“Your mindset should be truly international and not just constrained by partisanship in terms of where I come from -- am I Indian, Sri Lankan or Australia or English but really understand ‘yes I am a cricketer and what I am doing is what is best for all cricketing countries”

The former Sri Lanka skipper said Ganguly has the potential to build relationships, which is vital for the influential position in cricket's governing body.

“I have seen his work even before he took over as the BCCI president, even before

SKM condoles COVID casualty, urges people to combat disease collectively

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 26 JUL:

Sikkim Krantikari Morcha condoled Sikkim's first COVID-19 casualty and conveyed in a press release that the death of a senior citizen due to Novel Coronavirus has saddened everyone.

An SKM press release states that health workers at STNM Hospital put in all possible efforts but

could not save his life. The party has extended its prayers for the peace to the departed soul and further expressed heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family members.

The release highlights that more than 142 patients have recovered in Sikkim thus far due to the hard work of health

workers and thanked the frontline workers for their efforts to keep Sikkim safe and cared for.

The party adds that the Chief Minister and the State government and frontline workers have been working hard to keep Sikkim safe from this disease and that it was time for everyone to come together to fight COVID collectively.

8-day lockdown begins in Nagaland's Dimapur district

KOHIMA, JUL 26 (PTI) An eight-day total lockdown began in Dimapur, the commercial hub of Nagaland, from Sunday to stem the spread of COVID-19, district task force officials said.

Out of the 1,339 coronavirus positive cases in the State, Dimapur district with 527 has the highest number of people infected by the virus followed by Kohima with 334 confirmed cases, health officials said.

The Kohima district administration had already announced a seven-day lockdown starting from July 25 in

the state capital.

Dimapur wore a deserted look with streets empty and shops closed.

A few pharmacies and hospitals were open in some localities to cater to people in medical emergencies. Government offices, banks and medical clinics which are exempted from the purview of the lockdown remained closed today being Sunday.

The total lockdown in the district will continue till August 2.

In the state capital, the second day of the total lockdown continued with no

movement of people and vehicles, while all business establishments also remained closed.

The total lockdown in Kohima will end on July 31.

The government has imposed the strict restrictions in the two districts to enhance active surveillance and ensure comprehensive contact tracing, detection of suspected cases and implementation of isolation measures to contain the spread of novel coronavirus.

The state government has not imposed a total lockdown in nine other districts.

Mail us at advertise@summittimes.com or call us at **03592-208698**

~ SummitTIMES ~

CLASSIFIEDS

FOR RENT:

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

GENERAL LAND FOR SALE

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

FLAT FOR SALE

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

LAND FOR SALE

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

GENERAL LAND FOR SALE

General land 30X40 (3 Plots) available for sale at Tadong 6th Mile next to Harka Maya College. Flat Land no cutting required. Price 27 Lakhs (negotiable).
Contact: 9800201335

LAND FOR SALE

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

LAND FOR SALE

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

Facebook.com/

SummitTimesSikkim

fresh lot of rapid information

It's official, schools to remain closed at least till 31 Aug

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 26 JUL:

When the lockdown was first announced in Sikkim to contain the spread of COVID-19, the Education Department had issued a circular on 18 Mar, 2020, announcing the closure of all government and private universities, colleges, schools, educational institutes, teacher education institutes, training institutes, tutorials and coaching centres across the State.

The Department had decided to open the educational institutions from 01 Jul, 2020, but since the rise in cases of COVID-19 and infection continued, we also continued closure of educational institutes till 31 Jul, 2020, and decided to reopen on 03 Aug, 2020.

Keeping in view the further lockdown

imposed in the entire State and extended till 01 Aug, 2020, the Minister for Education, Kunga Nima Lepcha has mentioned that all educational institutions in Sikkim, both government and private, will continue to remain closed till 31 Aug, 2020.

The Minister has also mentioned that a review of the situation will be conducted before reopening of the educational institutions.

He has further mentioned that though safety and health come first, continuity of education for future benefit must also be our plan and has therefore appealed to all the teachers, students and parents to continue with online learning programmes, offline mode of learning designed by the Department and Home-schooling with

maintaining abundant precaution and following COVID-19 protocol of health and social distancing.

The Additional Chief Secretary of the Department, GP Upadhyaya has appealed to all the school-heads to keep vigil and ensure the safety of the huge properties our schools have and also to continue with the learning programme devised especially for the lockdown situation.

He has also appealed to the teachers that pushing online activities to the students must be rational and reasonable. A child should not be over-burdened in the name of online learning and psychological aspects of the learners during the troubled time must also be kept in consideration.

The State Project Director (Samagra

Shiksha) and Director (Elementary Education), Bhim Thatal has requested the district authorities to ensure that all teachers are adequately taking classes through online mode as well as other media being used meant for the lockdown period. A system of monitoring the progress of teachers also is underway in the Department which will assess the level of accomplishment by the teachers in their assignment during the lockdown. He has also mentioned that recently announced home-schooling for the elementary level of students (upto Class VIII) with the concept that 'if a child is not able to go to school, let the school come to the child' means supporting the students of elementary level for their schooling

at wherever they are. Teachers and parents together with educated youth are requested to monitor the learning of the children at homes during this time by maintaining ample social distancing and other COVID-19 protocol. Visiting homes of the students or calling them at a convenient place may not be possible during the lockdown, but monitoring and maintaining the learning continuity through phones and other modes of communication should be maintained. He has also requested the teachers to refer to the downsized curriculum of the elementary level done by the NCERT (at the national level) and keep connected with the SCERT at the State level for suggestions guidance as the SCERT is the Academic Authority under the RTE Act.

31 fresh COVID-19 cases in Andamans; tally rises to 290

PORT BLAIR, JUL 26

(PTI): Thirty-one more people have tested positive for COVID-19 in Andaman and Nicobar Islands, taking the Union Territory's caseload to 290 on Sunday, a senior health official said.

One of the new patients had recently returned to the Union Territory while 30 fresh cases were detected during local contact tracing, Health Department Deputy Director Dr Avijit Roy said.

The fresh infections have taken the number of active cases in the Union Territory to 114 while 176 people have recovered from COVID-19 so far, he said. BJP's Andaman and

Nicobar Islands unit president Ajay Bairagi and a few other party leaders have quarantined themselves after coming in contact with a COVID-19 patient, sources said.

The COVID-19 patient, son of a BJP councillor of the Port Blair Municipal Council and a pilot by profession, has a travel history, they said.

He had recently attended a party meeting here along with his father and other BJP leaders including Bairagi, the sources said.

A total of 21,965 samples have been tested for COVID-19 so far, of which 21,612 reports have been received and 353 are awaited, officials said.

Kargil Vijay Diwas at Raj Bhavan



SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 26 JUL:

Governor Ganga Prasad joined with the nation and remembered the Kargil Heroes on the occasion of the 21st anniversary of Kargil Vijay Diwas today.

The Governor paid homage to the brave and slain soldiers and offered floral tribute in the memory of martyrs at a brief function held at Raj Bhavan, an official press release informs.

On the occasion, the

Governor said, "On this occasion, we feel proud for the selfless sacrificed made by our soldiers who fought valiantly for the country. Their sacrifices will always be a source of inspiration for our forces."

ViewPoint

Take care of the Corona warriors who take care of everyone

DR SATYAVAN SAURABH

The corona epidemic has changed the entire world system and forced almost everyone to change their way of life. However, for many this epidemic forced not only to change their professional outlook, but it increased the amount of their work; Increase in working hours, risk of job loss, increase in stress levels, etc. new topics also emerged. But public servants and health professionals are more at risk during this epidemic. While the whole world was living a safe life in their homes, these warriors left no stone unturned to help everyone by putting their lives at stake, as the workload increased, some sections of society gave these Corona warriors. They argued to compensate them by paying extra salary, while some opposed it.

The global pandemic coronavirus has engulfed the entire world. Even today, the number of people infected with this virus and who lost their lives is increasing rapidly. Corona patients are increasing in all countries including India. At the same time, the front line warriors of Corona are fighting this virus every day by putting their lives on their palm. Some have even sacrificed their lives in this war while performing their duties. Endangering their own lives and the lives of their families, public servants became frontline professionals

to prevent and neutralize the corona from spreading Working hard since day one. They are the ones who are dealing with an unprecedented situation and are trying to get out of this danger.

We have seen that their working hours have increased, the overworked public servants are facing a huge amount of stress and sometimes they also face public anger due to the spread of misinformation in the society. For example, police personnel and health officials in Maharashtra faced the situation of stone-pelting when going for a check-up campaign in a village. At the same time, they are also struggling with a lack of structural problems and are trying to find a way through innovative solutions. In some districts, the public servants have planned to bring back the daily lives of the citizens with new ideas, such as odd schemes to start the market, creating innovative advertisements, making people aware through songs and poems, etc.

There is no such news from all over the country that on one hand, Corona warriors are being showered with respect by showering flowers on the one hand, while on the other hand they are left to wander for treatment when infected. Nearly all the state governments of the country have made a provision of 50 lakh rupees for the financial

help of their families on the death of the Corona warriors, but are not conscious about the cost of hospitalization if infected. The situation has become such that even doctors, nursing staff, police officers have to plead with colleagues and relatives for treatment. The central government should maintain the dignity of these heroes by behaving strictly on such matters, it becomes an important responsibility of the government and court of the country.

One must be committed to his duty to complete and carry on any task. This can be seen from the exemplary service shown by Odisha cadre IAS officer and State Health Secretary Nikunj Dhal, who returned to duty within 24 hours of his father's death. It emphasizes their commitment to duty. We bow down to their loyalty to this country service, a large part of the country's population is currently practicing segregation and working from home, or not working at all. During such a time, G Sreejana, an IAS officer and Commissioner of Greater Visakhapatnam Municipal Corporation (GVMC), returned to work just 22 days after giving birth to the child, breaking her maternity. This act of dedication by IAS officer G Srijana gives a lesson by showing the importance of handling such a huge responsibility.

There have also been reports

that after the death of Corona, the son did not shoulder the body of the father, did not shoulder the body of the mother, the family left. Amidst these reports, Ambulance driver Jamil Ahmed Digu, a resident of Srinagar in Kashmir, has emerged as such Corona warriors who not only transported the bodies of all the patients who died from Corona in Srinagar to the cemetery but also helped to bury them. He has been engaged in the service of humanity for the last four months, regardless of his life. Many civil servants are suffering from psychological illnesses after painful stress and are at risk of maintaining their family relations. Showing exemplary courage while performing his duty. Despite their courageous work, some sections of society are not giving them the respect they should get.

Our public servants are handling such a serious situation, so they deserve to be paid extra for their extra hours of work during Covid-19. On this, we should not get into unnecessary arguments. Recently, a school going girl from Maharashtra has written a letter praising police personnel for their service. This small act of gratitude has helped to boost the morale of police personnel. Such small tasks will not only help encourage them to do better but will also help in ending this Covid-19 epidemic as soon as possible.

Doctor Safe Team sanitizes Lower and Upper Majhitar



SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 26 JUL:

Doctor Safe Team of Mount Distilleries Limited, Majhitar, has sanitized different

parts of East and South District, a press release informs.

In the last two days the team has sanitized Lower and Upper Majhitar where

COVID-19 positive cases have been detected. This was done on the direction came from Rangpo Nagar Panchayat President, Maya Cinturi.

REPORTERS
SINGTAM: 8170070813,
MANGAN/ DIKCHU:
9832612485/ 9434011213
GANGTOK: 8116388176
9832424750 , 8016270440,
9679100995

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

GANGTOK DENTAL CLINIC


NOW OPEN
10AM to 7PM

BOOK YOUR APPOINTMENT
82106 99271

Dr. Anjali Gupta
BDS, Dental Surgeon

Near Sisa Golai
Below Greendale Hotel
Gangtok, East Sikkim

+91 8210699271
+91 8768213966



What is Novel Coronavirus - nCoV?

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

Symptoms of nCoV

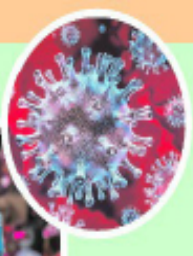


- Fever
- Difficulty in breathing
- Dry Cough
- Severe acute respiratory syndrome
- Pneumonia - like symptoms

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 : 7028372100
WEST : 9583287809
NORTH : 9641957468
SOUTH : 7407691463
New STNM
AMS : 9434711402

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE
GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM

Taking Pot-Shots at Corruption

Easiest target, empty bullets

Corruption is the use of public office for private gain. The Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 defines bribery as “a public servant taking gratification other than legal remuneration in respect of an official act; a public servant obtaining a valuable thing, without consideration from the person concerned in proceeding or the business transacted by such a public servant; and criminal misconduct”. Typical bureaucratese, we know, and requiring more than one read to comprehend. Meanwhile, since Sikkim appears to be pursuing a record of sorts when it comes to making weekly corruption-related arrests, this would be as good a time as any to discuss this, as many have called it, necessary evil.

Speak to anyone on the streets, and they will insist - and one speaks of the country and not just the State here - that work just won't get done if there was no graft involved. Most would have us believe this, but is it really so? It shouldn't, but it is. And this is because the two common interpretations of corruption are skewed. First, let us take the example of how political parties see corruption. Corruption for parties the world over is something that the opposition does. Since in most democracies the reins of office change often, parties in Opposition will blame those in power and since the opposition is invariably a former government [or a government in waiting], graft charges become convenient ploys to pin down opponents. This is not necessarily because there are too many instances of corruption [given India's dismal track-record of convictions, there appears to be too little corruption in higher places], but because corruption allegations demand no substantiation. The people will believe the corruption charges because according to them everyone is corrupt and because the investigating agencies are controlled by the State, the investigations can be made to stretch ever longer and then the courts can take up more time. Few expect corruption charges to stick, but it at least keeps an opponent occupied on another front. Examples abound, the Hawala scandal, the Bofors issue, the coal and the 3G cases and while on it, also the steady march of Sikkim's leaders in-waiting making frequent trips to Delhi with corruption charges against the present dispensation. And the list keeps growing longer with still more cases, still more allegations still more complaints. The bottomline however is that corruption charges are just sticks with which to whip up headlines or witch-hunts depending upon who holds the whip. Now, let's see how the people understand corruption. For most, it is something that gets their work done. They feed the monster to make their own lives better. That said, they still see themselves as suffering because of the corruption, not as cogs of the nexus. Many who make a noise about corruption are either politically motivated or are offended because someone else benefited from the graft when even they were in the race. This then is a corrupt practice as well.

It goes without saying that corruption cannot survive without political patronage, but blaming politicians alone will not suffice. Since it is the electorate which made them powerful enough to sidestep rules and hoodwink due process, it is also the electorate's responsibility to keep them honest. No politician will continue being corrupt or continue looking the other way if the voters send out a clear signal that they will not tolerate it. Okay, maybe they won't turn honest overnight, but will at least begin by toning down the flamboyance with which ill-gotten gains are flaunted at present. Even that would at least be a beginning and from there could start the process of addressing corruption in more practical terms as against the rhetoric [which inflames passions but does not resolve] or the equally disconcerting chest-beating which speaks of corruption in comparative terms [as if being less corrupt was a virtue of some sorts]. One needs to accept that corruption cannot be graded since one is either corrupt or honest and there are no in-betweens. It is not about being less or more corrupt, because once someone is corrupt, then the scale of the scam is decided by the opportunity available and not the sensibilities of the corrupt person. That said, crackdowns cannot take refuge behind this argument because at least the authorities need to have a better sense of proportions so that the resources at their disposal are deployed for the best 'returns'.

To book ad-space, contact

SummitTIMES at

GANGTOK:

For circulation details Contact: (Sandeep)
9734152451

& for Advertisement booking at 9933427505
or at office no 03592 208698. Mail us at advertise@summittimes.com

SILIGURI:

Mr. Mani Rai, M/s. Space Ads, B.R. Ambedkar Building, Room No.7, 1st floor. Opp.

Ganga Hotel. Hill Cart Road. Siliguri – 03. Ph. 9832318644/ 9800682989/ 9153035100 or
mail at mani_siliguri@yahoo.co.in.

KOLKATA OFFICE:

Irshad Ali/ Imteeyaz. Synapse, 6, Madan Street, Mezzine – 2, 2nd floor. Kolkata – 700072. Ph. 033-22124348/ fax 033-22124337/ mob. 9830547774/ 983108397. E-mail: contact.synapse@gmail.com/ irshad_ali123@rediffmail.com

Will school temperature checks curb the spread of coronavirus?

FIONA RUSSELL & KATHLEEN RYAN
THECONVERSATION.COM

This week, most students in Melbourne and Mitchell Shire returned to remote learning for term 3.

Students whose parents can't work from home are allowed to receive remote learning from school, as was the case during the first lockdown.

But this time, students in years 11 and 12, students in year 10 undertaking VCE or the applied learning equivalent, and specialist school students, are attending school for face-to-face learning.

This move recognises older students are more likely to be able to social distance than younger students, ensures senior students are supported during their VCE, and acknowledges the particular difficulties of remote learning for students with special needs.

In announcing this new model, the Victorian government also revealed daily temperature checks would be introduced for all students attending school face-to-face in term 3.

THE DETAILS

The Victorian government pledged to supply schools in Melbourne, Mitchell Shire and surrounding areas with more than 14,000 non-contact infrared thermometers. These are the type of thermometer positioned from a distance, generally towards a person's forehead, to take their temperature.

In the case a student records a temperature of 37.5°C or above, the school will contact the student's parent or guardian to take the child

home, and encourage them get a COVID-19 test.

The temperature checks are designed to detect fever as an indicator of possible SARS-CoV-2 infection. But there are a couple of things we need to keep in mind when considering how useful temperature checks will be.

First, these types of thermometers won't always reliably detect fever. And second, many children with COVID-19 won't have a fever.

SENSITIVITY AND SPECIFICITY

A few key features are important when screening for disease. In the case of non-contact infrared thermometers, the “disease” we're screening for is fever.

First, a tool should be able to correctly identify those with the disease (sensitivity). Second, a tool should correctly identify those without the disease (specificity). Third, a tool should have high probability that a person with a positive result does have the disease (positive predictive value, or PPV).

Testing of non-contact infrared thermometers has reported wide variation on each of these measures. One review found sensitivity ranged from 4%-89.6% and specificity from 75.4%-99.6%. Where one in 100 people had a fever, the PPV was between 3.55%-65.4%.

Non-contact infrared thermometers measure skin (peripheral) temperature without physical contact, which offers a convenient option for temperature checking large numbers of children.

But their readings can be affected by factors such as outdoor temperature, where on the body you

aim the thermometer, and distance from the subject.

We also need to remember fever reducing medications, such as paracetamol, can lower a child's temperature.

Combined, these factors indicate non-contact infrared thermometers may not be very reliable in detecting a fever (regardless of whether or not the fever is related to COVID-19).

DO CHILDREN WITH COVID-19 HAVE FEVER?

A review of studies found fever was the most common symptom in children and young people under 21 with COVID-19, recorded in 47% of cases. Other symptoms include cough (37%) and diarrhoea (4%).

Two reviews explored asymptomatic infection in children, reporting 14% and 19% of children had no symptoms at all.

This means fever screening may miss more than half of infected children in schools, as they could either have no symptoms, have symptoms that don't include fever, or have fever not detected by the non-contact infrared thermometers.

DO CHILDREN TRANSMIT COVID-19 IN SCHOOLS?

Initial reports suggested children don't transmit SARS-CoV-2 as much as adults, however evidence in this space is still evolving.

A NSW government report found no student-to-teacher transmission and very low student-to-student transmission.

Conversely, one of Victoria's largest outbreaks to date occurred at a P-12 school; staff, students, and close contacts have tested positive. But it's not yet clear how much transmission can be attributed to school activities as opposed

to household and community transmission.

A recent study from South Korea found within the home, ten to 19-year-old children transmit the virus as much as adults, whereas children aged under ten transmit less than adults.

While this paper focused on household transmission, a recent study from Israel reported on an outbreak in a secondary school. It found overcrowded classrooms, lack of mask wearing and air conditioning use were likely to be contributing factors.

SCHOOLS AROUND THE WORLD

Among countries that have now returned to school, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan and Vietnam have implemented fever screening.

France, Belgium, Germany and Israel have differing requirements for use of face masks among students and teachers.

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends parents check their child's temperature before or upon arrival at school.

The use of non-contact infrared thermometers to identify children who could have COVID-19 may not be reliable.

But at the very least, this tool provides a visible important reminder to parents, staff and students of the risk of COVID-19, and for children to remain at home if they're unwell.

[Fiona Russell is Principal research fellow, University of Melbourne; Kathleen Ryan is Research Fellow, Asia-Pacific Health, Infection and Immunity Theme, Murdoch Children's Research Institute]

How Burundi's independent press lost its freedom

AIMÉ-JULES BIZIMANA & OUMAR KANE
THECONVERSATION.COM

The general and presidential elections of May 2020, followed by the death of President Pierre Nkurunziza, put the international media spotlight on Burundi. The country is now facing one of the darkest times in its history since the 2015 crisis.

The crisis that year began when Nkurunziza, who had been in office since 2005, announced he would run for a third term.

The move was dubbed unconstitutional and the announcement triggered protests that were stifled and eventually banned by the authorities. Despite the protests, Nkurunziza was re-elected in July in polls boycotted by the opposition.

Since then, freedom of the press in Burundi has deteriorated considerably in an atmosphere of tension and repression. Local media have been silenced by repeated attacks from the government and the state security apparatus.

The remaining independent voices face difficult conditions. There are restrictive controls on the press and journalists and a constant fear of reprisals from elements enjoying impunity.

THE MEDIA IN BURUNDI: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement of 2000, also known as the Arusha Accords, added to the wave of hope that was brought on by the end of Burundi's 12-year civil war.

The agreement was signed in August 2000 after protracted negotiations facilitated by former presidents Julius Nyerere of Tanzania and Nelson Mandela of South Africa. The agreement was the beginning of a reconciliation process that also implied greater freedom of the press.

But since 2005, when Nkurunziza was elected under the National Council for the Defense of Democracy – Forces for the Defense of Democracy party, relations between the state and the media have become severely strained.

During the 2000s, private radio stations could oppose state oppression to an extent. They provided a platform for political opposition and civil society, and reported on embezzlement, corruption and human rights violations.

But as in past regimes, Burundian journalists faced huge difficulties when covering highly sensitive topics. Journalists were barred from covering rebel activities and issues relating to security and maintaining public order.

Mistrust between the government and the press deepened. Journalists experienced increasing threats, intimidation and

imprisonment. In 2013, a highly controversial media law was passed which undermined the protection of sources, limited subjects on which journalists could report, and imposed new fines for media found in violation of the law.

The National Communication Council, which is supposed to regulate the sector, has been exploited by political authorities, and its independence has been severely compromised. In media circles, the council is perceived to be a government puppet.

MEDIA BLACKOUT

Nkurunziza's decision to run for a third term in office, in defiance of the country's constitution, essentially created a media vacuum in Burundi. Private media coverage of protests against a potential third term immediately strained relations with political authorities; some radio stations were suspended and threats were made against journalists in the field.

The attempted military coup in May 2015 was a major turning point. Loyalist forces destroyed work and broadcasting equipment in newsrooms and burned down the headquarters of several media outlets. The forces accused them of pro-coup bias and broadcasting seditious messages. Private radio and television stations were heavily affected. The attempted coup gave Nkurunziza and his supporters a pretext to lock down the already weakened political and media landscape. The independent media, seen as being on the side of the opposition, became an enemy of the government.

Exile became the only option for some members of the press. Dozens of independent journalists were forced to flee the heavy-handed repression.

The crackdown on independent radio left the field wide open to Burundi's state broadcaster, which is the government's mouthpiece. Even international journalists, who are usually granted a certain immunity, have suffered pressure and intimidation from the government security apparatus.

In the turmoil brought about by the crisis, it is worth mentioning the remarkable role played by IWACU. The independent newspaper remained in operation despite the dangerous conditions. Four of its journalists were imprisoned in 2019. They were accused of “collusion” with rebels operating on the border with the Democratic Republic of Congo. Eventually, its director was forced into exile.

The online platform SOS Médias Burundi, coordinated by a social media collective, also stands out. It was formed at the time of the crisis and operates clandestinely.

Despite a few courageous voices who stood their ground, the 2015 crisis ushered in a

climate of terror and deep mistrust between the government and the remaining independent media.

THE PANDEMIC BLACKOUT

The COVID-19 pandemic broke out in Burundi the day before the May 2020 elections. So that they could go ahead unhindered, the government adopted a strategy of denial, invoking the country's “divine protection”.

The deportation of the World Health Organisation representative and his team of three experts was one of the most glaring indications of the restriction of information in Burundi. In spite of their refusal to officially acknowledge the pandemic, Burundian authorities still imposed quarantine on national and foreign travellers.

The lack of strict preventive action and social distancing in the country, and the underestimation of the scale of the infection, have been severely criticised.

Social and electoral gatherings continued with minimal, or no, health protection measures. This led some Burundian medical professionals and civil society members trying to warn the media and the public of the worsening health situation and the lack of testing.

In this context, the reporting surrounding the death of President Nkurunziza was of critical importance. According to a government press release, the “unexpected” death of the Burundian head of state, which took place in the Karuzi hospital on 8 June 2020, was caused by a “heart attack”.

Many international media outlets reported suspicions that the real cause of death was COVID-19, which would have made Nkurunziza the first leader to die from the virus in office.

The least that can be said is that there is no clear information surrounding government action on the pandemic and its consequences.

WHAT NOW?

Since the May 2020 elections, the international community has moved towards normalising relations with the new president, Évariste Ndayishimiye, awaiting signs of openness on his part.

Western diplomatic missions appear to be keeping a low profile, limiting themselves to a handful of policy statements. But can diplomacy return to normal if the media landscape does not? The crisis cannot truly be said to be over if there is still no real space for public debate through a free and independent press.

[Aimé-Jules Bizimana is Professeur au Département des sciences sociales, Université du Québec en Outaouais (UQO); Oumar Kane is Professor of Communication Studies, Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM)]

70 fresh COVID-19 cases in Arunachal; count rises to 1,126

ITANAGAR, JUL 26 (PTI): Seventy more people, including nine security personnel, tested positive for COVID-19 in Arunachal Pradesh on Sunday, taking the northeastern state's tally of such cases to 1,126, a senior health official said.

Thirty-seven fresh cases were reported in the Capital Complex region, 12 in Changlang district, six in Tirap, four each in Tawang and Papum Pare, two each in East Siang and Lohit and a case each was registered in Lower Siang, Siang and West Siang districts, he added.

The 37 fresh cases in the Capital Complex region were detected during rapid-antigen tests. Of the 12 new patients in Changlang, seven are returnees from other states, one is a health worker while four cases were detected in the Rankatu tea estate, State Surveillance Officer Dr L Jampa said.

All six new patients in Tirap district are Assam Rifles jawans, while three of the four new cases in Papum Pare district are Indo Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) personnel and one is a civilian from the Chiputa area, he said.

Three of the four new cases in Tawang district are Border Roads Task Force (BRTF) personnel



and one is a returnee from another state, Jampa said.

One BRTF personnel, who had returned from Uttar Pradesh, tested positive for the infection in Siang district, he added.

Two new patients in East Siang district had returned from the Capital Complex region while two new patients in Lohit had come back from Assam. One new patient in West Siang district had returned from Uttar Pradesh, Jampa said.

Barring three, all the new patients are asymptomatic, he added.

Thirty-six more people have recovered from COVID-19 and

were discharged from hospitals on Saturday, the official said.

Of the 1,126 cases, 695 are active while 428 people have recovered from the disease and three patients have died, he said.

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

The state has recently registered a steep rise in the number of COVID-19 cases, with 935 people testing positive for the infection since July 1, Jampa said.

Arunachal Pradesh reported its first COVID-19 case on April 2

and the person recovered from the disease on April 16. The state registered its second case on May 24.

The Capital Complex region, comprising the Itanagar, Naharlagun, Nirjuli and Banderdewa areas, has the highest number of active COVID-19 cases at 402, followed by Papum Pare (61), East Siang (38), Namsai (36) and Changlang (25), the official said.

The recovery rate among the COVID-19 patients in Arunachal Pradesh is 35 per cent and a total of 57,861 samples have been tested for the disease in the state so far, Jampa added.

Drone deployed to sanitise Odisha town



BALASORE (ODISHA), JUL 26 (PTI): In its bid to support the fight against COVID-19, the Integrated Test Range (ITR) here -- a DRDO centre for performance evaluation of missiles - has deployed a sophisticated drone to spray sanitisers over Balasore town, where around 100 cases have been recorded.

The remote-controlled drone, equipped with a GPS system, is capable of spraying disinfectants from a height of 20 metres from the ground, a senior official said.

"We have deployed drones in order to sanitise different areas of Balasore town. We

are trying to assist the district administration in its battle against the pandemic," ITR Director Dr Binay Kumar Das said.

On Sunday, the sanitisation drive was undertaken in three localities of the town, including areas around the police lines, he said.

The drone, developed jointly by

Anna University and ITI Chennai, can store up to 20 litres of disinfectants, which is sprayed through its four nozzles, Das said.

"We plan to intensify the drive in Balasore town tomorrow. Sanitisation with the help of drones can be immensely helpful in inaccessible areas," the ITR director said.

Meghalaya reports 59 more COVID cases; tally rises to 646

SHILLONG, JULY 25 (PTI): Meghalaya's COVID-19 tally mounted to 646 on Saturday after 59 more people, including six BSF staffers and four police personnel, tested positive for coronavirus, officials said.

The BSF and police personnel are from East Khasi Hills and East Jaintia Hills districts respectively.

"With the new cases detected, the number of active cases in the state has increased to 547," Health Services director

Aman War said.

While 94 patients have recovered from the disease in the state, five others died.

Shillong, the headquarters of East Khasi Hills district as well as the states capital, has the highest number of active cases at 466. Of these, 286 are BSF troopers, 159 are civilians and 21 are armed forces personnel, War said.

There are 41 active cases in Ri Bhoi district, 15 in West Garo Hills,

nine in West Jaintia Hills, eight in East Jaintia Hills, four in South West Garo Hills, two in South Garo Hills and one each in East Garo Hills and North Garo Hills.

"The surge in the number of cases (in Shillong) is worrying. That is why we have decided to go for a total lockdown in the Shillong agglomeration," he said.

The Meghalaya government on Friday announced a complete lockdown in Shillong agglomeration from July

26 midnight to July 29.

War said that the period will be utilized for tracing contacts of the COVID-19 patients.

He, however, maintained that there is no community transmission in the state.

"We still have a strong belief that community spread has not happened as yet. But if people do not refrain from unnecessarily venturing out of their homes, it will be a big worry for us," he said.

Withdrawal of Raj Bhawan's containment zone status gross violation of COVID norms: Tarun Gogoi

GUWAHATI, JULY 25 (PTI): Former Assam chief minister Tarun Gogoi on Saturday alleged that the sudden withdrawal of Raj Bhawan's containment zone status by the state government was tantamount to gross violation of COVID-19 protocols.

Gogoi, in a statement, also claimed that the 77-year-old governor violated the protocols, too, by visiting the flood-affected areas in the state.

"The governor is the

constitutional head of the state and instead of setting an example to fellow citizens, he himself visited different flood-affected areas of Assam in violation of protocol, and thereby, doing great disservice to the state," he said.

The Raj Bhawan was declared a containment zone as 73 people, including officers and staff there tested positive for COVID-19, he said.

"If a responsible person like the governor, the constitutional head,

does not follow the rules and regulation, how can we expect a common man to be a law-abiding citizen," Gogoi said.

All protocols like hand washing, wearing masks, social distancing, confinement of people in containment and affected areas must be strictly observed to contain the pandemic, the former CM said.

Congress MP Pradyut Bordoloi's presence at the funeral of a religious leader recently at Dhing was criticised by many BJP leaders, but they

are now "conspicuously silent about the governors visit, which has broken all norms," he said.

"The state government's failure in the strict implementation of COVID-19 protocols has led to the alarming rise in positive cases," Gogoi added.

The entire Raj Bhawan campus was declared a containment zone on July 4. Governor Jagadish Mukhi and his wife Prem Mukhi subsequently tested negative.

TMC launches social media campaign to counter BJP

KOLKATA, JUL 26 (PTI): In a bid to counter the BJP's social media campaign, West Bengal's ruling Trinamool Congress on Sunday launched a new initiative to highlight the achievements of the state government and showcase how federalism is being allegedly eroded by the Centre.

The campaign - "Shoja Banglay Bolchi" (speaking in straightforward Bengali) will be a three days a week video series anchored by TMC's Rajya Sabha party leader Derek O'Brien.

"One-minute video clips will be released at 11 am every Sunday, Wednesday and Friday. The series is expected to run for the next few months on social media," the TMC said in a statement.

The videos will highlight issues which are pertinent in the present social, political, and economic framework, it said.

"The videos will also focus on how Bengal, under Mamata Banerjee's leadership,

has made phenomenal progress in the last nine years across parameters. Other subjects include how federalism has eroded and how states have been deprived," the statement added.

According to TMC sources, this social media campaign will be used to counter the BJP's allegations about "fake news and rhetoric against the state government and the party".

TMC supremo Mamata Banerjee on Thursday announced a major reshuffle in the party's organisation as she gave leadership roles to younger and new faces and axed some old guards, with an eye on next year's assembly elections in West Bengal.

The leadership changes within the party were expected amid growing challenge from the BJP, which has emerged as the main opposition party by winning 18 out of the 42 Lok Sabha seats in the state in 2019, bringing down the TMC's tally to 22 from 34.

Woman delivers baby on NDRF boat in flood-hit Bihar

NEW DELHI/PATNA, JUL 26 (PTI): A 25-year-old woman gave birth to a baby girl on board an NDRF rescue boat plying on the swollen Burhi Gandak river in flood-affected Bihar on Sunday, officials said.

The woman was being rescued from her marooned house in Gobari village of East Champaran district when she developed severe labour pain and later delivered the baby around 1:40 pm, they said.

The National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) team was accompanied by an ASHA (accredited social health activist) worker who helped in the childbirth, an NDRF spokesperson said in Delhi.

The rescuers from the 9th battalion of the NDRF were attending to a drowning incident in the vicinity when they were informed about

the pregnant woman whose village was hit by floodwaters of the Budhi Gandak river, the spokesperson said.

"The mother and the newborn girl have been shifted to a public health facility in Banjariya village of Motihari district by an ambulance and their condition is stated to be stable," he said.

The spokesperson said NDRF personnel are trained in medical first responder course and all rescuers are taught handling of childbirth during an emergency.

"This is the 10th childbirth (including a case of twins) on an NDRF boat while evacuating expecting mothers from flood-hit areas since year 2013," the spokesperson said.

A total of 21 NDRF teams are deployed in a dozen districts of Bihar for conducting flood rescue and relief work.

VIDEO NEWS SECTION

Facebook.com/SummitTimesOnline

SIKIM SCAN | CapitalTIMES | Neighbourhood WATCH | Sports & Specials | EleniWhere | EICETERA

To book ad-space, contact SummitTIMES at

GANGTOK:
For circulation details Contact: +91-9749897493, +91-9647102692
& for Advertisement booking at +91-9933427903 or at office no 03592 208698. Mail us at advertise@summittimes.com
SILIGURI:
Mr. Mani Rai, W/o. Space Ads. B.R. Ambedkar Building, Room No.7, 1st floor, Opp. Banga Hotel, Hill Cart Road, Siliguri - 735007, Ph. 0353-2312434/48/ Fax 0353-23124337/ mob. +91-9830547774/ +91-983003977, E-mail: contact@synapse@gmail.com / irahad_al123@rediffmail.com

floor: Opp. Banga Hotel, Hill Cart Road, Siliguri - 735007, Ph. +91-9832318644/ 9800682989/ 9153035100 or mail@manirai_siliguri@yahoo.co.in

KOLKATA OFFICE:
Irahad Ali/ Irimeeyaz, Synapse, 6, Madan Street, Marine - 3, 2nd floor, Kolkata - 700072, Ph. 033-22124348/ Fax 033-23124337/ mob. +91-9830547774/ +91-983003977, E-mail: contact@synapse@gmail.com / irahad_al123@rediffmail.com

Phone:
03592-208698
+91-9832556698
+91-9832080753

www.summittimes.com
news@summittimes.com
summittimes@gmail.com
advertise@summittimes.com

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

LA Sparks’ Nneka Ogumike: ‘Our hope is that this isn’t a moment but it is a movement’

ROBERT O’CONNELL
LOS ANGELES, 26 JUL [THEGUARDIAN]: Earlier this month, Kelly Loeffler, a Republican senator from Georgia and co-owner of the WNBA’s Atlanta Dream, addressed a letter to commissioner Cathy Engelbert expressing concerns over a pattern of political behavior. Natasha Cloud and LaToya Sanders of the defending champion Washington Mystics had recently announced their intentions to sit out the upcoming season to focus on social justice issues. Players had advocated to wear the names of black women victimized by police violence on their uniforms. “To subscribe to a particular political agenda undermines the potential of the sport and sends a message of exclusion,” Loeffler wrote, denouncing the Black Lives Matter movement by name. “The truth is, we need less – not more politics in sports.”

When I asked Nneka Ogumike, the Los Angeles Sparks’ six-time All-Star and president of the WNBA players’ union, about Loeffler’s letter, she sighed. She’s been troubled by the sentiments of the league’s most problematic owner and proud of her peers’ responses – Loeffler received near-universal condemnation from league figures, including in a statement co-signed by all 13 Dream players – but disappointed with what she feels is a selective focus on the league. “It’s just interesting how much people pay attention to the WNBA when there’s bad news,” Ogumike said. “It’s annoying, really.”

At a time when athletes have increasingly embraced social activism, Ogumike may bear a more complex responsibility than any other American athlete. As a player, she is the focal point of a perennial title contender, a do-everything power forward with a Rookie of the Year award, Most Valuable Player trophy and WNBA championship on her ledger. In her role as the president of the players’ union, she represents a group of about

150 players that stands at the vanguard of today’s socially conscious sports culture, even as it asserts its own worth in a male-dominated industry. And as the WNBA gets set to tip off its 24th season on Friday in a bubble at IMG Academy in Bradenton, Florida, amid a nationwide reckoning, Ogumike believes that women’s basketball can emerge as the sport best-suited to our challenging times – and that its ascent can be sustained.

It’s easy to draw false insight about character from athletic tendencies, but Ogumike’s game is instructive. She’s observational; her plays often begin with a pause. She sizes up her defender, logging subtleties of foot placement and leverage, and only then goes to work: hammering her defender back with a well-placed shoulder and rising for a jump hook, or pivoting past some misallocated attention for an easy lay-in. Her strategies sync to the demands of the moment. You can watch her for an entire quarter and not be sure which hand is her dominant one.

Ogumike’s approach to leadership is similarly opportunistic. “She has the intelligence, she has the trust of the other players,” Tara VanDerveer, Ogumike’s former coach at Stanford University, said. “She’s going to make decisions not for herself or her own team, but that are in the best interest of the whole league.” Earlier this year, the players’ union and the WNBA ratified a collective-bargaining agreement that signaled a greater investment on the part of ownership than the league has ever known. The maximum salary limit more than doubled, travel accommodations were upgraded, and paid maternity leave was fully guaranteed. WNBA TV ratings had been on a rise in recent seasons, and – following the USA women’s national soccer team’s triumph at the 2019 World Cup and its concurrent battle with US Soccer over equal pay – conversations about fair compensation in women’s sports were in the air. With Ogumike



taking the lead, the WNBPA leveraged the circumstances into a benchmark-setting victory. “We’re really hoping it can set the tone and create that legacy for women in sports moving forward,” Ogumike said when the agreement was announced.

A 2020 season slated to be a celebration has since evolved into something far different. In March, the coronavirus pandemic threw the sports world into disarray; in May, the murder of George Floyd by a Minneapolis police officer set off the largest civil rights movement in recent history. While other US sports leagues scramble to respond with social-justice flavored messaging, though, the WNBA can draw on a deep legacy of activism. The league itself, born two and a half decades after Title IX, is inseparable from efforts toward gender equity, and its players have long numbered among the most outspoken athletes regarding issues such as racism, sexual violence and police brutality. Following the deaths of Philando Castile and Alton Sterling at the hands of the police in 2016, WNBA players wore warm-ups supporting Black Lives Matter, incurring

fines that the league would later rescind. The Seattle Storm has a formal fundraising partnership with Planned Parenthood. The Minnesota Lynx’ Maya Moore – an incandescent scorer, four-time WNBA champion and one of the most decorated players in basketball history – has taken a mid-career sabbatical to focus on criminals justice reform; she recently played a part in freeing Jonathan Irons from prison.

Ogumike is candid in noting the possibilities a summer of upheaval affords women’s basketball. Consumers across categories have lately turned to products aligned with antiracism and the struggle for social justice, and are becoming freshly attuned to the distinction between corporate PR and meaningful work. The WNBA has established more credibility in this field than any other US sports league. Ogumike describes an urgency to the players’ desire to have a season, despite the logistical challenges the pandemic presents. “This moment might actually offer ears that weren’t once turned toward us,” she told me. “This isn’t new to us, but we understand that we may be new to certain people. This is our chance to continue to align with

the people that support us.”

Coming from other figures in sports, such a sentiment would read as cynical. Last month’s mea culpa from NFL commissioner Roger Goodell, in which he said that “we were wrong for not listening to NFL players earlier” about the realities of systemic racism, seemed like nothing so much as attempt to protect the league’s image in an age of heightened scrutiny. Nike’s ongoing sponsorship deal with Colin Kaepernick may confirm the quarterback’s enduring significance, but it also represents a brand’s efforts to burnish itself with the chic signifiers of activism.

But the WNBA offers a rare alignment between its broadcasted politics and core mission. Tapping into new markets, for this league, is not a means of inflating already immense profit margins; it is a matter of asserting the value of the women’s game, of claiming deserved space in the sports landscape.

Even after the new CBA takes effect, the average WNBA salary will be \$130,000, far below even the NBA’s league minimum. Top players make less money stateside than they do playing

in the winter overseas, where appreciation and financial backing for women’s basketball outpace the current American support for the sport. “I’d rather be financially stable here and not have to go play six months overseas in the offseason,” Cloud told CBS News in January. Ogumike hopes that the uptick in awareness brought about by players’ activism can lead to a lasting appreciation for the WNBA game and a more robust promotional infrastructure. Asked what the ideal long-term outcome of this season would be, she answered: “Just simply people paying attention to us, watching our games, and things getting broadcasted.”

These days leading up to the season have been hectic for Ogumike; “I don’t think I’ve ever worked this hard before,” she said. She gets up at 6.30am to eat, stretch and warm up before a practice that runs from 9 until noon. Covid-19 testing now follows, then the gauntlet of hidden maintenance every athlete undergoes: “treatment and rehab and prehab” as she calls it. In the afternoons and evenings, while her teammates watch movies or play video games, Ogumike schedules Zoom calls with the WNBPA’s social justice council, the executive committee and the league office. She fields calls and texts from players throughout the day, from those who have questions about safety protocols to those, including her sister and Sparks teammate Chiney, who has decided to step away from basketball this season.

Some of those demands are common among top athletes. Others – namely, those associated with building and ensuring the ongoing viability of the league – are not. If Ogumike is overworked, she is undeterred. “We no longer see ourselves so much as opponents, except for those 40 minutes on the court, because everyone wants to be healthy and safe, and we want to make this work,” she says. “Our hope is that this isn’t a moment but it is a movement.”

Jones wins overtime NASCAR Xfinity race at Kansas Speedway

KANSAS CITY (US), JUL 26 (AP): Brandon Jones came roaring around the outside of Austin Cindric on the second attempt at a green-white-checkered finish, then won the race to the finish line to win his second consecutive Xfinity Series race at Kansas Speedway.

It was the second win of the season for the 23-year-old Jones, and it kept Cindric from matching Sam Ard’s series record by winning his fourth straight race. Cindric wound up leading 131 of 175 laps in an otherwise dominant performance.

Harrison Burton was third after it appeared he had the win locked up. Burton had a huge lead over Cindric with three laps to go after a long green-flag run, but a caution flag caused everyone to pit. Burton’s team had a much



slower tire change than its Team Penske rival, and that put him playing catch-up on the first attempt overtime.

That attempt was scrapped when a wreck occurred in Turn 1 deep in the field.

Ryan Sieg finished fourth after staying on the track rather than pitting before the overtime

period. Ross Chastain was fifth.

Cindric spent the entire race running near the front, just as he did in sweeping the doubleheader at Kentucky and winning last week at Texas, where Kyle Busch had his car disqualified and that moved him up one spot into first place.

The 21-year-old Cindric

started outside Row 2 but quickly moved around Jones for the lead, and he wound up leading 30 of the 40 laps in winning the stage. Cindric also dominated the second stage, though Jones gave him a run in the closer laps, to secure another playoff point to help him navigate the postseason.

The fourth consecutive 1 1/2-mile track for the Xfinity Series was a challenge all day for Noah Gragson, who was third in points behind a pair of wins but couldn’t get his car right. Gragson wound up finishing 15th.

Chastain and Michael Annett, who started on the pole, had long top-10 streaks in jeopardy when they were running ninth and 10th with 20 laps to go. Chastain ran his streak to 10 and Annett finished eighth to extend his to six.

No cricketer in world is even close to Stokes: Gambhir

NEW DELHI, JUL 26 (PTI): Nobody in world cricket is even close to England all-rounder Ben Stokes, who is “in his own league”, reckons former India opener Gautam Gambhir.

England’s World Cup hero Stokes has been in top form in the ongoing Test series against the West Indies. He scored a magnificent 176 to help England win the second Test.

He has a tally of 313 runs apart from nine wickets in two Tests. “You can’t compare

anyone in India at the moment with Ben Stokes. Absolutely not, because Ben Stokes is in his own league,” Gambhir said.

“What he has done in Test cricket, in one-day cricket, in T20 cricket, I don’t think so there’s anyone, let alone in India, there isn’t anyone who’s even close to him in world cricket at the moment,” he was quoted as saying in Star Sports show ‘Cricket Connected’.

The 38-year-old Gambhir said Stokes is a cricketer whom every

captain would like to have in his team.

“That is the kind of impact player you need in every line-up. It would be a dream for every captain to have someone like Ben Stokes whether he’s batting, whether he’s bowling, whether he’s fielding,” said Gambhir, who played 58 Tests between 2004 and 2016.

Stokes led England in the first Test against the West Indies in the absence of Joe Root, though they lost the series-opener.

Talking about Stokes’



leadership qualities, Gambhir, a BJP Member of Parliament, said, “He’s a leader in his own capacity. You don’t need to be called a captain to be a captain. You can be a leader by your own

performances as well.

“So, I think there are a lot of guys would be actually looking to be like Ben Stokes, but unfortunately, there’s no one at the moment in world cricket.

David Stern added to Women’s Basketball Hall of Fame class

KNOXVILLE (US), JUL 26 (AP): Late NBA Commissioner David Stern has been added to the Women’s Basketball Hall of Fame induction class.

Commissioner of the NBA from 1984-2014, Stern was Instrumental in the founding of the WNBA and a longtime supporter of the women’s game. He died Jan. 1 at age 77 a few weeks after a brain hemorrhage.

The enshrinement of the Class of 2020 has been postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic until next year. The ceremony will be held on June 12, 2021.

Joining Stern in the class that was selected by the Women’s Basketball



Hall of Fame Board of Directors are Tamika Catchings, Swin Cash and Lauren Jackson. The other members of the class are veteran player Debbie Brock and contributors Carol Callan, Sue Donohoe and Carol Stiff.

The 1980 US Olympic women’s basketball team,

which did not get to compete in the Olympics because of the US boycott of the Moscow Games, also will be honoured as the Trailblazers of the Game.

Stern previously was inducted into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame and the International Basketball Hall of Fame.

WRITE US:

Readers are invited to comment on, criticise, run down, even appreciate if they like something in this paper. Letters carrying abusive/ indecorous language and personal attacks, except when against people responsible in this newspaper (who are fair game), will have to be ignored. Letters which carry forward a conversation or initiate a dialogue will command immediate attention and receive prominence. Mail us at: news@summittimes.com

2020's 1st Atlantic hurricane lashes Texas; floods expected

CORPUS CHRISTI, JUL 26 (AP): Hurricane Hanna roared ashore onto the Texas Gulf Coast on Saturday, bringing winds that lashed the shoreline with rain and storm surge, and even threatening to bring possible tornadoes to a part of the country trying to cope with a spike in coronavirus cases.

The first hurricane of the 2020 Atlantic hurricane season made landfall twice as a Category 1 storm on Saturday afternoon within the span of little over an hour.

The first landfall happened at around 5 p.m. about 15 miles (24 kilometers) north of Port Mansfield, which is about 130 miles (209 km) south of Corpus Christi.

The second landfall took place nearby in eastern Kennedy County. Hanna had come ashore with maximum sustained winds of 90 mph (145 kph). As of Saturday night, those winds had weakened to 75 mph (120 kph).

Many parts of Texas, including areas near where Hanna came ashore, have been dealing with a surge in coronavirus cases in recent weeks, but local officials said they were prepared for whatever the storm might bring.

Chris Birchfield, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Brownsville, said residents needed to remain alert. While Hanna's winds were expected to weaken throughout Saturday

night, the storm's real threat remained heavy rainfall, he said.

We're not even close to over at this point. We're still expecting catastrophic flooding, Birchfield said.

Forecasters said Hanna could bring 6 to 12 inches (15 to 30 centimeters) of rain through Sunday night with isolated totals of 18 inches (46 centimeters) in addition to coastal swells that could cause life-threatening surf and rip current conditions.

Some areas in South Texas had reported receiving up to 9 inches (23 centimeters) of rain, including Cameron County, which borders Mexico and where Brownsville is located. Rainfall totals were expected to rise throughout the evening and into Sunday.

It's been all day, Melissa Elizardi, a spokeswoman for Cameron County Judge Eddie Trevi o, said of the rainfall.

In a tweet, President Donald Trump said his administration was monitoring Hanna, along with Hurricane Douglas, which was heading toward Hawaii in the Pacific Ocean.

Sherry Boehme, who lives in a condo along the beach in Corpus Christi, said the storm's approach had increased the anxiety she has felt during the pandemic. The 67-year-old has mostly stayed at home because of health issues related to chronic lung disease.



It's almost like a double whammy to us, Boehme said Saturday by phone.

I think it's made a lot of people nervous....We'll get through it. Everybody is good and strong and sticks together. Hanna came nearly three years after Hurricane Harvey made landfall northeast of Corpus Christi. Hanna was not expected to be as destructive as Harvey, which killed 68 people and caused an estimated 125 billion in damage in Texas.

First responders in Corpus Christi proactively placed barricades near intersections to have them ready to go if streets began to flood, Mayor Joe McComb said. More than 43,700 people throughout South Texas, including Corpus Christi, Harlingen and Brownsville, were without power Saturday evening, according to

AEP Texas.

Corpus Christi is in Nueces County, where health officials made headlines when they revealed that 60 infants tested positive for COVID-19 from July 1 to July 16.

Farther south in Cameron County, more than 300 confirmed new cases have been reported almost daily for the past two weeks, according to state health figures. The past week has also been the county's deadliest of the pandemic.

Coastal states scrambled this spring to adjust emergency hurricane plans to account for the virus, and Hanna loomed as the first big test.

South Texas officials' plans for any possible rescues, shelters and monitoring of the storm will have the pandemic in mind and incorporate social distancing guidelines and mask

wearing.

Gov. Greg Abbott said Saturday that some sheltering would take place in hotel rooms so people could be separated.

We cannot allow this hurricane to lead to a more catastrophically deadly event by stoking additional spread of COVID-19 that could lead to fatalities," Abbott said.

Cameron County planned to open at least three evacuation shelters. Other counties and cities throughout South Texas had also opened shelters, with many requiring face masks.

Various resources and personnel to respond to the storm were on standby across the state, including search-and-rescue teams and aircraft. Mobile teams that can continue testing for COVID-19 were also being deployed.

Abbott said he

has issued a disaster declaration for 32 counties in Texas and had asked the federal government to approve a similar declaration.

Tornadoes were also possible overnight Saturday for parts of the lower to middle Texas coastal plain, forecasters said. A hurricane warning was in effect for Port Mansfield to Baffin Bay, south of Corpus Christi, and a tropical storm warning was in effect from Port Mansfield south to Barra el Mezquital, Mexico, and from Baffin Bay north to Port O'Connor.

Mexico's northeasternmost states, coastal Tamaulipas and Nuevo Leon just to its west, also took precautions ahead of the storm's arrival. Tamaulipas disinfected shelters to try to avoid spreading COVID-19, the state's governor, Francisco Cabeza de Vaca, tweeted.

North Korea declares emergency in border town over first suspected COVID-19 case

SEOUL, 26 JUL: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un declared an emergency and a lockdown in a border town after a person suspected of being infected with the novel coronavirus returned from South Korea after illegally crossing the border, state media said on Sunday.

If confirmed, it would be the first case officially acknowledged by North Korean authorities.

Kim convened an emergency politburo meeting in response to what he called a "critical situation in which the vicious virus could be said to have entered the country", the North's KCNA state news reported.

A person who defected to South Korea three years ago returned across the fortified border that divides the two Koreas to the town of Kaesong this month with symptoms of COVID-19, the disease caused by the virus, KCNA reported.

"An emergency event happened in Kaesong City where a runaway who went to the south three years ago, a person who is suspected to have been infected with the vicious virus returned on July 19 after illegally crossing the demarcation line," KCNA said.

KCNA did not say if the person had been tested, but said an "uncertain result was made from several medical check-ups of the secretion of that person's upper respiratory organ and blood", prompting officials to quarantine the person and investigate anyone he may have been in contact with.

One analyst said the announcement was important, not only because North Korea was for the first time reporting a suspected coronavirus case but also because it suggested it was appealing for help.

"It's an ice-breaking moment for North Korea to admit a case,"

said Choo Jae-woo, a professor at Kyung Hee University.

"It could be reaching out to the world for help. Perhaps for humanitarian assistance."

North Korea is under economic pressure because of international sanctions over its nuclear programme.

'DIRE SITUATION' Cho Han-bum, a senior fellow at the Korea Institute for National Unification in Seoul, said it was significant that North Korea was reporting its first suspected coronavirus case was imported.

"North Korea is in such a dire situation, where they can't even finish building the Pyongyang General Hospital on time. Pointing the blame at an 'imported case' from South Korea, the North can use this as a way to openly accept aid from the South," Cho said.

KCNA did not elaborate on how the unidentified "runaway" had crossed one of the world's most heavily guarded borders but said the incident was being investigated and the military unit responsible would face "severe punishment".

The South's Joint Chiefs of Staffs (JCS) said there was a "high chance" that someone had indeed crossed and the military was checking surveillance footage. It even suggested it might be able to identify the person.

"Our military has specified some people and is verifying facts in close collaboration with related agencies," the JCS said.

North Korea has received thousands of coronavirus testing kits from Russia and other countries and imposed strict border closures.

Thousands of people in North Korea were also quarantined as it took precautions to prevent a coronavirus outbreak but restrictions had recently been eased.

S Africa highlights plans for economic growth post COVID-19

JOHANNESBURG, JUL 26 (PTI): South Africa's Trade and Industry Minister Ebrahim Patel has highlighted a slew of measures to grow jobs and production in critical industries post the COVID-19 pandemic, which has ravaged the economy.

Patel, while presenting his department's budget vote in Parliament, outlined the actions taken to protect the key sectors.

Together with the leaders of business and labour, we have forged consensus on the masterplans in four sectors - auto production, clothing and textiles, poultry, and sugar, Patel told Parliament on Friday.

From July last year, the South African Revenue Services has seized 550 shipping containers of illegally-imported and undervalued clothing and footwear, to protect local industries and entrepreneurs, he said.

In February this year, we increased tariff protection for poultry farmers against unfair foreign competition, protecting the local industry and local jobs, Patel said.

In March, local

retailers committed to buy 80 per cent of their sugar locally over the next year, growing further in future years, whilst local farmers and millers agreed to price restraint in this period, the minister said, adding that the automotive industry in the country has performed exceptionally well.

We reached a new record of almost 390,000 locally-made cars that we exported to the rest of the world. Thousands of jobs were sustained in the making of those cars in factories in Uitenhage, Nelson Mandela Bay, eThekweni, Buffalo City and Pretoria, he said.

An agreement has been reached with the UK to maintain access for South African products in its market after Brexit and the country has also worked hard to build the African Continental Free Trade Area as the foundation for a long-term growth, the minister said.

South Africa is well-positioned to become a major supplier of industrial goods and value-added services to the continent, he said.

Patel said that COVID-19 has exposed

the fragility in the global economy.

To prepare for the post-COVID world, we will strengthen efforts around reconstruction and recovery, including broader pacts with workers and businesses, focused on saving many firms and jobs; identifying new opportunities; embracing digital technologies to recover and change; and addressing economic inclusion with greater urgency, he said.

The quest for competitiveness must be balanced with the need to nurture economic resilience, the ability of economies to respond to risks that an open and integrated world present; be they to digital systems, or from climate change, or to food security or the spillover of trade wars raging elsewhere, or indeed from pandemics, Patel said.

History suggests that from the greatest human crises, the greatest human advances can be made.

So, in the darkest hour, we must prepare for a brighter future at the heart of which must lie a new economy fit for future purpose, fair and just, sustainable and resilient so that future shocks can be absorbed, the minister added.

Afghanistan writes to UNSC over 'violations' of its territory by Pak forces

UNITED NATIONS, JUL 26 (PTI): Afghanistan has written to the UN Security Council over continued violations of its territory by Pakistani military forces and said it will ask the 15-nation UN body to take necessary measures and actions to end them if the situation is not de-escalated bilaterally.

Afghanistan's Permanent Representative to the UN Adela Raz wrote to the President of the Security Council, Germany, to report on the most recent violations of the Afghan territory by Pakistan's military forces and said the incursion "represents a reiteration of violations as Kabul had previously expressed its concerns to the Security Council in February and August 2019.

Raz said in the letter that on July 15, Pakistan military forces began unprovoked artillery attacks against Afghan border posts and civilian residential areas in the Sarakano and Asad Abad districts of Kunar Province.

The attacks included 12 heavy artillery strikes targeting Asad Abad district and more than 160 artillery rounds fired at Sarakano district. In addition to four casualties among members of the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces, the attacks claimed the lives of six civilians, including two women, and eight injuries and resulted in significant damage to civilian property.

DONATE BOOKS FOR NOBLE CAUSE
TO BUILD LIBRARY

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

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

For more Details Contact ; 6294745117,8768809862

Email ; chitishchettri7@gmail.com

SummitTIMES

Amitabh Bachchan on how COVID-19 takes toll on patient's mental health

MUMBAI, JUL 26 (PTI): Megastar Amitabh Bachchan, who is undergoing treatment for coronavirus at a hospital here, has opened up about the mental health struggles COVID-19 patients face under isolation in order to curb the spread of the disease.

The 77-year-old actor and his son, actor Abhishek Bachchan were admitted to the isolation ward of Nanavati Hospital on July 11 after they tested positive for the virus.

In his blog on Saturday, Amitabh said the mental condition brought upon by the disease takes a toll on the patient as one is kept away from human contact.

"The mental state sparks from the stark reality that the COVID patient, put in hospitalised isolation, never gets to see another human for weeks. There are the nurses and the doctors on visit and medicine care but they ever appear in PPE units," the screen icon wrote.

He said one doesn't get to know the faces behind the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) as the healthcare workers take extreme precautions and deliver "what is prescribed and leave".

"Leave because longer stay has the fear of contamination. The doctor



under whose guidance the care and mapping and reports are governed by, never ever comes near you to give a hand of assurance, a personal detail of the treatment in the close proximity of an assurance."

The communication is virtual, Amitabh said, which is the best way under the current situation, but is still "impersonal".

The actor, who occasionally updates his fans on social media about his health, said the stigma of having been COVID-19 positive is something which a patient may wrestle with once the institutional isolation is over.

"Does it have an effect psychologically mentally?

Psychologists say it does. Patients after release are tempered, they are given to consultation with professional mind talkers.

"They are afraid to be in public for fear or apprehension of being treated differently, treated as one that has carried the disease, a pariah syndrome. Driving them into deeper depression and in the loneliness that they have just come out of," he noted.

Highlighting his own state, Amitabh wrote he sings to keep himself entertained in the loneliness.

"In the darkness of the night and the shiver of the cold room, I sing .. eyes shut in attempted sleep .. there is no one about or around .. and

the freedom to be able to do that will extend I know if in the Will of the Almighty there is release," he said.

On Thursday, the Bollywood veteran dismissed reports that he has tested negative for coronavirus and called the piece of news "an incorrigible lie".

Amitabh's daughter-in-law, actor Aishwarya Rai Bachchan, 46, and his eight-year-old granddaughter Aaradhya Bachchan also tested positive for COVID-19 and were shifted to Nanavati last week.

The tally of coronavirus cases in Maharashtra rose to 3,66,368 with 9,251 new patients being reported on Saturday, according to State Health department.

Zack Snyder says his 'Justice League' version will not have single shot from Joss Whedon

LOS ANGELES, JUL 26 (PTI): Filmmaker Zack Snyder has made it clear that his version of 2018 superhero movie "Justice League" will completely be his own work.

Warner Bros had recently announced that the original version of the movie, dubbed Snyder-cut by the DC Comics fans and filmed by the filmmaker prior to his departure, will debut on HBO Max in 2021.

During JusticeCon's "Spotlight on Zack Snyder" panel on Saturday, the filmmaker shared a new footage of Henry Cavill's Superman in a black suit.

He stressed that the movie will comprise of all the footage he filmed before his exit and will not feature a single shot from his successor Joss Whedon.

"There will be no chance on earth that I will use a shot prior or after I left the movie. I would destroy the movie, I would set it on fire before I would use a



single frame that I did not photograph. That is a f***ing hard fact," Snyder said.

"I literally would blow that thing up, if I thought for a second Anything you see in this movie that reminds you of the theatrical release, which again, famously, I literally have never seen, would be because that was a thing that I had done, and was being borrowed for

whatever, that Frankenstein's monster that you got in the theatre," he added.

"Justice League" featured an ensemble cast of Ben Affleck as Batman, Gal Gadot as Wonder Woman, Jason Momoa as Aquaman, Ezra Miller as The Flash and Ray Fisher as Cyborg.

Snyder, who had previously helmed "Man of Steel" and "Batman v Superman: Dawn of Justice", had left "Justice League" during the post-production due to a family tragedy.

The studio had then roped in Whedon, best known for Marvel tentpole "The Avengers" and its follow-up "Avengers: Age of Ultron", to oversee the post-production as well as the film's reshoots.

However, many people believe that Whedon had toned down the film, making it totally different from the one envisioned by Snyder. The film ultimately went on to perform moderately at the box office.

Justin Bieber visits Kanye West in Wyoming as rapper avoids wife

Justin Bieber is the latest celeb to fly out to Wyoming in a show of support for Kanye West.

The "Sorry" singer paid a visit to pal Kanye West's ranch — aka, the ZYY campus — in the landlocked state Friday, with West sharing a photo of the Biebs seated beside Damon Dash as they waxed poetic over the latest ZYY innovation.

"DD & JB discussing the new spray foam wall prototypes on the ZYY campus," West tweeted.

The two artists have developed a close bond over the years, largely supported by their shared faith, as the singer, 26, previously appeared with West, 43, during his "Sunday

Service" run last year. Dash has also voiced his support for West, whom wife Kim Kardashian claims is currently suffering from a bipolar episode.

"People who are unaware or far removed from this experience can be judgmental and not understand that the individual themselves have to engage in the process of getting help no matter how hard family and friends try," she claimed in a lengthy statement defending her husband.

Unfortunately, West is "refusing" to see his wife, dismissing her suggestion to fly to Wyoming to be with him. He also isn't receptive to even discussing his current mental state with Kardashian, TMZ reports.



50 AND FIT! Actor Matthew McConaughey showed off his buff body on a beach in Hawaii.

Shooting of 'Killing Eve' season 4 delayed indefinitely

LOS ANGELES, JUL 26 (PTI): The filming on the fourth season of thriller drama "Killing Eve" has been suspended till further notice in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic.

The BBC America show was scheduled to be shot in Europe but the lingering uncertainty due to the COVID-19 outbreak has led to the postponement without a clear return date.

Jodie Comer plays Villanelle to Sandra Oh's titular character of MI5 Agent Eve Polastri on the show, which is based on the "Codename Villanelle" novellas by Luke Jennings.

The third season premiered in April.

"'Killing Eve' shoots across multiple European locations. Due to the uncertainty of the world as a result of Covid-19, no shooting schedules for 'Killing Eve' season four have been locked in at this point and there are various scenarios in play," a spokesman for the show said in a statement to Deadline.

Sid Gentle Films, the banner behind "Killing Eve", was originally aiming to start production on the acclaimed and award-winning drama in August.

The makers are keeping mum about where the forthcoming season will take the characters, with past locations having been

Amsterdam, Barcelona, Bucharest and Tuscany.

It was also rumoured that US-based Oh has been reluctant to fly into Europe to begin shooting, but this was downplayed by a show insider.

The delay in production will most likely push back the premiere date of the show to 2021.

"Killing Eve" has been in the headlines in recent weeks after writer Kayleigh Llewellyn tweeted a picture of the show's all-white writers' room, sparking a conversation of show's lack of diversity on social media.

Oh too talked about her experiences of working in the UK entertainment industry.

ARIES:

Given that change is the only constant, where is your resistance to the transformation process stemming from? It will be easy for you to play the victim card, to blame your circumstances for what's going wrong. But the truth is, for everything that's being taken away from you, there are a dozen opportunities that are being presented to you. It all comes down to perspective.

TAURUS:

Sibling rivalry could take an ugly turn this week with land and property-related matters coming to the surface. When you're caught up in a personal battle, the only question you want to ask yourself is, 'Do I want to give into the ego or tune into my higher self?' You know better than to jeopardise a relationship that's this sacred. As such, unhealthy competition is a theme you could be dealing with at this time. There's more than enough to go around, Taurus. So don't try to hold on to something that isn't yours.

GEMINI:

You can't fix anybody. Let go of the need to. Everybody is on a personal journey, Gemini. What you can do is hold space for them to find the truth when they're ready to. There's nothing quite like direct experience, is there? Some of you could be feeling like you've signed up for more responsibilities than you can handle, and that's okay. Ask for help where you need to and cosmic intelligence will help you find a way.

CANCER:

Forgive the lover who reopened your wounds instead of activating the portal of divine union. Forgive the friend who didn't love you in the way you wanted to be loved by them. Forgive the child who didn't honour all the battles you fought for them. Forgive the parent who was absent when you needed them to protect you from the darkness and the demons. Forgive yourself for all the times you didn't live up to your expectations. Forgive.

LEO:

There are times we try every trick in the book to no avail, and then there are times the Universe grants us the master key that helps access all the doors that were once locked. The latter holds true for where you are, Leo. So, close your eyes, tune into your heart, and express gratitude. You're being looked after by the mysterious forces above. As such, your soul family is also showing up for you in a whole new way. Their love and support could be instrumental in helping you move to the next level.

VIRGO:

While we cannot control the cards dealt to us by destiny, we can determine our response to it. Instead of receding into the victim space, rise above. Open your eyes to what the Universe is pointing you towards. You will realise your circumstances are neither inherently good or bad. They simply are. Face the soul lessons with dignity and poise, Virgo, and know that in doing so, you're freeing yourself from past karma.

LIBRA:

There's only so much you can pour from an empty cup. But, you didn't need us to tell you this, did you? The cards are reminding you to stop giving other people access to your energy so freely and set boundaries wherever necessary. 'No' is a complete sentence, Libra. Some of you may find that miscommunication is a big issue for you right now. But you can't expect those around you to possess telepathic powers or to know that something's wrong when you insist nothing is. Speak your truth with clarity and know that you have the ability to resolve the given situation.

SCORPIO:

Solitude is not the same as loneliness, Scorpio. It's a beautiful space that helps you come home to yourself, find peace in your own company, and strengthen your connection with the divine forces. 'Mauna' or silence is another powerful practice, one that helps us become an observer of our thoughts instead of engaging with the chatter of the monkey mind. Today, you're being encouraged to take a break from the outside world, switch off your gadgets, and retreat into the inner landscape.

SAGITTARIUS:

Cosmic truth: there are not enough hours in a day to learn all things you want to. The weekend sees you indulging your curious mind and setting time aside for both study and practice. You love all the ways in which this newfound knowledge is holding space for you to grow and look at the world with a fresh perspective. Connecting with your

spiritual side is also going to be a big theme. Consider the art of meditation, if you haven't already. Remember, the aim is to move beyond the mind and experience that wonderful spaciousness when time and space cease to exist.

CAPRICORN:

Are you in alignment with your sacred purpose or are you living somebody else's version of the truth? This is a major wake up call, Capricorn, one that's urging you to do away with the false belief systems. Remember, you cannot make somebody else happy if you're unhappy yourself. This includes your partner and your parents.

AQUARIUS:

We can talk about money and success all we want, but the truth is, it's the simple stuff that really matters. Love, happiness, and freedom make our lives worth living. Without them, the bling would be meaningless. Today, you're being encouraged to engage in the things that bring a smile to your face and awaken a song in your soul. Know that this is what the Universe wants you to experience in abundance.

PISCES:

While the plan you have devised is genius, it may or may not be financially viable. No drastic moves or big risks, Pisces. The Universe wants you to think things through. Take your time before you commit to anything that could add to the worry. Those who are employed could be dealing with losses or a pay cut at this point. It's best to stick to budget at this point until you're able to figure out an alternate source of income.