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# SummitTIMES

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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## With 58 fresh cases, Sikkim goes past 1900 COVID-19 detections

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 05 SEPT:**

Sikkim's tally of confirmed cases of COVID-19 breached the 1,900 mark on Saturday with 58 fresh cases being detected in the 24 hours ending 8 AM Saturday. The State has thus far registered 1,901 cases, 549 of which are active cases. With 18 more people making full recoveries and getting discharged from isolation wards on Friday, Sikkim now has 549 active cases. Thus far, 1,347 have beaten the virus while five COVID-19 patients have succumbed to the disease.

In the daily health bulletin on Saturday night, Health Department State IEC Officer, Sonam G Bhutia informed that 54 samples returned positive in RT-PCR testing of 313 samples at the VRD Lab of STNM hospital. He added that one of 21 samples tested by TrueNat was found positive, while three persons were found positive for COVID-19 in rapid antigen testing of 19 samples.

While providing details of the 54 cases detected in RT-PCR testing, Mr Bhutia informed that three cases were reported

from the D2 government quarter in Shyari, six from Sichey area, one each from below West Point SSS in Tathangchen, Zero Point in Ranka, Upper Burtuk and Kazi Road.

He mentioned that 17 new cases were detected in Arithang, of whom nine were primary contacts from a containment zone. Four primary contacts from a medicine shop in Lal Bazaar tested positive while three from below AIR quarters and one from near CS Rai Secondary School were also found positive in Arithang.

Likewise, one person from 3rd Mile, JN Road, two staff members of STNM Hospital who were already in the quarantine, one police personnel, one from the containment zone in Lal Bazaar, one from Gupta Tea House in MG Marg, one from Singtam, nine from Farmers' Hostel, six from containment zone near Greendale School, two GREF personnel from Dikchu currently in quarantine were reported positive for COVID-19 in RT-PCR testing.

Mr Bhutia mentioned that one person

from Rangpo Bazaar was found positive for COVID-19 in TrueNat testing, while a person from 5th Mile Tadong and one from Saureni, Assam Lingzey, was found positive at Central Referral Hospital, Tadong and one person from Shanti Nagar, Singtam at Singtam District Hospital tested positive in the rapid antigen testing.

In the meantime, eight patients from STNM hospital, two from Paljor Stadium and eight from ITBP Ray were discharged on Friday after making full recoveries.

## Two from Sikkim receive National Award of Teachers

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 05 SEPT:**

A one-day program to felicitate all 47 recipients of the National Award of Teachers, 2020 was held at their respective district NIC centres across India today, a press release informs.

Every year, National Awards to teachers are given on the 5th of September at New Delhi on the occasion of Teacher's Day. However due to the ongoing corona pandemic the event for this year was conducted through Video conferencing.

The program started at 11.00am and was chaired by President of India, Ram Nath Kovind. The event was also graced by Union Minister of Education, Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank', and Union Minister of state for Education, Sanjay Dhotre along with various officials from Ministry of Education, Govt of India.

The state awardee, Archana Gurung attended the event from NIC centre Namchi while Lomas Dhungel attended from NIC Headquarters Gangtok. The event also saw the presence of Ragul K (DC South) and



AD Chettri (Joint Director East) at their respective districts.

Archana Gurung, who started her career as PGT English in 1996 and is presently serving as the Principal of Govt Sr Sec School Jorethang (South Sikkim), was awarded for her exemplary contributions to school management and other activities.

Lomas Dhungel, who started his career as GT (Maths) in 2012 and presently posted at Govt Sr Sec Secondary Makha (East Sikkim) was awarded for his innovative ideas in teaching mathematics and his socio-environmental project Hariyo Makha - Sikkim Against Pollution.

The president acknowledged the contributions made by the awardees in their field of education and congratulated them on their achievements.

## Biggest one-day spike of 182 COVID-19 cases in Meghalaya pushes tally to 2,916

**SHILLONG, SEP 5 (PTI):** Meghalaya registered its highest single-day spike of 182 COVID-19 cases on Saturday, which pushed the tally in the northeastern state to 2,916, a health department official said.

Of the new cases, 121 were reported from East Khasi Hills district, 31 from Ri-Bhoi, 15 from East Garo, 12 from West Garo, two from North Garo and one from West Khasi hills districts, Health Services Director Aman War said.

"Fifteen health workers and five armed forces personnel from East Khasi Hills district are among new patients," he said.

The death toll rose to

15 in the state after a 65-year-old man from West Khasi Hills district succumbed to the infection, War said.

"The man was brought to the Civil Hospital in Mairang with respiratory problems and diagnosed with the coronavirus infection. He was taken to a COVID hospital here but the patient died on the way," War said.

During the day, 59 patients were cured of the diseases, taking the number of recoveries in the state to 1,527, War said. Meghalaya has 1,374 active COVID-19 cases at present.

A total of 97, 550 samples have been tested for COVID-19 so far, the official added.

## Delhi's air quality drops to 'moderate' category



**NEW DELHI, SEP 5 (PTI):** After oscillating between the "good" and "satisfactory" categories for one-and-a-half-month, the national capital's air quality dropped to the "moderate" category on Saturday.

Experts attributed it to lack of favourable wind speed and rains over the last few days.

The city recorded a 24-hour average air quality index (AQI) of 101. The last time Delhi recorded its AQI (124) in the moderate category was on July 15.

AQI between 0 and 50 is considered safe, 51-100 satisfactory, 101-200 moderate, 201-300 poor. At 301-400, it is considered very poor and 401-500 falls in the severe category. The above 500 is severe as well as the

emergency category.

A Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) official said the air quality deteriorated slightly due to lack of rains and favourable wind speed. However, rains on Saturday evening will lead to some improvement.

On August 31, it recorded a 24-hour average AQI of 41, which was the lowest since the CPCB started maintaining air quality records in 2015.

It was the fifth "good" day in terms of air quality this year.

AQI values were 45, 50, 50 and 45 on March 28, August 13, August 20 and August 24, respectively.

The AQI value remained between 50 and 70 on most days in August.

## Edu Dept celebrates Teacher's Day



**GANGTOK, 05 SEPT [IPR]:** A brief programme to commemorate the Teacher's Day, 2020 was organised in a simple manner at the Conference Hall of the Education Department today. The event was graced by Minister for Education, Kunga Nima Lepcha in the presence of Advisor, MP Subba, Education Department, Additional Chief Secretary, GP Upadhyaya, Secretary, Anil Raj Rai along with all Directors and Additional Directors.

The ACS, GP Upadhyaya welcomed the guests and officers present. While highlighting the importance of the Teacher's Day, he acknowledged the contribution of the teachers in shaping the lives of thousands of students.

He also mentioned that out of 45 total awardees in India this year, 02 are from Sikkim to get the National Award for Teachers. Medals and certificates have been mailed from Delhi and the Department is contemplating a programme at the Raj Bhawan to felicitate national and state awardees.

He further mentioned that the Government has conferred the State Teachers' Awards upon 8 teachers

and Commendation Awards to 15 teachers this year. The Department has congratulated them for their earnest works and achievement.

Advisor, MP Subba while addressing the gathering, stated that the ideals of Dr Radhakrishnan require to be disseminated by the senior level officers. He urged to ensure whether we are reaching out to the teachers to really acknowledge their achievement.

He also mentioned that we all need to ponder this factor and ensure reaching out to the teachers. Recognising, acknowledging and understanding each other and their profession is important. A creative, congenial, vibrant and professional environment is the call of the day and we need to ensure teaching profession as a respected and well sought for.

Speaking on the occasion, the Minister KN Lepcha expressed his happiness that despite many protocols to be observed, a small but well-planned programme was organised. He mentioned that the respect towards teachers in the earlier days really encouraged

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## India takes 13 days to cross 40 lakh COVID-19 cases from 30 lakh; record 86,432 infections reported in a day

**NEW DELHI, SEP 5 (PTI):** India's COVID-19 infection tally sprinted past 40 lakh, just 13 days after it crossed 30 lakh, with a record 86,432 cases being reported in a day, while recoveries have surged to 31,07,223 on Saturday pushing the recovery rate to 77.23 per cent, according to the Union Health Ministry.

The total coronavirus cases mounted to 40,23,179, while the death toll climbed to 69,561 with 1,089 people succumbing to the disease in a span of 24 hours, data updated at 8 am showed. India's COVID-19 cases jumped from 10 lakh to 20 lakh in 21 days. It took 16 more days to race past 30 lakh and 13 days more to cross the 40-lakh mark.

It took 110 days for the COVID-19 cases in the country to reach one lakh while it had taken 59 days more to go

past the 10-lakh post.

The COVID-19 case fatality rate due to the novel coronavirus infection has further declined to 1.73 per cent.

There are 8,46,395 active cases of coronavirus infection, which is 21.04 per cent of the total caseload, the data stated.

India's COVID-19 tally had crossed the 20-lakh mark on August 7 and went past 30 lakh on August 23.

According to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), a cumulative total of 4,77,38,491 samples have been tested up to September 4 with 10,59,346 samples being tested on Friday.

Of the 1,089 fresh deaths, 378 are from Maharashtra, 116 from Karnataka, 79 from Tamil Nadu, 76 from Andhra Pradesh, 71 from Uttar Pradesh, 58

from West Bengal, 49 from Punjab, 30 from Madhya Pradesh, 29 from Bihar, 22 from Chhattisgarh, 20 from Puducherry, 19 from Haryana, 15 from Assam, 14 from Gujarat, 13 each from Delhi and Rajasthan.

Twelve fatalities each have been reported from Jammu and Kashmir and Uttarakhand, 11 each from Kerala and Telangana, nine from Odisha, eight from Goa, seven from Tripura, five from Chandigarh, three each from Jharkhand and Manipur, two from Himachal Pradesh while Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Meghalaya, Sikkim and Nagaland have registered one fatality each.

Of the total 69,561 deaths, Maharashtra has reported the maximum at 25,964, followed by 7,687 in Tamil Nadu, 6,170 in Karnataka, 4,513 in

Delhi, 4,276 in Andhra Pradesh, 3,762 in Uttar Pradesh, 3,452 in West Bengal, 3,076 in Gujarat and 1,739 in Punjab.

So far, 1,513 people have died of COVID-19 in Madhya Pradesh, 1,108 in Rajasthan, 877 in Telangana, 759 in Haryana, 755 in Jammu and Kashmir, 701 in Bihar, 531 in Odisha, 447 in Jharkhand, 345 in Assam, 337 in Chhattisgarh, 326 in Kerala and 312 in Uttarakhand.

Puducherry has registered 280 fatalities, Goa 220, Tripura 136, Chandigarh 68, Himachal Pradesh 50, Andaman and Nicobar Islands 49, Ladakh and Manipur 35 each, Meghalaya 14, Nagaland 10, Arunachal Pradesh seven, Sikkim five and Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu two.

**turn to pg 02**



*Hyundai now says recalled vehicles should be parked outside*

**DETROIT (US), SEPT 5 (AP):** Hyundai has reversed itself on a recall to fix a defect that could cause engine fires and is now telling owners of more than 200,000 vehicles to park them outdoors until repairs are made.

The company, along with affiliated South Korean automaker Kia, on Thursday said they were recalling over 600,000 vehicles in the US and Canada to fix a brake fluid leak that could cause the fires. Hyundai initially said it was OK for its vehicles to be parked indoors.

The recalls cover 203,000 Hyundai Santa Fe SUVs from 2013 to 2015. Also included are over 440,000 Kia Optima midsize sedans from 2013 through 2015 and Kia Sorento SUVs from 2014 and 2015.

Hyundai spokesman Michael Stewart said the company's North America safety team met on Friday and decided that the Santa Fes should not be parked in garages.

After further review, it was determined that out of an abundance of caution, customers should park the vehicles outside until the recall is completed, Stewart said.

The recalls cover 203,000 Hyundai Santa Fe SUVs from 2013 to 2015. Also included are over 440,000 Kia Optima midsize sedans from 2013 through 2015 and Kia Sorento SUVs from 2014 and 2015.

A message was left Friday seeking comment from Kia on whether it also recommends the vehicles be parked outside.

The automakers said in paperwork released on Thursday by US safety regulators that brake fluid can leak inside a hydraulic control unit for the anti-lock brakes, possibly causing an electrical short that can lead to fires. Kia's recall will start on October 15, while Hyundai's will start October 23.

Dealers for both companies will inspect the control units for leaks and replace them if needed at no cost to owners.

In company documents posted on Thursday by US safety regulators, Hyundai said it had 15 reports of engine fires caused by the fluid leaks, while Kia said it had eight. Hyundai said it's not aware of any injuries, and Kia said it had none.

Hyundai said earlier that if the anti-lock brake warning light comes on, owners should not drive their vehicles and should contact a dealer. If there's a warning light, owners also should disconnect the 12-volt battery by removing the positive cable, the company said.

Hyundai documents said the company received its first complaint about an engine fire in a 2014 Santa Fe in April of 2018, and it started an investigation. Kia began investigating after getting a complaint of a melted control unit in a 2015 Sorento last February.

The recalls are the latest in a series of engine fire problems that have plagued the two automakers and have touched off investigations by the US National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

## No. of COVID-19 recoveries crosses 31L in India, case fatality rate drops to 1.73 pc

**NEW DELHI, SEPT 5 (PTI):**

With a record 70,072 patients recuperating from COVID-19 in a span of 24 hours, the total number of such recoveries surged to 31,07,223 in the country, pushing the recovery rate to 77.23 per cent, the health ministry said on Saturday, while underlining that the "test, track and treat" strategy is showing tangible results.

The COVID-19 case fatality rate has further dropped to 1.73 per cent, it added.

Five states account for 60 per cent of the recoveries. Maharashtra accounts for almost 21 per cent, followed by Tamil Nadu (12.63 per cent), Andhra Pradesh (11.91 per cent), Karnataka (8.82 per cent) and Uttar Pradesh (6.14 per cent), the ministry said.



"The highest ever single-day recoveries of 70,072 were recorded in 24 hours. With this high number of COVID-19 patients recovering and being discharged from hospitals and home isolation, the recovery rate is now 77.23 per cent.

This has also led to the declining case fatality rate, which stands at a new low of 1.73 per cent as on date," it said.

Early identification through testing has led to a higher daily number being reported, but surveillance and con-

tact-tracing, along with a focus on a timely and appropriate clinical treatment of patients, have ensured a speedy recovery, the ministry said.

"The higher number of recoveries and the declining fatality rate have shown that India's grad-

ed strategy has worked," it underscored.

A total of 4,77,38,491 samples were tested for COVID-19 up to September 4, including 10,59,346 on Friday, the ministry said.

The country has posted more than 22.6 lakh recoveries than the number of active coronavirus cases currently, it pointed out.

There are 8,46,395 active COVID-19 cases in the country currently, which account for 21.04 per cent of its total case-load, the ministry's data updated at 8 am stated.

India's COVID-19 tally mounted to 40,23,179 with a record 86,432 cases reported in a day, while the death toll due to the disease climbed to 69,561 with 1,089 people succumbing to it in a span of 24 hours, the data showed.

## SGSS sanitizes Shantinagar



**SUMMIT REPORT**

**SINGTAM, 05 SEPT:**

A sanitization program was conducted today at different places of Shantinagar, a press release informs.

The sanitation program was led by president, Krishna Chhetri, Shantinagar Gaon Sudhar Samiti and volunteer Amber Pradhan. The areas covered included ATTC hostel along the lower belt till the church, touching all the stairways that are used by people to cross the walkway or the highway above.

In upper Shantinagar, sanitization was done from ATTC road to Petrol Pump that included the premises of Shantinagar monastery also. People of the area also came to help in the sanitization drive.

Panchayat Inspector, Hissey Lama, BAC Khamdong provided PPE kit, proprietor of Om Himalayan Medical shop, KL Mintri gifted a sanitizing kit (spray machine) to our Samiti that was received by the president today. Singtam Nagar Panchayat provided 3 litres of sanitizer.

## Women's NGO cleans Tashiding PHC



**SUMMIT REPORT**

**GANGTOK, 05 SEPT:**

Rising Soul Sisters, a recently formed women's NGO of Tashiding, West Sikkim, organized a cleanliness drive at Primary Health Centre (PHC) premises, Tashid-

ing, with the help of PHC staff, a press release informs.

The drive was conducted by a 16-member team of the NGO. They also thanked the health workers for their service and offered khadas to them.



## Blood donation drive at Singtam hospital

**YOGEN THATAL**

**SINGTAM, 05 SEPT:**

A team lead by Pradeep Dahal, a general secretary, Patriotic Youth Club of Pendam in association with BAC Duga and Voluntary Blood

Donation of Sikkim conducted a blood donation drive at District Hospital, Singtam today.

BDO, IB Dahal along with 15 others donated blood during the camp held on the occasion of Teacher's Day.

## VBDAS motivates youth to donate blood

**SUMMIT REPORT**

**GANGTOK, 05 SEPT:**

Voluntary Blood Donors Association of Sikkim [VBDAS] Gangtok, in an initiative of its East district organization coordinator and regular blood donor, Gaurav Raj organised a motivational programme at Rhenock BAC hall today with 20 important personalities of the area.

The aim of the programme was to form a force of blood heroes in and around Rhenock area and involve youth in blood donation, a press release informs.

The program was attended by ASHA, Health, Panchayat and local gentry. The blood heroes formed in the programme will carry out



blood donation camps in future and will act as additional force to fulfill the requirements of blood in different blood banks in East district.

During the pro-

gramme, Gaurav Raj talked about blood donation and encouraged them to connect with the VBDAS network to get and give help when needed.

## With eye on bypolls, MP Cong leaders begin river march

**BHIND (MP), SEPT 5**

**(PTI):** Madhya Pradesh Congress leaders Govind Singh and Ajay Singh on Saturday began a foot

march from Lahar for river conservation after garlanding a statue of Mahatma Gandhi.

Congress spokesperson Bhupendra Gupta said the 'padyatra', during which MLA Govind Singh will walk along the banks of Chambal and its tributaries, will culminate on the banks of Sindh river at Sevra in Datia district on September 11.

Gupta said the Congress, during the march, will tell people how the BJP poached MLAs and

brought down the democratically elected Kamal Nath government in the state in March.

A total of 27 Assembly seats in the 230-member House will have bypolls though no date has been fixed for them as yet.

Speaking to reporters in Lahar alongside former leader of opposition Ajay Singh, Govind Singh said the Congress would inflict a crushing defeat on the BJP in the bypolls and bounce back to power.

Speaking on the padyatra, Singh said illegal sand mining was killing water bodies in the Gwalior-Chambal region.

Incidentally, 16 of the

27 seats which will have bypolls are situated in the Gwalior-Chambal region.

Several senior Congress leaders, including AICC general secretary Mohan Prakash, will participate in the yatra.

## UN Assembly president: 'Inclusion is key' for virus vaccine

**UNITED NATIONS, SEPT 5 (AP):** The president of the UN General Assembly is warning that a vaccine for COVID-19 must be made available to everyone who needs it because if just one country is left out the world will still face a crisis from the coronavirus. As the world looks to a vaccine and a post-COVID-19 world, Tijjani Muhammad-Bande also says that inclusion is key, because without inclusion the suffering of those who are already left behind, will continue and we cannot guarantee peace in that kind of a context.

He said in an interview on Thursday with The Associated Press that statements from those developing vaccines have said they intend to make them widely available, which he stressed is important.

I believe that there will be protocols and agreements to guarantee affordability and accessibility to the product when it is available, he said.

Muhammad-Bande said the pandemic, perhaps ironically, has defied initial predictions that developing countries would be hardest hit because many of their health systems are poorer.

What has happened, he said, is that death rates and infections are far lower in percent-

age terms in developing countries, including in Africa, than in the major developed countries of the world.

The point that is absolutely fundamental, both in rich and poor countries, developed and developing countries, (is that) it mattered how you responded to the disease, whether you are poor or rich, Muhammad-Bande said.

In dealing with the virus, he said, richer countries had better health care and financial support while developing countries reliant on tourism and oil, for example, are suffering from severe economic hardships.

Go to each country, see how the pandemic affected differentially rich and poor people, he said. This is the big issue and it has to be addressed.

Asked what needs to be done most urgently to return the world to some sense of normality, he said, Solidarity and partnership and empathy for the other I think are key to how we go forward.

Muhammad-Bande was interviewed on the day that ambassadors from the 193 UN member nations attended their first in-person plenary meeting in the General Assembly chamber since the pandemic forced diplomats from the world body to work remotely.

## India takes...

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

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

## Edu Dept...

them to perform for the wellbeing of their students.

Teachers are the ultimate source of knowledge and deserve the respect. At the same time, it is also important to involve the teachers and understand their concepts for proper planning in education sector. Regarding the functioning pattern, he mentioned that it is time for decentralisation and devolution of powers and functions in order to empower the districts.

He has further acknowledged the hard works done by the teachers during the lockdown. He further congratulated all the award winners and mentioned that their contribution has helped us acquire the current status in education sector. He also mentioned that discussion and deliberation on National Education Policy, 2020 are underway and a meeting will be conducted on 08 Sept, 2020 to work out action plan by respective Directorates for framing policy.

The programme concluded with the vote of thanks proposed by the Secretary, Anil Raj Rai.

~ SummitTIMES ~  
**CLASSIFIEDS**

## LAND FOR SALE

Two plots available – 30X40 sq ft and 50X30 sq ft  
Junkeri Dara, Samlik Marchak  
Price negotiable  
Contact : 6296366498,  
9641878315, 9593262407

## 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

## 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 and is fit for offices, shopping complexes, guest houses, banks etc. Contact: 8509755220, 8348007688.

## GENERAL LAND FOR SALE

General roadside land for sale measuring 30 by 45 square feet near smile land below apica garden. Contact no.7797885351/9733538899.

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# East District Cricket Association & Cricket Clubs meet SICA

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 05 SEPT:**

President, Lobzang G Tenzing, Sikkim Cricket Association (SICA) executives and Honorary Secretary, Tshewang Lama met the new executives of East District Cricket Association and the representatives from various cricket clubs around Gangtok at a local hotel on 03 Sept, a press release informs.

The meeting discussed improvement and development of cricket and club culture in Sikkim. Discussions were also held on problems faced by the clubs, players and other related cricketing matter such as the contribution of the respective clubs in developing and focusing on the young cricketer of Sikkim, to promote more club culture.

Various matters such as improvement and development cricket in the state, search of new and



younger local talents, skill development of local players, establishment of club culture in Sikkim, assistance of all the clubs to SICA for development of cricket were discussed.

It was also decided that during BCCI season, clubs and district associations should organise camps, talent hunts and training programs for remaining players

within state, the release mentions.

SICA has requested all the clubs to submit their Club Constitution which they have registered under Government of Sikkim to SICA to the earliest and also instructed those clubs who have not prepared the constitution to draft their constitution to the earliest and submit.

Also, SICA has asked the clubs to submit the reports and feedbacks of First Two Tier Club Tournament 2020 which was played earlier this year. President would also be meeting the rest of the clubs in batches. He also informed the clubs about the voting rights given to clubs and will come out with a vision document to promote

club culture in Sikkim.

Representatives of the following cricket clubs were present; CAT Cricket Club, SHAFT Cricket Club, Alpine Cricket Club, Sledzers Cricket Club, Devolution Cricket Club, Black Eagle Sikkim Police Cricket Club, Royal Daragaon, Islamia Cricket Club and Middle Dot Cricket Club.

## LTSRDCS seeks Governor's intervention in LT Assembly seat reservation

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 05 SEPT:**

Limboo Tamang Seat Reservation Demand Committee Sikkim [LTSRDCS] chairperson, Nima Theeng Tamang has written to the Governor of Sikkim, Ganga Prasad, seeking his immediate intervention in seat reservation for Limbus and Tamang communities in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly.

In the letter dated 04 Sept 2020, he has asked for a resolution to

be passed in the Cabinet as well as in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly for either separate seat reservation for Limboo and Tamang communities under Clause [f] of Article 371F of the Constitution as per the Reservation of Bhutia and Lepcha communities in the SLA or seat reservation for Scheduled Tribes in the Assembly on the basis of population in the upcoming session of the Sikkim Legislative Assembly to be held on 21 Sept.

Mr Tamang writes that clause [f] of Article 371F empowers the Union Parliament to make provision for the number of seats in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly for the purpose of protecting the interests and rights of different sections of the population of Sikkim. The SLA can pass a resolution to request the Centre for separate seats to be allotted to Limboo and Tamang communities in the Assembly, he adds.

## Sudan declares state of emergency over deadly floods

**CAIRO, SEP 5 (AP):** Sudanese authorities declared their country a natural disaster area and imposed a three-month state of emergency across the country after rising floodwaters and heavy rainfall killed around 100 people and inundated over 100,000 houses since late July.

The announcement was made late Friday following a meeting of the country's Defense and Security Council which is headed by a top government official, Gen. Abdel-Fattah Burhan.

Flooding caused by seasonal heavy rainfall, mostly in neighboring Ethiopia, led the Nile River to rise about 17.5 meters late in August, the highest level it has reached in about a century according to the Sudanese Irrigation Ministry.

The ministry said water levels of the Blue Nile are higher than the 1988 flood levels that destroyed tens of thousands of homes in several parts of Sudan and displaced over one million people.

Labor and Social Development Minister Lina al-Sheikh said the flooding had killed some 100 people, as well as injured at least 46 people and affected more than 500,000 people across the country. More than 100,000 houses across the country were totally or partly collapsed, she said.

The U.N. humanitarian agency has warned that the situation is expected to get worse over the coming weeks, as above-average rains are forecast until the end of September.

The capital of Khartoum was hit hard in the past two weeks. Residents in several districts of the city were seen erecting barricades and other shields as water from the Nile swept through several neighborhoods, in footage circulating online.

The military deployed troops to help evacuate people and build barricades in Khartoum as well as distribute food, after flooding there cut roads and swept away houses and belongings.

## Lt Governor causing disrepute to govt by her autocratic decisions: Puducherry CM

**PUDUCHERRY, SEP 5 (PTI):** Puducherry Chief Minister V Narayanasamy on Saturday charged Lt Governor Kiran Bedi with causing disrepute to the government through her "autocratic decisions."

These included rejecting files sent for approval to sanction grants to State government undertakings and also to government aided private schools, he said. Addressing a virtual press conference, he said teachers of privately managed and government aided schools have been holding agitations as they were not paid salaries for nearly nine months.

It was unfortunate that Lt Governor had been rejecting the government decisions to sanction grants without break to private schools so that the teachers would not be left in the cold, he said. "All along the government grant decided for private aided schools had been available without break."

But for last nine months, the schools were facing difficulties. The Lt Governor is citing an untenable reason for refusing to sanction the grants, he said.

Workers in AFT mill and other government run textile undertakings, cooperative societies and spinning mills had also not been paid the wages for long, he said.

He alleged that the Lt Governor was hatching a conspiracy to bring in disrepute to the government by her 'negative' and 'autocratic stand to give her nod for allocation of grants to the schools and PSUs. "What can the government do if there is such a Lt Governor," he asked.

Narayanasamy also charged the Centre with being unresponsive to all the pleas for sanction of grants to the Union Territory, "which is facing a critical fiscal situation."

## Pharma company donates vehicle to Health Dept



**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 05 SEPT:**

Lupin Human Welfare & Research Foundation [LHWRF] donated one vehicle for transporting health workers to Healthcare, Human Services and Family Welfare Department, Government of Sikkim today, a press release informs. They handed over the vehicle to DG

cum Secretary, Dr Pempa Tshering Bhutia.

LHWRF believes that the vehicle will provide some comfort to those frontline warriors who keep Sikkim safe against the deadly virus. Lupin Limited is an Indian multinational pharmaceutical company based in Mumbai and Maharashtra.

## What happened to Iceland's heroes who stunned England at Euro 2016?

**NICK AMES**

**LONDON, 05 SEPT [THEGUARDIAN]:** A look at three players who flourished and three who faded after the team's extraordinary success four years ago

**THREE WHO FLOURISHED**

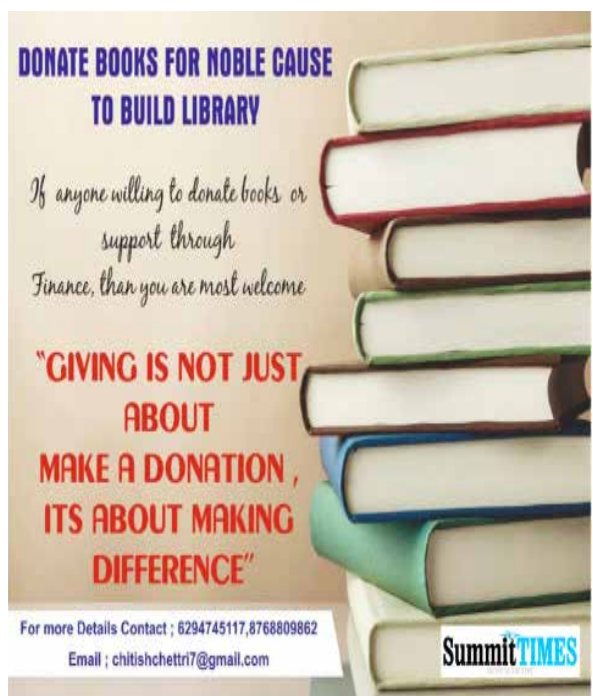
**JOHANN BERG GUDMUNDSSON** The winger came into Euro 2016 on the back of relegation from the Championship with Charlton, although he had jointly topped the division's assist charts. More fine performances in France brought a move to the Premier League and Burnley, where he has been an important and highly effective operator. Last season was fraught with thigh problems but Gudmundsson, who had started the campaign in excellent form, is fit again and will be expected to add a degree of attacking unpredictability to Sean Dyche's side once more. Like several of his teammates, he will not face England because of club commitments.

**HANNES HALLDORSSON** At first glance the goalkeeper's spell at Qarabag, which brought only eight appearances after he joined them in the wake of Russia 2018, appears to have been a failure. But Halldorsson, who was 34 at the time, still played in the Champions League qualifiers and Europa League group stage for the Azerbaijani club. These days he is

back in the local league with Valur. Given that he spent the early years of his career slogging through Iceland's lower divisions, before finding the time to direct the country's Eurovision entry in 2012 among other projects, it goes down as a life supremely well lived.

**BIRKIR MAR SAEVARSSON** He never made it big in club football, but Saevarsson matched Halldorsson in extracting the very most from his talent. Iceland's marauding right-back was 31, and a solid enough performer in the Scandinavian leagues, when Euro 2016 came around. It meant a high-profile move was never really likely, but the unexpected Indian summer of his career continued in their World Cup campaign and he was capped as recently as January in a win over El Salvador. Saevarsson, rangy and tremendously fit, still plays for Valur alongside Halldorsson and famously combined that with working in a salt packing factory prior to Russia 2018.

**THREE WHO FADED** **KOLBEINN SIGTHORSSON** The winning goal Sigthorsson squeezed past Joe Hart was the pinnacle – and what a pinnacle – of a career that always promised slightly more. Had it not been for a serious knee injury that robbed him of 18 months after Euro 2016.



## WEEKLY MARKET PRICE OF LARGE CARDAMOM & FRESH GINGER COLLECTED BY THE SPICES BOARD, GOVT.OF INDIA, SINGTAM, ON 03.09.2020

Large Cardamom	Name of the markets						
	Gangtok	Singtam	Mangan	Jorethang	Geyzing	Kalimpong	Siliguri
Badadana (€/kg.)	400.00	365.00	350.00	-	400.00	No Trade*	470.00
Chotadana (€/kg.)	325.00	332.50	337.50	350.00	350.00	No Trade*	362.50
Badadaba (€/mound)	16000.00	14000.00	14000.00	-	16000.00	No Trade*	18800.00
Chotadana (€/mound)	13000.00	13300.00	13500.00	14000.00	14000.00	No Trade*	14500.00
<b>Ginger</b>		<b>Singtam</b>	<b>Ranipool</b>	<b>Jorethang</b>	<b>Geyzing</b>	<b>Kalimpong</b>	<b>Siliguri</b>
(Price - €/kg.)	Mota	20.25	37.50	-	-	No Trade*	-
	Patla	25.00	42.50	-	-	No Trade*	55.00

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**What is Novel Coronavirus - nCoV?**

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

**Symptoms of nCoV**

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

**Treatment**

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

**Precautions to Prevent nCoV**

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

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



## A Support System for Quality Education

*Help teachers make learning relevant and fun*

Education is reasonably universal now, so access to classrooms is no longer an issue. And Saturday was also Teacher's Day, which makes it even more apt to speak some about the profession which arguably has the deepest impact on our lives. More than the details of lessons learnt from textbooks, the memories that stay longer with most people are of the teachers who taught them. Every person invariably has a teacher who either inspired the entire class to chase their dreams or toed the other end of the spectrum and actively engaged in stifling imaginations, enforcing norms and dictating conduct. This Teacher's Day, let's go over what role teachers can play in preparing students for life.

The pressure of examinations and competition, and the tendency to prioritise rote over comprehension has handicapped the teaching fraternity into becoming problem solvers, handing out answers and solutions for students to mug-up instead of assisting students find their own answers and expressions, encouraging them to enquire more and develop faculties that question more often instead of accepting things as dished out. Several attempts have been made to correct this approach and at least in the Indian context, all efforts have failed thus far. Because students look up to teachers, it is important for teachers to offer themselves as role models, but it would be even better if teachers could introduce their wards to personalities worth emulating and inspiring students to excellence. Teachers should ideally motivate and inspire students towards learning, not hand-hold them through the syllabus till the exams and then pick up another batch to repeat the same.

If one agrees that these are the qualities one seeks in teachers, the obvious question that follows is, can one be trained for such a role? And do the existing models of 'training' focus enough on these aspects of teaching? Only trained teachers will be able to answer these questions, but fact remains that these should not even be issues that distract from more important policy interventions. Teachers, ever since modern education was introduced, were required to be qualified. For how long have B. Ed. courses, for example, been offered? For a very, very long time. And yet, it is only now that precious resources and attention is being invested in getting even already appointed teachers with impressive on-job experience to acquire these degrees. If the teacher appointment process had not been blatantly usurped by enthusiastic proponents of nepotism, India and Sikkim would have been deliberating weightier issues of education by now. Appointment of deserving and qualified teachers should always have been a given, and then one could engage in more meaningful discussions on how to retain the better teachers, appoint better facilities in schools and update syllabus and teaching methods.

Sikkim's pursuit of quality education is welcome, but for it to get anywhere, the ennui that HRD Department has become will have to be shaken off first. Ironically, this is the one aspect that remains missing from all discussions on the delivery of quality education. The ideal teachers and the perfect students, will after all, need the support of at least a reasonably functional Human Resource Development Department which is as motivated to appoint better facilities in schools [by way of libraries, laboratories and even basics like electricity, toilets and running water] as it is excited by the opportunity to conduct trainings, order books or organize workshops. Sikkim is lucky to have a substantially big pool of new teachers who are motivated and genuinely interested in making a difference in the lives of students under their care. It is important that the school management committees and local communities support them in efforts to make classrooms more vibrant and learning more fun and relevant. It is important for people to find ways to get more involved with their neighbourhood schools (to begin with) even if their wards are not enrolled there and offer assistance and support to these institutions to be able to deliver quality education.

### WRITE US:

Readers are invited to comment on, criticise, run down, even appreciate if they like something in this paper. Letters carrying abusive/indecent 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](mailto:news@summittimes.com)



## Why COVID-19 vaccines need to prioritize 'superspreaders'

**DANA GOLDMAN, DAVID CONTI & MATTHEW E. KAHN**  
*theconversation.com*

Once safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines are available, tough choices will need to be made about who gets the first shots.

A committee of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine – at the behest of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and National Institutes of Health – has proposed an equitable way to allocate the vaccine.

They recommend first responders and health care workers take top priority. Older adults in congregate living situations would also be part of a first vaccination phase, according to the plan.

We are faculty at Johns Hopkins University and the University of Southern California who have spent decades studying health economics and epidemiology. One of us is a member of the National Academy of Medicine.

Having seen firsthand the real risks of rapid, asymptomatic spread of COVID-19 among younger adults, we disagree with some of the recommendations. Asymptomatic spread is shutting down schools and universities nationwide and threatening surrounding communities.

We argue that this pandemic requires a different model for making vaccination choices. After taking care of essential workers, vaccinations should be given to the biggest transmitters of the virus – mostly the young – and only then to the most vulnerable.

### LESSONS FROM 2009 FLU EPIDEMIC

The textbook vaccine model goes out the window when novel viruses emerge.

Some lessons can be drawn from the 2009 H1N1 flu epidemic, which killed an estimated 500,000 people around the world. In the U.S, President Barack Obama declared the spread a national emergency.

A vaccine was developed as early as the fall of 2009. However, only 16 million doses were initially available. The CDC was required to make some

difficult decisions about allocation. Some states requested 10 times the amount they were allocated.

In the end, the CDC allocated the vaccine strictly in proportion to a state's population – that is, on a per capita basis. States then allocated them, often with priority to infants and the elderly, along with people at high risk.

This priority – to protect the most frail – has been public policy since at least the 1957-1958 influenza pandemic.

Later studies, however, have shown that a better way to protect older people was to control spread among the young, which often has meant vaccinating school-age children early.

One of the lessons from these past pandemics is that vaccinating the likely asymptomatic spreaders early can avert multiple infections with others.

### THE SUPERSPREADERS

The experience of the past few months has shown how important it is to check transmission with COVID-19. A recent study found that as few as 10% of those infected lead to 80% of the infection cases. What has made it more difficult is that up to 40% of those who carry the virus, often known as superspreaders, show no symptoms at all.

Very few of the COVID-19 superspreaders are elderly. It is the younger people who have a much greater propensity to resume social lives at schools and in other venues.

Among the young are a subset of highly social people with wide circles of friends who become the most fertile ground for the spread of COVID-19. These young people also have a much lower risk of death or even severe symptoms, which also means they are more likely to infect others.

Cases have been spiking in the 15- to 25-year-old age group, another likely sign that they are propelling the spread of the virus. A recent outbreak on the University of Southern California's fraternity row infected at least 40 people.

The American Academy of Pediatrics and the Children's Hospital Association reports that at least 338,000 children have tested positive for the

virus through July 30, with more than a quarter of that number having tested positive in just the last two weeks of that month.

More broadly, younger residents in the virus hot spot of Los Angeles County make up the majority of positive new cases. In California, young people between 18 to 34 years of age account for more than one-third of cases.

### YOUNG VERSUS OLD

Anticipating that young people will engage in activities that spread the virus, many universities put their fall classes exclusively online. Some that decided to go in-person had to close after as little as a week on campus.

With or without a vaccine, the best strategy for older Americans, especially those with underlying medical conditions, is avoiding contact with potential carriers.

Optimally, older people will drive down deaths by staying home in large numbers, and younger people will drive down infections by getting vaccinated in even larger numbers. It all works if the vaccine is effective and enough people take it.

We predict the pressures and politics around prioritizing vaccine distribution will be intense. We argue that they key will be to take the most beneficial route, not the most obvious one. With a full-scale public health campaign behind it, that will mean prioritizing those who are driving transmission, not those who are most vulnerable.

As counterintuitive as such a strategy may appear, plenty of evidence shows this would be the right approach.

*[Dana Goldman is Leonard D. Schaeffer Chair and Distinguished Professor of Public Policy, Pharmacy, and Economics, University of Southern California; David Conti is Professor of Preventive Medicine and Associate Director for Data Science Integration, University of Southern California; Matthew E. Kahn is Bloomberg Distinguished Professor of Economics and Business, Director of JHU's 21st Century Cities Initiative, Johns Hopkins University]*

## Sketchy darknet websites are taking advantage of the COVID-19 pandemic – buyer beware

**DAVID MAIMON**  
*theconversation.com*

Underground markets that sell illegal commodities like drugs, counterfeit currency and fake documentation tend to flourish in times of crisis, and the COVID-19 pandemic is no exception. The online underground economy has responded to the current crisis by exploiting demand for COVID-19-related commodities.

Today, some of the most vibrant underground economies exist in darknet markets. These are internet websites that look like ordinary e-commerce websites but are accessible only using special browsers or authorization codes. Vendors of illegal commodities have also formed dedicated group-chats and channels on encrypted instant messaging services like WhatsApp, Telegram and ICQ.

The Darknet Analysis project at the Evidence-Based Cybersecurity Research Group here at Georgia State University collects data weekly from 60 underground darknet markets and forums. My colleagues Yubao Wu, Robert Harisson and I have analyzed this data and found that three major types of COVID-19 offerings have emerged on darknet markets since late February: protective gear, medications and services that help people commit fraud.

Using these darknet markets is risky business. First, there's the built-in risk of becoming the victim of a scam or buying counterfeit products when purchasing products from underground vendors. There are also

health and legal risks. Inadvertently buying ineffective COVID-19 protective gear and dangerous remedies from unregulated sellers could physically harm buyers. And purchasing information and services with the aim to defraud people and the government is a criminal offense that carries legal penalties.

### PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Several vendors have added protective gear such as face masks, protective gowns, COVID-19 test kits, thermometers and hand sanitizer to their list of products for sale. The effectiveness of this protective gear is questionable. Underground vendors typically do not disclose their products' sources, leaving consumers with no way to judge the products.

One example of the uncertainties that surround protective gear effectiveness comes from one of the encrypted channel platforms we monitored during the first few days of the pandemic. Vendors on the channel offered facemasks for sale. Demand for facemasks was very high at that time, and people around the world were scrambling to find facemasks for personal use.

While governments and suppliers faced difficulties in meeting demand for facemasks, several vendors on these platforms posted ads offering large quantities of facemasks. One vendor even uploaded a video showing many boxes of facemasks in storage.

Given the global shortage of facemasks at the time, our research team found it difficult to understand how this vendor in Thailand could

offer so many for sale. One disturbing possibility is that they sold used facemasks. Indeed, authorities in Thailand broke up an operation that washed, ironed and boxed used facemasks and supplied them to underground markets.

### TREATMENTS

Darknet vendors are also selling medications and cures, including effective treatments, like Remdesivir, and ineffective treatments, like Hydroxychloroquine. They're also selling various purported COVID-19 antidotes and serums. Some vendors even offer to sell and ship oxygen ventilators.

Using COVID-19 medications purchased on darknet platforms could be dangerous. Uncertainties about the true identity of medication manufacturers and the ingredients of other cures leaves patients vulnerable to a wide array of potentially detrimental side effects.

### DIY FRAUD

Government efforts to relieve the financial stress on individuals and businesses from the economic impact of the pandemic has led to a third category of products on these markets. We have observed many vendors offering to sell online fraud services that promise to improve customers' financial circumstances during this crisis.

These vendors offer to either support customers in putting together fake websites that allow them to lure victims into disclosing their personal information, or simply provide stolen personal information. The stolen information can be used to file for unemployment benefits or obtain loans.

Some vendors go a step further and offer support in the fraudulent benefits application process.

COVID-19-related fraud could have grave consequences for individuals whose identities have been stolen and used to apply for government benefits or loans, including the loss of future government assistance and damage to credit scores. Fraudulent requests for COVID-19 relief funds filed using stolen personal information also puts additional strain on federal, state and local governments.

### DIGGING UP THE DATA

The size of the online illicit market of COVID-19 essentials is unknown. We aim to collect enough data to provide an empirical assessment of this underground economy.

There are several challenges to understanding the scope of the COVID-19 underground market, including measuring the magnitude of the demand, the extent supply meets that demand and the impact of this underground economy on the legitimate market. The unknown validity of darknet customers' and vendors' reports about the products they purchased and sold also makes it difficult to assess the underground market.

Our systematic research approach should allow us to overcome these issues and collect this data, which could reveal how online underground markets adjust to a worldwide health crisis. This information, in turn, could help authorities develop strategies for disrupting their activities.

*[The writer is Associate Professor of Criminal Justice and Criminology, Georgia State University]*



# Belur Math to live stream Kumari Puja

**KOLKATA, SEP 5 (PTI):** The authorities of Belur Math - global headquarters of Ramakrishna Math and Mission - will live stream the centuries-old Kumari Puja tradition this year due to COVID-19 pandemic.

No visitor will be allowed entry during Kumari Puja ritual, which usually attracts thousands of devotees in the compound.

The Belur Math authorities had one month back barred entry of visitors to the math complex after opening it in mid-June with several COVID-19 cases reported among the monks and other staff.

A spokesman told PTI on Saturday that the authorities are yet to decide whether entry of public will altogether be banned throughout the four puja days and the image and rituals will also be similarly streamed and telecast on channels to enable devotees to have virtual darshan.

"We will certainly



hold Kumari puja, a must ritual followed for 121 years, but we cannot risk COVID-19 infection even if a small gathering is allowed. The Kumari puja will be held in the presence of a handful of senior monks and the parents of the girl child who will be worshipped as Maa Durga," the spokesman said. He said

the child, selected after several processes, and her parents will undergo Covid tests and must follow all safety protocols.

As part of the Kumari puja rituals, a little girl, less than eight years of age, is selected by the monks after the consent of her family is taken and worshipped on the day of Mahastami, the second

day of the puja. The Kumari puja, a popular affair, is watched by thousands of devotees as the proceedings take place in a pandal next to the main temple complex.

However, due to the present pandemic situation, the puja will be organized inside the main temple complex, the spokesman said.

"We are yet to decide whether entry of visitors will be altogether prevented on the puja days and other rituals will also be streamed similarly like the Kumari puja.

Everything will depend on the pandemic situation at that time.

But Kumari puja will be a strictly closed-door affair," he said.

## Assam govt preparing SOP to implement Gauhati HC directives



**GUWAHATI, SEPT 04:** Assam government is preparing a standard operating procedure (SOP) to implement the directives of Gauhati High Court on adherence to COVID-19 protocol issued by the health department, state Minister for Health and Family Welfare Himanta Biswa Sarma said on Friday.

The Gauhati High Court had expressed deep concern over the rise in coronavirus cases and have made the police and the deputy commissioners personally liable so as to ensure that the directives and protocols issued by the state health department to check the spread of the contagion is maintained in public places, the minister told a press conference here.

The situation in the state is alarming with an average of 3000 new cases of coronavirus reported daily for the last three days. But the state government cannot have further lockdowns without the permission of the Centre, he said.

"We are committed to follow the high court order and a meeting will be held with the police and deputy commissioners to ensure that the SOP being prepared is implemented.

"...We do not have too many tools with us, except to ensure that people wear masks and maintain social distance to check the situation. The high court order will help the government convince the people to take adequate preventive measures," he said.

The high court, he said, has directed the police to strictly enforce fines on persons not

wearing masks and "we hope this acts as a deterrent".

A division bench of Gauhati High Court comprising Chief Justice Ajai Lamba and Justice Manish Choudhary hearing a PIL had directed all district heads of police, their deputies and officers-in-charge of police stations on Thursday to be proactive on the streets.

The HC directed that the police must check whether the order issued by the state health department on May 8 on wearing of face masks and maintaining social distance in public places are maintained or not.

It had also directed the state authorities to impose fine on the violators of government guidelines.

Sarma said the Assam government will launch awareness campaigns in specific places regarding these measures and the NSS and NCC cadets will be involved in them.

The Minister said that it has been observed that more complications arise post-COVID-19 with many dying after they test negative.

"The total deaths due to COVID is 330 but around 1000 people have died if we take into account those who have passed away after testing negative due to varied complications," he added.

The minister further said that there was wrong information circulating that COVID-19 treatment in the state will no longer be free.

"This is factually incorrect. The rent for the paying cabins in government hospitals will only be charged but the

entire treatment will be free. We have to charge the paying cabins or else there will be objections from the Auditor General and it will not be possible to justify it," he said.

Only patients admitted in private nursing homes who come to the government plasma banks for plasma therapy will have to pay for the plasma kit worth Rs 6500. But the plasma is given free to them, he said. Sarma claimed that Assam is perhaps the only state in the country where the "entire treatment (for coronavirus) is free - right from plasma and medicines to the welcome and farewell gift".

It is only patients admitted in private nursing homes who come to the government plasma banks for plasma therapy who have to pay for the plasma kit worth Rs 6500 but the plasma is given free to them.

He also clarified that during lockdown in Assam the recovered patients were dropped home. But now it is they who want to go home on their own and not wait for the hospital vehicles.

Patients from other districts undergoing treatment in medical colleges and hospitals will, however, be dropped in their homes while those who want their RT-PCR reports within 24 hours will be charged.

A total of 1,18,333 COVID-19 positive cases have been detected in the state so far and of them 330 have died. There are 29,274 active cases, while 88,726 were discharged from the hospital after treatment and three others migrated out of the state.

## Goalie Karanjit extends stay at Chennnaiyin FC

**CHENNAI, SEP 5 (PTI):** Two-time ISL champions Chennaiyin FC on Saturday announced goalkeeper Karanjit Singh's contract extension by one year till the end of the 2020-21 season of Indian Super League which begins in November.

The 34-year old is set for his sixth consecutive campaign for the team, having won the ISL twice with the club in 2015 and 2017-18, starring especially in the second triumph, a press release said.

Having donned the dual role of goalie-cum-goalkeeping coach last season, Karanjit will continue in a playing capacity in the upcoming campaign as new head coach Csaba Laszlo is expected to bring in a goalkeeping coach as part of his backroom staff.

Karanjit said he was looking forward to contributing his best to CFC in the coming season.

Chennaiyin FC is my home. I didn't have to think twice before taking the decision to continue with my adopted family and represent our loving fans and the city of Chennai for one more season, the veteran custodian, who has made 62 appearances for the club, said. Coach Laszlo said



Karanjit's presence will benefit the team and his inputs will be important for the youngsters.

Karanjit is a pivotal member...I am very happy we will continue to benefit from his experience and expertise. He has been a big part of Chennaiyin's success and his valuable input in training sessions and match situations will be of immense importance, especially for our younger goalkeeping talents,

the newly appointed coach. Karanjit's performances for Chennaiyin stood out especially in CFC's 2017-18 title winning campaign with seven clean sheets in 20 games, the joint-highest that season.

He also made two remarkable penalty saves in games against Jamshedpur FC and Kerala Blasters FC that season, which proved instrumental in CFC's eventual title triumph.

## Hyderabad FC sign defender Chinglensana Singh

**HYDERABAD, SEP 5 (PTI):** Hyderabad FC on Saturday said they have completed the signing of 23-year-old defender Konsham Chinglensana Singh for the next two seasons of the Indian Super League.

Known in the footballing circuit as Sana, the Manipuri defender joins in after a three-year spell with FC Goa and has penned a two-year deal till the end of the 2021-22 season.

"The club is building a new squad with a lot of ambition in an exciting project," said Sana. "I want to be part of this team and play my role in helping the club establish its legacy in Indian football by trying to win trophies and bringing back glory days to the city of Hyderabad," he added.

Sana became the third new Indian signing at Hyderabad FC this

season after Subrata Paul and Halicharan Narzary.

Hyderabad FC co-owner Varun Tripuraneni said, "Sana is one of the most exciting and talented young defenders in the country."

"He has been a consistent performer and every time he's been on the field, he made sure to leave an impression. We're looking to build a squad with the right mix of youth and experience, and we hope he will be a valuable addition," he added.

Having spent his formative years at Mahindra United, Air India and Tata Football Academy, Sana began his professional career in 2015 with Shillong Lajong, with whom he played two seasons in the I-League.

Having made his bow in the ISL in 2016, he became an integral part of the Delhi Dynamos side

under Italian Gianluca Zambrotta, featuring regularly in their run to the play-offs. He was picked up by FC Goa in the ISL expansion draft in 2017, and has been part of the Gaurs for the last three seasons where he also picked up a Super Cup winners medal in 2019.

"The primary aim of all teams in the league is to make it to the play-offs and then make the final push. I've been part of the same mentality at Goa and our targets are similar in Hyderabad," Sana said. "With Goa, I've been part of the side that's been in the semi-final twice and the final once, so achieving that final step is a personal target," he added.

On the international stage, Sana has represented India at the U-19, U-22 and U-23 levels while also making his senior debut in 2016.

## Probe on after families allege 5 men kidnapped by China's PLA from Arunachal

**ITANAGAR, SEPT 05 [PTI]:** Arunachal Pradesh police has launched a probe following reports that five people, who had gone hunting in a forest in Upper Subansiri district on the Sino-India border, were allegedly kidnapped by the Chinese military, a senior official said on Saturday.

The alleged incident occurred on Friday in Nacho area of the district, their families said. Two others, who were in the group, managed to escape and informed police.

"I have sent the officer-in-charge of the Nacho police station to the area to verify the facts and directed him to report immediately. However, the report will be available only by Sunday morning," Superintendent of Police Taru Gussar said.

Those allegedly kidnapped have been identified as Toch Singkam, Prasat Ringling, Dongtu Ebiya, Tanu Baker and Ngaru Diri. All of them belong to the Tagin community. Their family members living at district headquarters Daporijo said some of their relatives had left for Nacho Saturday morning to discuss the matter with the Indian Army. Nacho is around 120 kilometers from the district headquarters.

The families urged the authorities to take steps to bring them back.

The Army could not be reached for comments.

Pasighat West MLA Ninong Ering said that befitting reply must be given the China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) for the incident.

Five people from Upper Subansiri district of our state Arunachal Pradesh have reportedly been abducted by Chinas Peoples Liberation Army (PLA). Few months earlier, a similar incident happened. A befitting reply must be given to #PLA and #CCPChina. @PMOIndia, he tweeted.

In March, a 21-year-old man was abducted by the PLA from Asapila sector near the McMahon line. While his two friends managed to escape, Togley Sinkam was taken away at gunpoint, his family had said. After 19 days in captivity, the youth was released by the Chinese Army.

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# Here comes El Loco: is the Premier League ready for Marcelo Bielsa?

LOUISE TAYLOR

**LONDON, 05 SEPT [THEGUARDIAN]:** The small crowd gathered outside Marcelo Bielsa's modest terraced home counted down the minutes until the door opened and the man set to re-energise this season's Premier League emerged into an overcast July evening. Their patience was being rewarded. Suddenly, a beaming Bielsa was no longer inside his one-bedroom flat above a sweet shop but down in its stone-walled back yard, exchanging elbow bumps and posing for selfies with his adoring neighbours in the Yorkshire market town of Wetherby.

It took some time for a member of the Leeds manager's backroom staff to coax the 65-year-old into a hatchback and head to Elland Road for a long-awaited promotion party.

A little earlier West Brom's defeat at Huddersfield had guaranteed Leeds were back in the top tier for the first time in 16 years and everyone wanted a little piece of the man who will make the Premier League a lot more interesting. Not to mention lifted the mood of the biggest city in Europe to have gone so long without a top-tier football club.

The unconventional and determined unorthodoxy of Bielsa's methods dictates the top flight should be braced for similarly idiosyncratic moments on its pitches this season. Multimillionaire – or even millionaire – managers do not, as a rule, live or behave like Bielsa but, as perhaps befits the owner of one of the game's sharpest tactical brains, the Argentinian is much more eccentric Oxbridge don than Harry Redknapp clone.

If it takes a rare Premier League head coach to eschew a private life spent largely behind electric gates



and blacked-out luxury car windows, few teams assembled on comparable budgets play as daringly as Leeds.

Howard Wilkinson, the last manager to bring the league title to Leeds, in 1992, was a tactical pragmatist but, like Bielsa, the former teacher possesses a fierce intellect, lacks artifice or pretension and has never been afraid to do things differently.

Two men with more in common than first meets the eye are big on detail, with their faith in training-ground discipline, diligence, rigour and repetition – particularly off-the-ball drills – married to the creation of a wider club culture.

Like Wilkinson, Bielsa – who prides himself on his daily training ground dust inspections and has, on occasion, even tasked players

with picking up litter – does not really play the media game. While Wilkinson, typically, replied “children” to a question about what he used to teach, the current Leeds manager has elevated press conference pedantry to new heights. His response last season to an inquiry about the suspect fitness of his French loanee striker Jean-Kévin Augustin proved instructive. It involved a 20-minute, 1,500-word monologue on a hamstring strain.

On the plus side, the word excuses does not seem to figure in the extensive vocabulary of a man who believes one-to-one interviews are “undemocratic” and refrains from using the media to berate referees, rival managers, substandard facilities or his club's transfer policy.

Once on the pitch, things speed up. The players implementing his

ideas operate in a torrent of such intricate high-intensity positional interchanging, passing, moving, quick-fire counterattacking and, above all, pressing that fellow coaches are sometimes left awestruck. Having been mentored by the Argentinian, Pep Guardiola and Mauricio Pochettino remain confirmed Bielsaites.

As with Guardiola's Manchester City, there were distinct shades of Bielsa's Leeds blueprint in the way Pochettino's Tottenham played – albeit with a rather more expensive set of players. The challenge for Bielsa and his relatively cut-price squad now is to reproduce, at a significantly higher level, the style that blew away so many Championship teams. When his contract expired in July there were fears one of the game's more enigmatic figures could quit but a new

deal has been agreed and, at the time of writing, merely required the application of pen to paper.

Whatever happens in the coming weeks and months, the precise framework inside creative individuals such as Pablo Hernández can bewitch neutrals and others including, perhaps most notably, Calvin Phillips, Mateusz Klich and the captain, Liam Cooper, have improved beyond recognition, perhaps reflects their manager's erudite background.

Bielsa comes from a Rosario-based family of lawyers, outstanding architects, diplomats and principled politicians. His own formidable brain has been channelled almost exclusively into football tactics. Although his wife, Laura, an academic, shuttles between Wetherby and Argentina, she and their two adult daughters, Iñes and Mercedes, have had their family life dominated by football.

Even by the standards of a profession inhabited by its fair share of workaholics and obsessives, a pursuit of perfectionism sets Bielsa apart. “They call him ‘El Loco’ cos he's crazy ... but he knows exactly what we need,” chorus Leeds fans in an adaptation of Bad Moon Rising designed to emphasise the symbiotic bond between the former Newell's Old Boys, Vélez Sarsfield, Espanyol, Argentina, Chile, Athletic Bilbao, Marseille, Lazio and Lille coach and a club that has long revelled in its outsider status. “It's us against the world,” says Cooper. “That's always my message to the lads. We're one big family and we have that siege mentality.”

The sense of Leeds against the world has been actively nurtured by the club's Italian owner, Andrea Radrizzani, the Spanish director of football, Victor Orta, and the chief executive, Angus Kinnear. Leeds

were the first Championship club where players and executives agreed to take significant wage deferrals once the covid pandemic struck, accepting cuts of, in many cases, at least 50%, by collecting a maximum of £6,000 a week. That gesture saved the jobs of 272 Leeds staff while also ensuring an army of casual workers continued to be paid during lockdown.

Unlike certain clubs, backroom bonds are tight at Leeds. Orta makes a point of ensuring the birthdays and anniversaries of even junior staff are recognised and an enduring sense of camaraderie constructed.

The board regards the development of off-field infrastructure as being as important as Bielsa's tactical framework. Plans are under way to create an Elland Road community campus featuring a new £25m training ground – the current base at Thorp Arch, near Wetherby, lies a 22-mile drive to the north-east – sited alongside public pitches, a doctor's surgery and other facilities intended to benefit the local population.

Judith Blake, the leader of Leeds city council, is working closely with Kinnear and company to implement this scheme. “When Leeds do well it's not an exaggeration to say you can feel the change of mood in the city on many different levels,” she says. “Marcelo has captured not just the fans' imagination but that of the whole city.

“It isn't just the fantastic style of football Leeds play or how Marcelo has managed to get 10% more from the players; it's his approach as a whole. He recognises the importance of the fans and how the game becomes nothing without them. It's his passion, his engagement, his meticulous attention to detail and, also, his modesty. We're very lucky to have him.”

## 7,000 fans to be allowed at French league game next weekend

**PARIS, SEP 5 (AP):** The French soccer league has praised a decision to allow 7,000 fans in the stadium for a second division match between Auxerre and Clermont next weekend.

Because of coronavirus restrictions, a maximum of 5,000 spectators are allowed at games, unless clubs get a special dispensation from their local authority.

Auxerre obtained dispensation from the prefecture, making the September 12 match the first one with more than 5,000 fans since the rule was put in place for this season.

The French league salutes the decision, the LFP said in a statement Saturday, adding that it hopes other clubs can follow suit.

Spectators still have to wear masks inside the stadium and observe social distancing.

## For Lionel Messi and Barcelona things will never be the same again

SID LOWE

**LONDON, 05 SEPT [THEGUARDIAN]:** No smile, no handshake and no reconciliation. Lionel Messi is staying at Barcelona but this was no happy ending. It is over, for now, yet there is no real closure and no one truly got what they wanted, maybe not even Josep Maria Bartomeu. A survivor clinging to power, he will no longer preside over the departure of the best player in the club's history but nor will he evade responsibility for it. His victory, if that is what this was, is hollow one. Messi made sure of that.

The prospect of his leaving after 20 years at Barcelona was sad and has been avoided for nine months but that was never the worst part. The worst part was that it had got to the point he wanted to leave; that things were so bad, so broken, he would turn his back on it all. And that remains; it has not been fixed by Messi staying, still less by Bartomeu surviving. “I wanted to be happy,” Messi said, “and I didn't find happiness at the club.”

Doing so now may be difficult; his final decision, taken under duress, did not deliver it. This whole thing was not an act: before, during or, most striking of all, after. It was not a power play, nor a push for a new contract. Messi announced he was staying at the club he “loves” but there was no new deal, no promises, no pretence. Instead, there was sadness as he talked, which he did not on a club channel but on Goal.com. Hours later, Barcelona's website still had not even mentioned

it. It was supposed to be good news, the very best news, but it was not news at all.

There was no celebration, just a kind of weariness. From Messi, there was a blunt honesty, a refusal to gloss over this or act like everything was OK, their differences resolved. He could have backed down, could have said he had felt conflicted, could have asked to draw a line under this whole sorry saga or tried to build bridges, but he did not. He could have said it was a moment's madness. He did not do that either.

He admitted he wanted to go and accused Bartomeu of reneging on an agreement to let him. He said he had been telling Bartomeu all year, that he had thought about it carefully and that his time was up; it was for others to take over now. He could even have said that he wanted to benefit the club, help them economically but he did not do that either: insisted he was within his rights to rescind his contract and walk for free. Only one thing had stopped him: the risk of ending up in court. Nothing else.

All he wanted to avoid was a fight, but he was not backing down from one either – at least not with the man he held responsible for the fact so much was wrong. The best part of breaking up is the making up but there was no making up with those in charge. On the day he stayed, far from peace, there was a statement from his father reasserting Messi's legal right to leave. Sure, there was talk of love for the club and the revelation that his children

had cried but he would not allow that to serve to protect the president or pretend he welcomed this outcome.

Many supporters are with him on that: plenty wanted him to go, for his sake not theirs, a curious phenomenon emerging in which some of those most on his side backed his departure and some of those most turned against him demanded he stay. His supporters were saddened and hurt but saw other villains and felt he had earned the right to decide. Listening to him joylessly explaining the decision to stay, they would have agreed.

Messi remains, which should be something to be thankful for, but it did not feel like it. Not least because he would not hide behind a facade. Sometimes when players walk out, they deliver a parting shot; Messi delivered his when he walked back in again, the honesty brutal. There are acrimonious splits; this was an acrimonious reuniting.

Read that line again: “I'm staying because the president said the only way to go was to pay the €700m clause, which is impossible, [or] the other way was to go to court.” This from the club captain.

“For a long time now, there has been no project or anything. They're performing a balancing act, plugging holes as they go along,” Messi said.

That approach was applied to him in the end, too. All year, he said, they had ignored him or put him off, then when it came to it, short-termism took over and they said no.

## Australia keen to help Stoinis evolve as finisher like Dhoni

**SOUTHAMPTON, SEP 5 (PTI):** Australia is willing to give recalled all-rounder Marcus Stoinis a longer run to help him evolve as a finisher in the mould of former India skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni, said vice-captain Pat Cummins.

Stoinis' unbeaten 23 off 18 balls was not enough as Australia slipped from 124-2 to 148-6 to lose the opening T20I against hosts England by two runs on Friday.

Australia have a lot of quality players who bat in the top-order for their domestic T20 sides but the world number one team is still searching for a batsman in the middle-order who can finish off games.

Opening the batting, Stoinis, 31, scored 705 runs for Melbourne Stars to top the BBL runs chart last season. However, his inability to rotate the strike early in the innings



has been one of the reasons why he was left out of the 2019 World Cup.

“It's something we've spoken about for exactly that reason -- they're all the best players when they go back to playing domestic comps,” Cummins was quoted as saying by Sydney Morning Herald.

“You could argue that middle-order role is one of the hardest in any cricket team. That's what we've identified, we've got to give guys a go.

“Someone like MS Dhoni, he was one of the best in the world because he played 3-400 ODI games. You saw during this week's practice

games we gave a lot of guys a go in that.”

Cummins said Australia has identified the roles and wants to give the players enough game time to cement their places.

“We know it's not going to happen overnight. That's been a common theme that selectors and Finchy have spoken about: we'll identify roles and give them a long run in that.

“I think we've got the right squad, the right players, it's about getting plenty of games into everyone now,” the pace spearhead said. Australia's first compet-

itive match in nearly six months was played in front of empty stands due to the COVID-19 pandemic and Cummins said it was “strange”.

“I don't think it made any difference to the performance but for sure it was strange,” Cummins said. “Until Starcy's bowling the first over and you can hear a pin drop it's weird. After a couple of overs we got into it.

“Just odd unless we create the noise in the field there is absolutely no noise happening. Bit of an adjustment but everyone's played enough cricket.

“I don't think the crowd makes too much of a difference a lot of the time but it is certainly different here in England and not hearing some of the songs.”

Australia's numero uno ranking and a run of four series victories will be on the line when they take on England in the second T20I on Sunday.

## "Incredibly consistent" Malan delivers every single time in T20, says Nasser Hussain

**SOUTHAMPTON, SEP 5 (PTI):** Former England skipper Nasser Hussain has praised top-order batsman Dawid Malan for his “incredible” consistency in T20 cricket, saying the left-hander delivers every time he comes out to bat.

The 33-year-old Malan, who made his debut in the shortest format of the game in 2017, has notched up a ton and seven fifties in the 14 T20Is he has featured in.

Malan has been in red-hot form in T20 cricket. After playing out an unbeaten 54-run innings against Pakistan last week, he was adjudged the man of the match for his 43-ball 66 against Australia which helped England win the first T20 by 2 runs on

Friday. “Every single time, he delivers. T20 is not that easy to be consistent because at times you have to go in and give it a bit of a smack, he has been incredibly consistent,” Hussain told ‘Sky Sports’.

“What I like about him is that he doesn't overhit. He's got long levers, but you never really see Dawid Malan slogging, he's in real control of all those shots,” he added.

Malan has admitted his remarkable form has even surprised him.

“It is a good story as well and he is almost admitting that he's surprised himself. When we've done domestic cricket, he

wouldn't have been one of the first names on your list,” Hussain said. “There was Alex Hales, Sam Billings and people like that, young guns who we would all be saying ‘watch out for these lads, they're going to be pushing’ and they have pushed.

“Dawid Malan was going under the radar but it doesn't really matter what you're doing in domestic, what matters is when you put an England shirt and helmet on, how do you do there?” he added.

The 52-year-old feels England currently have a very strong limited-overs side with several quality players going up against each other to get into the team.

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## Singapore taking 'active steps' to ensure timely access to effective, safe coronavirus vaccine

**SINGAPORE, SEP 5 (PTI):**

Singapore on Saturday said it is closely monitoring the global progress in developing COVID-19 vaccines and taking active steps to ensure that the city-state has timely access to an effective and safe vaccine.

Health Minister Gan Kim Yong told parliament that once COVID-19 vaccines become available, Singapore's approach will be to protect those at higher risk or people who may be more likely to be exposed to infection.

Singapore has seen several new COVID-19 clusters in dormitories that were previously cleared of the disease in recent weeks.

On Friday, the Ministry of Health (MOH) identified a new cluster at Blue Stars Dormitory with 33 earlier confirmed cases linked. The dormitory was declared cleared of COVID-19 on August 8, the Channel News Asia reported.

Among the three imported cases, reported on Friday, is a Singaporean and a permanent resident (foreigner) who returned from India on August 28 and August 23.

The third case is a Short-Term Visit Pass holder who arrived from India on 26 August. He was allowed entry into Singapore as his spouse has been seeking medical treatment in Singapore.

The three had been placed on 14-day Stay-Home Notice (SHN) upon arrival in Singapore, and had been tested while serving their SHN at dedicated facilities.

On Saturday, Singapore reported 34 new COVID-19 cases, including three in the community and two imported. This brings the total number of cases in the country to 56,982.

The community infections comprise one Singaporean and two work pass holders (foreigners), according to a preliminary update from the Ministry of Health (MOH).

The two imported cases were placed on stay-home notice when they arrived in Singapore.

The rest of the cases were among foreign workers here.

With 146 cases discharged on Friday, 56,156 patients, or 99 per cent, of all COVID-19 patients, have fully recovered from the disease.

There are currently 51 confirmed cases in hospital and 696 recuperating in community facilities from mild symptoms, or are clinically well but still test positive for COVID-19.

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# As Africa's COVID-19 cases rise, faith is put to the test

**KAMPALA, UGANDA (AP):** The COVID-19 pandemic is testing the patience of some religious leaders across Africa who worry they will lose followers, and funding, as restrictions on gatherings continue. Some evangelical Christian leaders in Uganda have launched a campaign with the now-universal phrase of protest: "I can't breathe."

Their members vow to occasionally put on the burlap costumes they say resemble the sackcloth worn by biblical prophets.

"Uganda is a God-fearing nation but, unfortunately, due to the lockdown, the citizens of our great country cannot gather to seek God's intervention," Betty Ochan, leader of the opposition in Uganda's national assembly, recently wrote in the local Daily Monitor newspaper. "The devil is taking dominance. If people do not worship God together, they are spiritually derailed."

From Nigeria to Zimbabwe, people are speaking out — or sneaking out to worship — as they argue that limits on religion could lead to a crisis of faith.

"I am appalled that some people have the audacity to tell us how many hours we can spend in church," said Chris Oyakhilome, president of the Lagos-based megachurch known as Christ Embassy. "How dare you. What in the world do you think you are?"

Church services in Nigeria resumed last month but are limited to an hour, a severe test for some in a country where worship can spill from a Sunday morning into the afternoon.

Some ministers in Nigeria, Africa's most populous country, have sparked a separate controversy for sparing followers should continue paying their tithes into designated



bank accounts. Some ministers have long been accused of maintaining lavish lifestyles at the expense of their followers.

But the larger concerns are rooted in the very nature of belief.

"Coming together is very important from an African point of view," said Christopher Byaruhanga, a professor of systematic and historical theology at Uganda Christian University. "We Africans want to live in a community. So the coronavirus is now redefining that community."

Coming together to worship is part of the "accountability" that builds trust as people share their testimonies, he said.

The "overall levels of religious commitment" in sub-Saharan Africa are among the highest in the world, according to a 2018 study by the Pew Research Center. The region's number of Christians grew from about 7 million in 1900 to 470 million by 2010, when it was home to 21% of the world's Christians and 15% of all Muslims.

Christians strongly associate their faith with the brick-and-mortar buildings of their parishes, said the Rev. Charles Odurkani, an emeritus bishop in Uganda.

"Africans are notoriously religious," he said. "Of course, in Africa some people worship with two feet. One foot in traditional culture and another foot in Christianity."

Another religious leader in Uganda, a self-described prophet who leads a congregation of thousands in Kampala, has criticized attempts to negotiate with the government to reopen houses of worship.

"It's disrespectful ... if a so-called pastor goes on his knees and begs a politician to open up," Elvis Mbonye recently told a local broadcaster. "I will not ask any man to give me the permission, the right, the directives."

Hajji Ramadhan Mugalu, secretary-general of the Uganda Muslim Supreme Council, said Muslims "are losing out on the ... social aspect" while mosques remain closed.

"If arcades and malls have been

opened, our prayer is that these places of worship should also be opened," he said. "Yes, they can pray at home, but congregational prayer is very powerful."

Authorities in Uganda and other countries say they will follow the advice of health experts on allowing places of worship to resume normal operations. In Tanzania, however, President John Magufuli has alarmed health experts by asserting that divine power would offer protection from the virus. The country hasn't updated its number of infections — just over 500 — since April.

In South Africa, which makes up roughly half of the African continent's 1.2 million confirmed coronavirus infections, the pandemic has challenged people's relationship with their faith, said Mosa Sona, bishop at Grace Bible Church in the Johannesburg township of Soweto.

"Am I a believer that practices his faith in the midst of a crowd, at a building called a church, or does it matter when I am all alone at

home?" asked Sona, whose church was among the first to stream sermons online.

Others insist on staying physically in touch with their coreligionists, no matter what pandemic restrictions say.

In Zimbabwe, the government has encouraged people to pray at home. But that wasn't an option for Amos Mazikande, who recently went to a "prophet" with his apostolic group to seek a cure for his daughter's persistent headaches.

The family used back roads to avoid police on their way to an open ground where services are held in the capital, Harare.

"Coronavirus will be defeated by the Holy Spirit, so we don't have to fear it," Mazikande said.

Across the country, apostolic believers line up to collect "holy" water, oil, pieces of cloth and clay pots that they believe offer protection from "evil spirits" that bring poverty and disease.

At a recent service, about a dozen worshippers huddled to sing and dance, some with face masks dangling from their chins. Under a nearby tree, a woman knelt while the leader sprinkled water and vigorously shook her head in an apparent healing session.

Some say such scenes show the pandemic is strengthening people's faith no matter how they worship.

Etienne Bonkougou, a chaplain in Burkina Faso's capital, Ouagadougou, said he has noticed that since normal church services recently resumed, people who didn't attend regularly before the pandemic now show up every week.

"People found it necessary to get closer to God because they said it's only God that can deliver them," Bonkougou said.

## Quarantine a small price to pay for Australian in Venice

**VENICE (AP):** Roderick MacKay had to get government approval to leave Australia, spent two weeks in preventive coronavirus quarantine in Rome and will be locked up in a hotel back in Australia for another two weeks upon his return.

But the 33-year-old director says it's a small price to pay to get his first feature film, "The Furnace," to the Venice Film Festival — especially after it took six years to make.

"The Furnace" explores a forgotten aspect of the 19th century west Australian gold rush, when Muslim and Sikh camel handlers from India, Afghanistan and Persia — Iran's former name — were brought in by the British colonizers to help open up the Outback, many essentially working as indentured laborers.

"The Furnace" follows the story of a young Afghan camel



played by Egyptian actor Ahmed Malek, who is led astray from his friendship with local Aboriginal people by a shifty gold prospector.

"It's shining a light on a little known chapter of our history and representing community groups who have not really been represented in Australia's history," MacKay told The Associated Press. "And so I think on the basis of that, that was really the thing that compelled me to come here and do my bit to represent the film."

That was no easy feat given the coronavirus pandemic and the lockdown of MacKay's hometown of Perth, in western Australia, as well as Italy's restrictions on trav-

elers coming from outside Europe.

MacKay had to get federal government approval to leave the country, and successfully made the case that "The Furnace" was the only Australian official selection at Venice, where it is screening in the Horizons section for new talent.

"It turns out, we're kind of representing the country," he said. "So luckily, or thankfully, they considered that to be a worthy enough cause."

Upon arrival in Italy, MacKay quarantined at a Rome apartment for two weeks, people-watching from the rooftop terrace, preparing for the festival and watching movies,

including Ridley Scott's "Gladiator" to "get in the vibe, in the zone" of Rome. Now at Venice, he is overwhelmed: MacKay had only previously made two short films before "The Furnace," which he conceived of when researching the western Australian gold rush in 2014.

"It's taken me six years to get this project off the ground. So a month in quarantine, really in the scheme of things, is kind of a small blip in the time that I've taken from my life to realize this project," he said.

After Venice, he retraces his steps back to Perth, where a government-appointed hotel quarantine awaits him.

"Not ideal, but we understand that it's necessary in these times," he said. "And hey, perhaps it'll be a nice sort of two-week window to just process everything that we've been up to here in this extraordinary time."

## Gas pipeline blast kills 16 praying at Bangladesh mosque

**DHAKA, BANGLADESH (AP):** An underground gas pipeline near a mosque exploded during evening prayers outside Bangladesh's capital, leaving 16 Muslim worshippers dead and dozens injured with critical burns, officials said Saturday.

The blast occurred Friday night as people were finishing their prayers at Baitus Salat Jame Mosque at Narayanganj, local police chief Zayedul Alam said.

By Saturday afternoon, 16 people, including a 7-year-old boy, had succumbed to their injuries. Doctors at a burn unit of a state-run hospital were treating at least 37 people with burns on up to 90% of their bod-



ies, said Samanta Lal Sen, a coordinator of the unit.

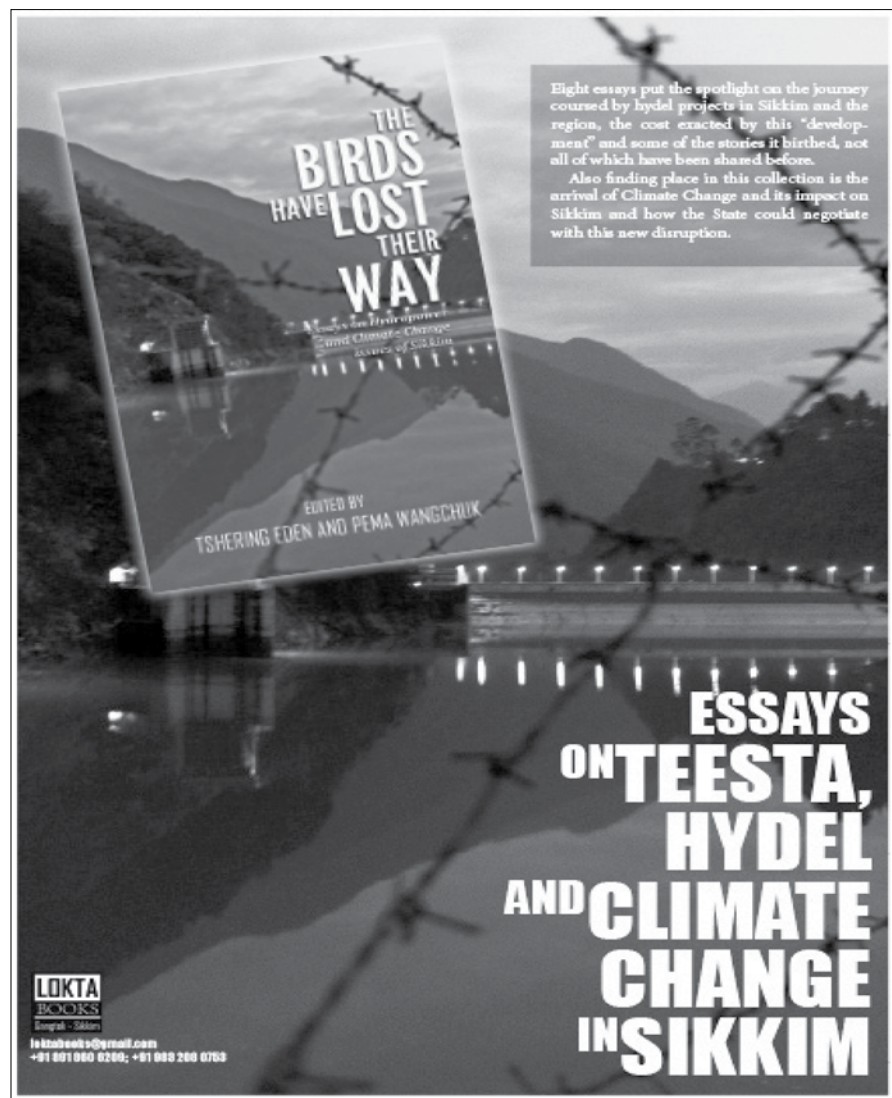
TV stations reported that because of the impact of the blast, at least six air conditioners also exploded inside the mosque.

Firefighters were investigating the cause of the explosion.

Abdullah Al Arefin, assistant director of the

Fire Service and Civil Defense, said that officials suspected that gas had accumulated inside the mosque from a leak in the underground pipeline, and that it had gone unnoticed.

"The gas could not go out as the windows of the mosque were shut because of the air conditioners," he said.



**ESSAYS ON TEESTA, HYDEL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IN SIKKIM**





**LOL!** The model and author, Chrissy Teigen spends time with her mother and daughter while bike riding in Sherman Oaks, Calif.

## Award season is completely devoid of artistic creation: Bradley Cooper

**LOS ANGELES, SEP 5 (PTI):** Actor Bradley Cooper believes that Hollywood award season is "utterly meaningless" as they do not lead to any "artistic creation".

The actor, who has been nominated for Oscars eight times but is yet to take home his maiden trophy, talked about the relevance of the award season during a chat with "Hamilton" star Anthony Ramos for Interview Magazine.

Ramos, who had featured in Cooper's directorial debut "A Star Is Born", remarked that award season mostly "single out" individual artistes and doesn't acknowledge the concept of teamwork.

"What we forget is that we're a representation of the story that those 150 to 200 people told together. We're like a walking flag," the actor said.

Cooper agreed with Ramos, calling the award season a "real test".

"It's set up to foster that mentality. It's quite a thing to work through, and it's completely devoid of artistic creation. It's not why you sacrifice everything to create art, and yet

you spend so much time being a part of it if you're, in quotes, 'lucky enough to be a part of it,' the 45-year-old actor said.

"It's ultimately a great thing because it re-



ally does make you face ego, vanity, and insecurity. It's very interesting and utterly meaningless," he added.

On the work front, Cooper has set up the biopic of composer Leonard Bernstein as his second directorial project.

The actor will also star in Guillermo del Toro's "Nightmare Alley" and Paul Thomas Anderson's untitled new project.

## Rajeev Sen Flies To Mumbai To Be With Wife Charu Asopa

After living apart for almost three months, actress Charu Asopa and her husband, model Rajeev Sen, met recently and lit up Instagram with loved-up pictures. Rajeev, who was living in Delhi for quite some time, flew to Mumbai to be with his wife amid rumours about their separation. In their latest Instagram entries on Friday, Rajeev Sen and Charu Asopa shared pictures from their Mumbai home and their outing and even left adorable comments on each other's post. "Stronger together. I love my wife," Rajeev captioned his post, reacting to which Charu commented: "And I love my husband." Charu posted a picture of herself hugging Rajeev in their house and wrote: "Missed you so much." His reaction: "Missed you more." Aww.

Rumours about Rajeev Sen and Charu Asopa's separation started doing the rounds on the Internet after the model flew to Delhi a few days before their first wedding anniversary - June 7. They even addressed rumours in different interviews, where they even talked about deleting pictures featuring each other from their respec-

tive social media profiles. Earlier, dismissing Rajeev's allegation that someone close to her is "brainwashing" her, Charu told Times Of India: "No one is brainwashing me. I am mature enough to make my own decisions - something that I have always done. Maybe, he was

when Charu shared pictures from the festivities, Rajeev dropped this comment: "Hubby is coming to you, jaldi se."

Rajeev Sen and Charu Asopa met through common friends and after dating for four months, they got married in a civil ceremony on June 7 last year,



brainwashed into deleting our pictures from his social media handles."

However, the couple soon began dropping loved-up comments on each other's posts. On Ganesh Chaturthi,

followed by a grand celebration in Goa.

Charu Asopa is a television actress who has worked in shows like Agle Janam Mohe Bitiya Hi Kijo and Mere Angne Mein.

## James Ponsoldt in talks for 'Nothing To See Here' adaptation

**LOS ANGELES, SEP 5 (PTI):** Filmmaker James Ponsoldt is in negotiation to direct the upcoming feature "Nothing To See Here". The movie is based on author Kevin Wilson's novel of the same which was published in October 2019 by HarperCollins imprint Ecco, reported Deadline.

If finalised, the project will mark the director's reunion with Scott Neustadter and Michael H Weber, the scribes of his 2013 critically-acclaimed feature "The Spectacular Now".

Described as a "humorous, emotional story of class, family, love and friendship", the film focuses on the relationship between Lillian and Mad-

ison, two former boarding school friends from completely different backgrounds. "A decade after Lillian's sudden and controversial expulsion from school, Madison is married to a prominent senator and Lillian still lives at home with her mother. So the last thing Lillian expects is a job offer from her old friend.

"The job: taking care of Madison's step-children. The twist: there is something not quite right about these kids," the official plotline read.

The project, which hails from 3000 Pictures, will be produced by Neustadter and Weber, with Wilson serving as executive producer.

## Jonathan Majors, Glen Powell to star in war epic 'Devotion'



**LOS ANGELES, SEP 5 (PTI):** Actors Jonathan Majors and Glen Powell are set to lead historical war epic Devotion, to be directed by Sweetheart filmmaker J D Dillard.

Based on Adam Makos' 2014 book of the same name, the screenplay of the film is written by Jake Crane and Jonathan A. Stewart with revisions by Dillard.

The film will chart the true story of U.S. Navy fighter pilots, Jesse Brown and Tom Hudner, two young men from different worlds. Initiated together into the VF-32 squadron, they are pushed to their limits, testing and flying a new design of fighter jet. But their friendship is tested when one of them is shot down behind enemy lines.

According to Variety, the film is being produced by Molly Smith, Rachel Smith, Thad Luckinbill and Trent Luckinbill for Black Label Media.

Sony Pictures Worldwide Acquisitions has acquired the film, while STX International, a division of ErosSTX, is handling international distribution.

We are thrilled to be partnering with both Sony Pictures and STX International to bring this epic story to the big screen. J D Dillard is one of the most exciting filmmakers in the business and brings an extraordinary vision to this film in combination with our talented cast, said Smith.

Production is set to start in February next year.

## Anna Faris quits 'Mom' after seven seasons

**LOS ANGELES, SEP 5 (PTI):** Actor-comedian Anna Faris is exiting her hit TV show Mom, ahead of its eighth season, in pursuit of new opportunities.

In the CBS sitcom from creator Chuck Lorre, Faris plays Christy, an exasperated single mom of two, who must navigate sobriety, parenthood, and her relationship with her mother Bonnie, essayed by Allison Janney, who also grapples with addiction.

The past seven years on Mom' have been some of the most fulfilling and rewarding of my career. I'm so thankful to Chuck, the writers, and my amazing castmates for creating a truly wonderful work experience.

While my journey as Christy has

come to an end, allowing me to pursue new opportunities, I'll be watching next season and rooting for my TV family, Faris said in a statement to Variety.

News of her exit comes just days ahead of the September 14 production start on season eight.

From the inception of Mom,' Anna was the first and only choice for the role of Christy. We are so proud of the stories we have been able to tell during Anna's seven years with us. We wish Anna all the best, and we thank her for her beautiful portrayal, Warner Bros. Television, CBS, and Chuck Lorre Productions said in a joint statement.

Mom also features Mimi Kennedy, Jaime Pressly, Beth Hall, William Fichtner and Kristen Johnston.

It is executive produced by Lorre, Nick Bakay, Baker and Warren Bell.



### ARIES:

If you've been pushing yourself too hard, slow down and breathe. The cards are urging you to reassess your priorities, Aries, and your relationship with yourself. What are you trying to prove by outdoing your past records? The truth is, your body "and" your mind will ultimately have to bear the brunt of your negligence. If you're already dealing with physical ailments or blockages of some sort, make time for a quick body scan. You know what to do if there is something that requires urgent attention.

Tip: Reassess your relationship with yourself and your physical vessel.

### TAURUS:

Everything you need to know can be found by digging into that well of wisdom within you. So, instead of looking outside for guidance, connect with yourself on a deeper level. You'll know exactly what to do, Taurus, and you're being asked to act without delay. Some of you may find that your dreams and visions are getting trippier by the minute. Signs and symbols follow you wherever you go. Maintaining a psychic journal will help you make sense of the messages coming through from the higher realms.

Tip: You already know what to do. Trust your inner wisdom.

### GEMINI:

So what if it hasn't worked out, Gemini? Don't give up now. The cards are urging you to pick up the pieces and move forward and onwards. Recognise the potential you have been blessed with. Know that you possess the power to move mountains as you go along. What the path requires from you: a new level of commitment. When you set an intention for the Universe, the Universe will send you the support you need to survive this storm.

Tip: You possess the power to move mountains as you go along.

### CANCER:

If you've been thinking about setting aside some time to meditate, set

intentions, and connect with your guides, now is the time, Cancer. Your helpers from the unseen realms are trying to get through to you. With a little bit of practice, you will be able to understand what they're bringing your attention to and what you need to heal within. Remember, the Universe never gives us anything we're not equipped to handle. Trust that you will find the guidance required to realign with your path and make positive changes.

Tip: You are receiving downloads from the unseen realms.

### LEO:

You could continue doing things in the same way as you have been doing them all your life, but where's the fun in that? 'Innovation' is your power word, Leo, and it requires you to make radical changes even if this makes you feel like your life has been turned upside down temporarily. If you've been feeling creatively blocked, it's a good idea to step away from the given project and awaken your inner child. You'll be surprised by the creative solutions that come your way when you're busy having fun.

Tip: 'Innovation' is your magic word.

### VIRGO:

Oh, the mountains we can move when we believe in our own potential! 'Confidence' is your power word, Virgo, which comes not from a space of ego, but from that inner reserve of strength and wisdom. You've been here several times before. You know exactly how to triumph over your demons. Remember, your spirit guides are with you, giving you the signs you need to keep moving towards the finish line. PS: It's time to go seize the day!

Tip: 'Confidence' is your power word.

### LIBRA:

The full moon in Pisces brought with itself all sorts of revelations "and" opened up the portal to deeper awareness. It's a time of getting to 'know thyself' more intimately, and making love to the parts of you that

you have rejected over the years. You'll find that your psychic abilities will also strengthen in the process. Make time for your meditative practices. Stay connected to your guides and ascended masters who are assisting you from the unseen realms. The messages you are receiving right now will help you in the process of ascension.

Tip: This is a time of spiritual awakening.

### SCORPIO:

To know yourself this intimately is a gift that not many possess. Respect and honour the messages you are receiving from your superconsciousness, even though they may not make sense in that moment. The Universe works in mysterious ways and you will soon understand why you were guided to make certain decisions. Some of you may be stepping into a time when you will be sharing your gifts with others in a bigger way. Trust the pathway that's opening up for you, Scorpio.

Tip: Honour the messages you are receiving from your superconsciousness.

### SAGITTARIUS:

When a desire arises from deep within you, it is your soul's way of bringing your attention to what you need to create in this lifetime. Are you living a life that is in alignment with this sacred purpose, or a dream that's been handed down to you by Society? 'Authenticity' is your power word, Sagittarius, and sometimes it requires you to move past the illusion you have created for yourself. The path you want to walk on may seem impossible from where you are standing, but you'll be surprised by how beautifully things fall into place once you befriend courage.

Tip: Honour your soul's calling.

### CAPRICORN:

We are in the midst of Kali Yuga, or what the seers referred to as 'the end of time'. However, the law of duality is always at play in the

earthly realm. Which means that there are always 'good forces' to counteract the evil. However, what we consume by way of news and other media tends to highlight the darkness at all times, which in turn triggers fear and panic. Just for today, you're being asked to change the consumption game, to focus on the positive changes that are taking place around you, no matter how big or small they may be. Trust that redirecting your gaze will bring about a shift in your vibration.

Tip: Focus on the good things that are taking place around you.

### AQUARIUS:

The cards are bringing your attention to the first energy centre in your body known as the 'muladhara', located at the base of your spine (the coccyx, to be precise). When there is an imbalance in our 'root', it affects the way we feel about money and security. Today, instead of trying to control your external circumstances, look within. Ask yourself the question: "What do I need to do in order to feel secure?" In moments of deep connection, you will find your answers. Working with a healer or therapist could alleviate the process. Walking barefoot on the grass, practicing yoga, and meditating with crystals such as tourmaline, smoky quartz and red jasper will open the gates of healing.

Tip: Bring your attention to your root chakra.

### PISCES:

What if the things you feel passionately about are anything but random? What if they're forming a bridge between where you are standing and where you need to be? Don't diminish your desires, Pisces, as they hold the secret to your evolution in the earthly realm. Today, you will find that the Universe is helping you understand your true calling and progress further on your path. So move beyond the perceived limitations and get ready to conquer the world!

Tip: Your desires hold the secret to your evolution in the earthly realm.