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# SummitTIMES

Vol 05 | Issue 278 | Gangtok | Tuesday | 20 October 2020

ON TOP OF THE NEWS

RNI No. SIKENG/2016/69420

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## Lift restrictions on seating capacity in taxis, urges SPYF

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 19 OCT:**

Sikkim Progressive Youth Forum has written to the Transport Minister urging him to do away with the restrictions on seating capacity in taxis and to begin SNT bus service in small towns and villages of the state.

According to the forum, restrictions on the seating capacity and the consequent increase in vehicle fares is hurting

the pockets of the common Sikkimese.

SPYF has said that there is no scientific evidence that carrying just two passengers instead of 4 would protect people from the virus. The restriction does not ensure 6 feet distance inside a vehicle, they add.

It has therefore urged the government to make the existing restrictions on seating capacity optional.

## Bala Devi returns to action for Rangers FC in Scotland

**NEW DELHI, OCT 19 (PTI):** Indian women's football team forward Bala Devi returned to action in faraway Scotland, coming on as a second-half substitute in Rangers FC's 5-1 drubbing of Hearts Women FC in the Scottish top-flight.

The 30-year-old Manipuri had decided to stay back in Glasgow during the global lockdown, brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

She got back into action with Scottish Women's Premier League resuming on Sunday.

Rangers Women FC got off to a flying start.

"It was really good to be back on the football pitch once again. Being away from the pitch for so many months is not a good feeling," Bala was quoted as saying by the-aiff.com.

"But all those months of hard work paid off, and we have now started off with a win but this is only the start of a long season ahead."

Bala had been training for the Rangers for around two months

ahead of her first post-pandemic game against Hearts Women FC.

"I have been training with the team for about a couple of months now, and hopefully we will be physically ready to go once the league starts," Bala said.

"Of course, our team gave us our fitness programmes, which was optional for us to follow when the pandemic struck. But I made it a point to follow the training modules given to me," she added.

"The workouts I could do at home, I did indoors. I found a park near my home here in Glasgow, and did most of my training there, when it was safe to go out. Since there was a lot of open space I was also able to do some running, and that felt good."

Such was her determination to keep her mind in the game that she doubled up her training efforts by joining her teammates from the Indian women's team to train together online.

However, it has not always been easy at her new home abroad.

## Two more COVID deaths takes toll to 62 in Sikkim

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 19 OCT:**

Sikkim has witnessed two more COVID-19 related deaths taking the State's death toll to 62 on Monday. One 60-year-old man from Chumbung in West District died last evening with comorbidities, while another 60-year-old man from Tathangchen in East District with no comorbidities succumbed to novel coronavirus this morning.

In the daily health bulletin on Monday, Health Department State IEC Officer, Sonam G Bhutia mentioned that a 60-year-old man from Chumbung was admitted at STNM hospital on 05 October

and passed away at around 8:30 AM on Sunday. He added that the patient had the comorbid conditions of diabetes and hypertension.

Another 60-year-old man from Tathangchen, Gangtok, who was admitted in the ICU facility of STNM hospital, passed away at around 6 AM this morning. He informed that the patient was admitted in STNM hospital on 06 October after testing COVID-19 positive and was in the ICU facility. He said that the patient did not have any comorbid condition and died due to COVID-19.

In the meantime, with no RT-PCR testing as VRD Lab in STNM hospital was



closed on Sunday, there were only four fresh cases of novel coronavirus reported in the last 24 hours ending 8 AM Monday. Four persons tested positive for COVID-19 in the rapid antigen testing of 18 samples on Sunday, while

all 10 samples tested by TrueNat returned negative for COVID-19.

The State's tally of confirmed cases of COVID-19 has crossed the 3600 mark and stands at 3601, while the figure of discharged

patients of COVID-19 in the State has further improved to 3195 with the discharge of 11 more patients on Sunday. The number of active cases in Sikkim has further come down to 263, three of whom are currently in ICU facility.

Mr Bhutia informed that out of four new cases of COVID-19, three have been reported in East District and one in West District. While giving details of new cases reported in RAT, he informed that one person from Middle Tikpur, Sombaria in West District and one from near Paljor Stadium, one from Chalamthang, Pakyong and one from Namcheybong, Pakyong were found positive for COVID-19.

## COVID-19 caseload in India crosses 75-lakh mark



**NEW DELHI, OCT 19 (PTI):** The number of new coronavirus infections reported daily in India dropped below 60,000 for the second time this month, while the number of new fatalities registered across the country dipped below 600 almost after three months, the Union Health Ministry data stated on Monday.

The total cases mounted to 75,50,273 with 55,722 infections being reported in a day. The death toll climbed to 1,14,610 with 579

fatalities being registered in a span of 24 hours, the data updated at 8 am showed.

On October 13, India had last registered daily cases below 60,000.

The active cases of coronavirus infection remained below 8 lakh for the third consecutive day.

There are 7,72,055 active cases of coronavirus infection in the country which comprises 10.23 per cent of the total caseload, the data stated.

The national recovery rate has

improved to 88.26 per cent while the case fatality rate due COVID-19 stands at 1.52 per cent.

India's COVID-19 tally had crossed the 20-lakh mark on August 7, 30 lakh on August 23 and 40 lakh on September 5. It went past 50 lakh on September 16, 60 lakh on September 28 and crossed 70 lakh on October 11.

According to the ICMR, a cumulative total of 9,50,83,976 samples have been tested up to October 18 with 8,59,786 samples being tested on Sunday.

## Half of Indians may have had coronavirus by February, government panel estimates

**MUMBAI, 19 OCT [REUTERS]:** At least half of India's 1.3 billion people are likely to have been infected with the new coronavirus by next February, helping slow the spread of the disease, a member of a federal government committee tasked with providing projections said on Monday.

India has so far reported 7.55 million cases of the coronavirus and is second only to the United States in terms of total infections.

But COVID-19 infections are decreasing in India after a peak in mid-September, with 61,390 new cases reported on average each day, according to a Reuters tally.

"Our mathematical model estimates that around 30% of the population is currently infected and it could go up to 50% by February," Manindra Agrawal, a professor at the Indian Institute for Technology in Kanpur and a committee member, told Reuters.

The committee's estimate for the current spread of the virus is much higher than the federal government's serological surveys, which showed that only around 14 per cent of the population had been infected, as of September.

But Agrawal said serological surveys might not be able to get sampling absolutely correct because of the sheer size of the population that they were surveying.

Instead, the committee of virologists, scientists and other experts, whose report was made public on Sunday, has relied on a mathematical model.

"We have evolved a new model which explicitly takes into account unreported cases, so we can divide infected people into two categories – reported cases and infections that do not get reported," Agrawal said.

The committee warned that their projections would not hold up if precautions were not followed, and cases could spike by up to 2.6 million infections in a single month if measures such as social distancing and wearing masks were ignored.

## ‘Covid-19 peak over’: No explanation, but panel experts indicate reasons for both hope and caution

**AMITABH SINHA**

**GAYA, 19 OCT [INDIANEXPRESS]:** The reasons for the continuous decline in coronavirus infection numbers since last month have not been clear. The numbers have fallen sharply – even though travel restrictions have eased, economic and other activities have resumed and, to a large extent, normalcy has returned. There has also been no reduction in the number of tests, nor has the disease prevalence in the population reached a stage where 'herd immunity' would have to be factored in. The use of face masks, and physical distancing are far from being universal.

The government-appointed scientific committee has not spelt out the possible reasons for the decline in coronavirus numbers. But two of its members offered insights into what could be happening.

"A recent case study of Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu published in the journal Science a few weeks ago showed that almost 70 per cent of infected people were not passing the disease to others. The virus was spreading only through a small set of people who are referred to as super-spreaders," Prof Manindra Agrawal, a member of the committee, told

The Indian Express.

These super-spreaders, Prof Agrawal said, have a greater chance of getting infected during the early phase of the epidemic. "So, it is possible that the super-spreaders have already been infected, and become immune. And as we have seen, very few among the others transmit the disease. This could be one possible reason for what we are seeing right now," he said.

Super-spreaders are infected people who infect a large number of others. The study that Agrawal referred to, had relied on data from over 85,000 confirmed infections in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu until August 1, and nearly 6 lakh of their contacts who were identified and traced. It is the largest such study so far.

"Look, we all have varying degrees of contact with people. We may have 10-15 people with whom we interact on a very regular basis, then another larger set of people whom we might be meeting occasionally, and an even larger set with whom we rarely interact. During restrictions, we would be interacting mainly with people within our innermost circle. Whatever infections had to happen in that small circle of contacts might



already have happened. Once that has happened, the numbers are expected to decline. For fresh infections to take place, people need to start interacting with the larger sets, or with complete strangers, as with co-passengers in public transport. That has just begun to happen, and I suspect most of the infections that we see right now are a result of those kinds of interactions, rather than in the closed groups," Dr Kang said.

"Everything about the transmission

of the virus is dependent on the nature and length of our interactions with other people. And there is a lot that we either do not understand, or are unable to analyse because of lack of adequate data. But this decline in numbers in the last one month is not inexplicable. It can be explained if we have good data and information," she said.

Prof Agrawal pointed out that the current decline in cases in India were similar to what many European countries had experienced a few months ago.

"Take the case of Italy, for example. There too, the disease prevalence had not become so widespread that we could have begun talking about herd immunity. But the cases had declined very sharply. What we are seeing now (in Italy) is a resurgence, or a second wave. But it is not necessary that every country or region has to go through a second wave of infections. If we are careful, and tide over the next few months, we can be hopeful of a better situation next month," he said.

Prof Kang said apart from festivals, the approaching winter and the resultant increase in air pollution could also be reasons for concern.

"We do not yet fully understand the correlation of the coronavirus epidemic with cold weather. But there is a seasonality associated with the spread of other kinds of viruses and infectious diseases, and based on that experience, it would not entirely be out of place to suggest that the spread of coronavirus might increase during winter. We have to be careful. Air pollution could be a cause for concern as well. Bad air is already a big reason for respiratory diseases, and coronavirus can complicate matters further," she said.



## Annual Souvenir of Nepali Gorkha Sewa Samiti released

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 19 OCT:**

The Annual Souvenir of Nepali Gorkha Sewa Samiti, Hamro Chahari Smarika was released in Mumbai on 18 Oct by renowned singer, Deepa Narayan Jha, a press release informs.

Advisor and writer of Hamro Chahari, Hira Chhetri while conducting the live telecast program on Hamro Prajashakti mentioned that the monthly meet program

named Basibiyalo which was closed due to the pandemic shall also resume shortly.

On this occasion, Nepalese entrepreneur and proprietor of Daffodils Industries, Ramji Shivakoti presented 50 pieces of hand bags which was later distributed among the patients residing at Hamro Chahari Ashram.

General secretary of Sanyukta Nepali Mahasangh, Purna Kanwar presented



financial support to Hamro Chahari during the event.

Women guests of Hamro Chahari from different parts of the

country and abroad joined the program virtually.

## South convenes DISHA quarterly meeting

**NAMCHI, 19 OCT (IPR):**

The quarterly meeting of District Development Coordination and Monitoring Committee (DISHA) under South District was held at the Conference Hall of South District Zilla Panchayat Bhawan today.

The meeting was attended by Member of Parliament (Lok Sabha) and Chairman (DISHA), Indra Hang Subba, accompanied by DC (South) Raghu K, Zilla Adhakshya (South) Tshering Dem Bhutia, Zilla Upa-Adhakshya Bhim Lhakey, Additional Political Secretary Anjita Rajalim along with ADCs (Dev), HoDs, officials of all Line Department and representatives of Farmer Producer Organisations of South District.

The programme was commenced by offering Khadas and bouquet to the Chief Guest and distinguished guests by



DC South.

Further, DC (South) Raghu K. in his welcome address spoke about the importance of DISHA meeting. He also highlighted on the formation of DISHA which is to fulfill the objective of ensuring better coordination and working efficiently in a time-bound manner towards achieving overall development of the district.

Addressing the

meeting, MP, Indra Hang Subba stressed on the proper implementation of the flagship schemes by respective departments in order to achieve holistic development of society. He added that the development done now will be beneficial for the future generation and help them to be self-reliant and self-sustained. Hence, he asserted upon accountability and transparency

towards execution and implementation of the schemes.

In addition, he also approached the elected representatives to intervene in timely manner so as to seek out any drawbacks and advised the concerned officials to work in close coordination for the welfare and upliftment of the public. Furthermore, he appreciated South District Department

for their dedication towards DISHA and encouraged to work more efficiently in order to achieve the desired target.

During the meeting, various departmental works undertaken so far under various government schemes and its issues were discussed like MGNREGA, SBM RURAL Cluster, PMAY, PMGSY, DDU-GKY, PMKVY, command area development and water management programme, PMEGP, PMUY, IPDS, PMFBY, RKVY, NHM, ICDS, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, Implementation of National Food Security Act, DILRM, Digital India) Internet Access Programme and Smart Cities Mission.

Officials from all the line departments presented detailed PPTs on the schemes. The FPOs members also addressed about its ongoing work status, achievements and issues related to them accordingly.

## Training on Children's Parliament at Namok Swayem

**MANGAN, 19 OCT [IPR]:**

Today, the District Child Protection Unit, North under Child Protection Scheme, Social Justice and Welfare Dept, in coordination with the Village level Child Protection Committee, Namok Swayem GPU organised a training programme on the Procedure of Children's Parliament for the Village Level Children's Parliament of the GPU.

The program was chaired by Ongdup Bhutia, Zilla Panchayat who addressed the members of the Children's Parliament and advised them to fulfill their duties and responsibilities as Child



Parliamentarians with utmost sincerity, for which they would be guided and assisted wholeheartedly by the Village level Child Protection Committee.

He also volunteered to be their Facilitator and assist them in their sittings as and when held. The Panchayat President-cum-Chairperson, Village level Child Protection Committee, Dawchung

Bhutia also extended her wholehearted support to the child Parliamentarians and welcomed them to the child friendly GPK for holding their meetings.

The Prime Minister of the VLCP, Chewang Norbu Lepcha, requested all the Ministers to work hand in hand for the betterment of their community and protection of child rights. The DCPO, North,

Wendy Lepcha explained the roles and responsibilities of each Minister and the procedure to be followed for their meetings. She also highlighted the purpose of the Children's Parliament and encouraged the children to know their rights, be empowered and speak up on any form of abuse or violation of their rights

and take advantage of the enthusiastic support of the VLCP for their benefit.

The other team members of the District Child Protection Unit, Eeptisha Rai sensitised the children on various child related legislations and the Child Protection Scheme under Social Justice and Welfare Dept. Counsellor Phuphu Doma and Bishal Tamang played an interactive game on child rights to sensitise the children on the Rights of Survival, Development, Participation and Protection. The program ended with the Vote of Thanks by Roshan Subba, Social worker, DCPU (N).

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## Two tier Cricket Club Tournament update

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 19 OCT:**

The Sikkim Cricket Association's 1st two tier Club Tournament match was played between Gyalshing & District Cricket Welfare Association (GDCWA) vs United Soreng Cricket Club today, a press release informs.

GDCWA won the toss and chose to bat first. In the first innings, they scored 181 runs with the loss of 7 wickets in 30.00 overs, wherein Bhushan Subba scored 38 runs in 38 balls, followed by Narchung Lepcha who scored 38 runs off 47 runs.

The captain Jordan Sherpa scored 29 runs off 38 balls.

Deepesh Chettri, Nobin Subba and Amir Subba took 2 wickets each and Andriyas Rai took 1 wicket. They set the target of 182 runs.

In the second innings United Soreng Cricket Club was all-out for 69 runs in 25.5 overs. Vivek Subba with 16 runs was the highest scorer for Soreng. Md Adil, Nam Hang Limboo and Prashant Rai took 2 wickets each and Shamsher Pariyar, Bhushan Subba and Dinesh Rai took 1 wicket each.

GDCWA won the match by 112 runs. Bhushan Subba was announced as the man of the match for his 38 runs and 1 wicket.

### New SMC formed in Rhenock Reshi School



**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 19 OCT:**

A new School Management Committee (SMC) was formed in Rhenock Reshi School today, a press release informs.

The event was chaired by former

ward Panchayat Member, Deepa Rai along with Bhanuraj Thapa, HM, teachers, members of old and new SMC following the entire Covid-19 protocol.

Headmaster, Dhurba Vasistha talked about the School's

development and achievement. Similarly new SMC vice president, Robin Tamang and Santosh Pradhan spoke on the same matter. The meeting was conducted by teacher, Kamal Bhujel and the vote of thanks was shared by teacher, KK Pradhan.

### 153 families join SKM at Rangang Yangang



**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 19 OCT:**

Sikkim Krantikari Morcha GPU Level joining cum induction programme was held at Neya Mangzing GPU, Rangang Yangang Constituency wherein 153 families quit SDF

and joined SKM, a press release informs.

The meeting was attended by All Sikkim Contractors Association Chairman, NB Dahal, Rangang Yangang Area In-charge, Raj Kumar Basnet, Confidential Secretary to CM, Bikash Basnet, Chairman Land Use &

Environment, Tshering Lepcha, CLC president Rangang Yangang, Tengayla Namka and SKM representatives.

The primary objective of the meeting was to build a strong party organizational structure at the grassroots level, the release mentions.

## Lt. Phul Maya Dahal Memorial Inter Village Volleyball tourney



**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 19 OCT:**

Second day of the Late Phul Maya Dahal Memorial Inter Village Volleyball Tournament saw Katwal Six and Bardang Six reaching the next round today, a press release informs.

Katwal Six defeated Bagaykhola

with two games to one and Bardang Six defeated Sumin FC in two straight sets.

Principal, Ralap SS, Dorjee Sherpa and JD, Education Department, KB Chettri, was the chief guest and the guest of honou of the day.

Other guests

included president, Shantinagar Gaon Sudhar Samiti, Krishna Chettri, Milan Sharma, DP Pandey and Arjun Chettri.

Khemal Katwal of Katwal Six and Sabir Lohar, Captain, Bardang Six were awarded man of the match titles.

### Tumin Lingee resident donates to Gor School

**SUMMIT REPORT  
GANGTOK, 19 OCT:**

Pinto Bhutia, of Tumin Lingee donated PPE kit, thermal scanner, sanitizers, etc. to Government Secondary School, Gor, North Sikkim, a press release informs. He has donated such items to 7 different schools and colleges.



## ANTYESHTI KRIYA

The Antyeshti kriya of Shree Buddha Maya Thatal, Mother of Yogen Thatal who left for an heavenly adobe on 11 Oct, 2020 falls on 23 Oct, 2020 at their own residence i.e. Bardang, Landmark - ATTC College. All the relatives and well wisher are hereby requested to attend the final ritual/prayer for the same.

**Santosh Thatal, son (8145167333)**

**Sandeep Thatal, son (6283820991)**

**Madan Thatal, son (8509607251)**

**Yogen Thatal, son (8170070813).**



## SLSA conducts training for Remand Advocates

**GANGTOK, 19 OCT (IPR):** Under the directions of Executive Chairperson, Sikkim State Legal Services Authority, Justice Meenakshi Madan Rai and as per the State Plan of Action, a Training Programme for all the Remand Advocates and Retainer Lawyers on Pre-Arrest/Custody/Remand and the Duties of Remand Advocate was conducted through webinar from the Office of Sikkim SLSA on 17 October, (Saturday).

Member Secretary, Sonam Palden Bhutia, Sikkim SLSA was the Resource Person who conducted the training programme through webinar, which was attended by the Remand Advocates and Retainer Lawyers from all the four Districts of Sikkim.

In view of the guidelines of National



Legal Services Authority (NALSA) and under the "Legal Aid Counsel" Scheme of NALSA, Remand Advocates have been appointed in all the Learned Courts of Sikkim, for the purpose of representing the accused who does not have or cannot afford an Advocate of their choice, oppose remands, move

bail/miscellaneous applications, etc. and undertake steps, as may be necessary for effective representation of such accused person.

Retainer Lawyers have also been appointed for the Offices of Sikkim SLSA, High Court Legal Services Committee and the 04 District Legal Services Authorities

(East at Sikkim, West at Gyalshing, South at Namchi and North at Mangan). These Retainer Lawyers, man the Front Offices set up in the Legal Services Institutions in the District, provide legal counseling and support to the children residing at the Child Care Institutions, devote time for legal aid activities and also provide legal aid advice, consultation, drafting and conveyance.

During the training, Sonam Palden Bhutia emphasised on the fact that right to free legal aid under the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987, and, assistance is

an essential ingredient of reasonable, fair, and just procedure for a person accused of any offence and is essential that Access to Justice is available at all stages of the criminal process including pre-arrest stage. He also explained in detail about the history and importance of all stages of criminal investigation with Case Laws. He asserted that providing legal aid to the arrested at the pre-arrest stage ensures protection of the rights of people when they are most vulnerable, and also strengthens the criminal justice system.

NALSA's Scheme of engaging Retainer Lawyers and Remand Advocates and their roles and responsibilities, were also disseminated to the participants. The Resource Person also utilized power-point presentation to highlight some of the important case laws and legal provisions regarding the topics.

The training session ended with interaction between the participating Lawyers with the Resource Person.

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## ED summons against Abdullah Witch-hunt: NC

**SRINAGAR, OCT 19 (PTI):**

The National Conference (NC) condemned the Enforcement Directorate (ED) summons to party president and Member of Parliament Farooq Abdullah on Monday, describing the move as witch-hunt and vengeance.

In a joint statement, several NC leaders from the Kashmir valley, the Jammu region and the Union Territory of Ladakh condemned the "undue witch-hunt" and intimidation of Abdullah, saying the "motive" behind the summons is to deter him from representing the aspirations of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

They said the incumbent ruling dispensation in New Delhi is employing the government machinery and malevolent tactics to subdue Abdullah's effort in forging unity among different mainstream political parties of Jammu and Kashmir.

"This government is doing everything it can to silence the combined voice of the people of Jammu and Kashmir, which Dr Sahib (Abdullah) has been able to forge. The tactics are being employed across the board in the country to stifle the voices of dissent by using all spiteful measures, the party will not duck due to such tactics," the statement said.

The leaders condemned the treatment meted out to Abdullah, an octogenarian, the seniormost politician of Jammu and Kashmir and the Member of Parliament from Srinagar.

"Such tactics will only make us more resolute towards achieving our goal peacefully and

constitutionally. The measure also reveals the jitters the present ruling dispensation is going through in the wake of the growing consensus among all mainstream political parties on the People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration, headed by Dr Farooq Abdullah," they said.

NC general secretary Ali Muhammad Sagar, provincial presidents Nasir Aslam Wani (Kashmir) and Devender Singh Rana (Jammu) and other senior leaders of the party, including those from Ladakh, were signatories to the statement.

Earlier, an NC spokesperson said the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is employing government agencies to target Abdullah, after failing to fight him politically.

"The BJP, after failing to politically fight party president Farooq Abdullah, has resorted to employing its agencies for the task," he said in a statement here.

The ED questioned Abdullah, a former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister, on Monday in connection with a money-laundering probe in a case related to the alleged embezzlement of Jammu and Kashmir Cricket Association funds, officials said.

They said the NC president's statement will be recorded under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) as in the past.

The NC spokesperson said the ED summons to Abdullah is clearly the result of the unity the party president has been able to forge among mainstream political parties in Jammu and Kashmir in the shape of the People's Alliance for

Gupkar Declaration.

"This is the price one faces when opposed to BJP's ideology and divisive politics. Recent history is a witness to how the BJP has been employing coercive and intimidating measures through various departments to target opposition leaders across the country. The recent ED summons to Abdullah is a case in point," the statement said.

The NC said the timing of the summons is very clear as the previous summons was issued just before August 5 last year, when the BJP-led Centre abrogated Article 370 of the Constitution, and this summons comes within days of the formation of the People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration, of which Abdullah has taken a lead.

"Abdullah continues to maintain his innocence and will cooperate with the authorities in what is nothing but a witch-hunt," the statement added.

Meanwhile, taking to Twitter, Abdullah's son and NC vice-president Omar Abdullah described the ED summons as political vendetta.

"The party will be responding to this ED summons shortly. This is nothing less than political vendetta coming days after the formation of the People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration. To set the record straight no raids are being conducted at Dr Sahib's residence," he wrote on the microblogging website.

People's Democratic Party (PDP) president Mehbooba Mufti said the ED summons displays the extent of the Government of India's nervousness about mainstream parties in Jammu and Kashmir fighting as one unit.

## UN hopes meeting will raise \$1 billion for key Sahel nations

**UNITED NATIONS, OCT 19 (AP):** The U.N. humanitarian chief is hoping a major ministerial meeting Tuesday will not only raise 1 billion for the three countries

at the epicenter of a humanitarian crisis in Africa's Sahel region but also spur leaders to address the underlying causes, including increasing conflict and insecurity, weak governance and a lack of development.

Undersecretary-General Mark Lowcock said in an interview with The Associated Press that the troubling situation in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger is a symptom of failure to deal with all of those causes of problems as well as rapid population growth and climate change.

As a result, he said, we have a record number of people, more than 13 million, needing humanitarian assistance across the border areas of Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, and most of them are children.

The virtual ministerial meeting Tuesday -- hosted by Denmark, Germany, the European Union and the United Nations -- is aimed at spotlighting one of the world's fastest growing humanitarian crises, so

as to increase aid funding and put a stronger focus on solutions, Lowcock said.

This is timely because things are deteriorating at an alarming rate, he said.

Otherwise problems will compound and there'll be a lot of loss of life. According to the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, which Lowcock heads, the 1.4 billion humanitarian appeal for the three countries is only 39% funded for 2020.

An estimated 7.4 million people are facing crisis levels of food insecurity during the current lean season, three times more than a year ago, the agency said.

That's people who don't know how they will put food on the table for their family that day or the next day, and who have got acute malnutrition problems in the family, Lowcock said in Thursday's interview.

Compared to the average of the last five years, acute food insecurity has increased by a staggering 514% in Burkina Faso, 130% in Mali and 144% in Niger, his agency said.

What I hope is through this conference, for these three countries,

we'll get up to about a billion dollars for 2020, Lowcock said. That will certainly enable us to keep the situation under control and contain the worst difficulties. The question then is, are we going to sustain that into 2021-2022?

He said the problems of the central Sahel will take time to address and one aim of Tuesday's meeting is to get recognition that the wider world needs to engage for the long term in this region and that leaders must be focused on meeting the needs of the people and dealing with the underlying problems.

Lowcock said governments in the Sahel need to assert control over their territory, noting that large areas are now under control of extremist groups.

But he stressed that this must be done in a way that doesn't compound the problem, saying there are too many cases of military intervention being excessively violent, or not protecting people in this region at the moment.

Lowcock said the Sahel is the only region in the world where all the U.N. indicators of human development are getting worse.

He called for more

girls to go to school and stay there, a reduction in infant and maternal mortality, and improvements in clean water availability.

Lowcock said there must also be a recognition that traditional livelihoods in the Sahel -- subsistence agriculture and nomadic livestock grazing -- will not support the number of people there will be in the region in the decades ahead, not least because of climate change.

As an example, he pointed to the evaporation of major environmental assets like Lake Chad, which is now a shriveled puddle.

More than 100 countries have moved from largely subsistence-based rural agriculture economies over the past few hundred years to economies developed in relation to cities, so there are models for Sahel countries to use in dealing with these problems, but at the moment, they're not being taken up in an effective way, he said.

Lowcock said he fears that in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger as well as three other Sahel countries Cameroon, Chad and northeast Nigeria there is a risk of a tipping point where it starts to

get dramatically more difficult to deal with the underlying causes.

It's a bit like a snowball rolling down the hill, he said, pointing to a twentyfold increase in the number of displaced people between 2018 and 2020 from 70,000 to 1.5 million in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger while his year has seen the worst floods ever recorded in the region and the highest number of people in need of humanitarian assistance.

He also noted there has been a record level of attacks on aid workers this year and extremist groups have expanded their areas of operation. There must be a recognition that extremist groups have an agenda that is inimical to the interests or livelihoods of ordinary people in the places they control, he said.

These are not problems that can be solved in the short term, but until you face up to them, recognize what you're dealing with, and start talking about what the solutions can be, obviously you're not making any progress, Lowcock said. So you don't get to choose where you have to start the journey, but you do have to take the first steps.

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## Newspaper Business

*Layoffs and roll-backs, relevance and need*

These have not been good times for newspapers. Lay-offs, wind downs and if the recent incident in the Northeast, UP and elsewhere where journalists find themselves behind bars without a chargesheet but charges under draconian sections of an overbearing and thin-skinned state are added, the trouble is not just with the bottom-lines. There is also the ever present challenge of relevance and speed, something that social media and television beat newsprint to with ease. Newspapers have remained a sunset sector for a while now, but to their credit, still produce quality journalism and remain in circulation.

And while on the current times, in the region, we have known these immediate months as the news-drought phase as must be apparent to regular buyers of newspapers (thanks for doing so) who could not have missed the dearth of "local" news updates in their local papers. But this is a cyclical phase, what has arrived as a shocker, and also a reminder, on what the media space is going through came in the form of a major development at one of the richest newspapers of the country. It was not so long back that Hindustan Times media capped its layoff/ scale-down mission with the announcement that it was shutting down four editions – Kolkata, Ranchi, Bhopal and Indore. In typical HR bureaucratese, while it was clear that these editions would no longer be printed, the fate of journalists employed at these bureaus had not been clarified. In all probability, most of them were laid off, as HT had also done with its business bureaus in Delhi and Mumbai. It was not so long ago that a string of rather exceptional newspapers bankrolled by chit-fund finances folded up and left behind a litter of suddenly made jobless journalists. But at that time, the blame rested with the financiers; with what has happened with HT now and with other media houses over the recent years, however, has brought the whole print journalism model into question. One was always aware of these discussions raging the world over, but with these developments, the deliberations have arrived closer. Why, even this newspaper has risen from the ashes of another, and while that might have a ring of positivity to it, it also carries a hint of things not being all honky-dory in the newspaper business.

Point is that while journalism might serve the community, it still requires a business model to remain viable. Fiscal robustness is an important contributor to quality journalism. That said, it cannot be looked at solely as commercial enterprise. Unfortunately, business managers have been gaining more influence in media houses in the recent decades and while they have scaled up profits in the past, they clearly lack the resolve to weather economic crisis. Spending fiscal quarters or even entire financial years deep in the red is not new to newspaper houses, but they never triggered the kind of panic layoffs and roll-backs in the scale that one has been witnessing off late. That is happening because journalists have been edged out or won over by the accounts sections. That said, it is not being implied that newspapers should be not-for-profit (although, good luck with turning profits from good journalism), but just a reminder that business ups and downs had earlier led to re-strategizing and innovations unlike the bloodletting that one sees nowadays.

It is in a setting like this that one should also go over what newspapers are all about. Survival alone does not a good newspaper make. Opinions on this will undoubtedly differ, but here are some points for the readers to mull upon. For starters, good newspapers are unwavering in their commitment to their community and this "community" can be the national audience, a big city or even a small town. They serve as a kind of glue that provides various factions with the same information so that they can unite or divide based on their views formed from access to the same unbiased reportage. Newspapers don't decide, they provide the people with all the required information from all the varied points of view and let the people decide. Newspapers are lynchpins which keep things civilized even as they facilitate change and moderate the opposing views in the course of this change. They don't bring about the change. That is for the people to do. Newspapers and journalists who believe themselves to be the activists/ agents of change credit themselves with too much intelligence and importance. As individuals or even institutions, one can only contribute to change, not force it. These qualities are not always overtly expressed in a newspaper's pages, but flow naturally when newspapers succeed in shining the light on real problems. And good newspapers go a step further.

Apart from reporting on issues they provide insight into the issues that face a community. If, after reading a newspaper, you feel that you have understood an issue better, it is a sign that the papers are succeeding. Similarly, one should see her concerns and experiences reflected in the pages. That's a must, because that provides the connection between the publication and the readers. Good newspapers also play it straight. And when doubts surface, they explain their actions. But they are neither arrogant nor defensive. Finally, good newspapers are like relatives. They prompt a wide range of emotions that run the gamut from love to hate, depending on the day. But you still want them around, just like the relative. Look where we arrived - a conversation which started with layoffs, ended with finding family :-)

# New modelling finds investing in childcare and aged care almost pays for itself

JANINE DIXON & HELEN HODGSON  
THECONVERSATION.COM

In the absence of an official analysis of the impact of the budget by gender the National Foundation for Australian Women has this morning published its own gender analysis of the budget, across multiple dimensions.

It finds the government has invested heavily in things that will mainly benefit men, including apprenticeships and traineeships (two-thirds of which are taken by males), the construction of physical infrastructure, and tax breaks for the purchase of assets that will primarily assist the male-dominated industries of mining and manufacturing.

The female-dominated care sector was largely overlooked, despite the Royal Commission into Aged Care and the Disability Royal Commission highlighting shortcomings in the current system.

Childcare workers were among the first to lose JobKeeper.

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The extra funding injected into the aged care following tragic impacts of COVID was insufficient to bring the sector to a four star quality rating.

The experts believe the budget is a lost opportunity to maximise employment growth, to invest in the (social) infrastructure that will most boost the economy and to address the problems with female-dominated paid and unpaid work exposed by COVID-19.

CARE BOOSTS EMPLOYMENT  
Published with the National Foundation for Australian Women's

analysis is new modelling by the Victoria University Centre of Policy Studies on government investment in the care sector.

It examines what would happen if the government increased funding enough to boost the wages of personal and child care workers and to lift capacity to the point where it met unmet demand.

More than 900,000 Australians who provide unpaid care to the elderly, disabled, and children aged under five say they would like more hours in paid employment.

The modelling finds that the investment in the care economy needed to enable each of these unpaid carers to work an extra 10 hours a week in paid employment has a significant economic payoff, increasing labour supply by 2%.

By 2030 the extra labour supply would be fully absorbed into employment. Annual GDP per person would be \$1,270 higher, or more than \$30 billion in aggregate.

Women's paid employment would be 3.75% greater than it would have been if no action had been taken. Men's employment would be more than 0.75% above the no-action base case.

The average incomes of both women and men would be higher, although women's incomes would be higher by a greater margin.

A BOOST WOULD ALMOST PAY FOR ITSELF

The budgetary cost of the policy would be largely offset by increased economic growth which would underpin greater revenue collection from income taxes and the goods and services tax.



When fully running, the net cost to the budget would be less than one fifth of the direct cost.

Government investment in physical infrastructure helps in two ways – it provides construction jobs and a useful piece of infrastructure to support future economic activity.

Investment in care helps in three ways:

- It stimulates jobs and better conditions in the care sector, a worthy outcome in itself.

- It provides economic stimulus to all sectors by freeing people up to participate in the labour market, an impact that cannot be achieved by providing stimulus to other sectors, such as manufacturing, for example.

- And it addresses female economic disadvantage by reducing the wage gap and changing the circumstances that often set limits on what women can achieve in their careers.

THERE'S A NEW BUDGET AROUND THE CORNER

While the analysis shows the

population on average would be better off with an expanded care sector, it says nothing about how to reform access to subsidised or government-funded care.

The system is complicated, as are the (dis)incentives to work resulting from the present tax and charging arrangements.

However charged for, extra spending on childcare, aged care and disability care would produce an bigger bang for the buck than most of the extra spending announced in the budget, as well as producing better outcomes for women.

There's a budget update around the corner, in December, and a new budget due in May. If extra spending is needed, there's an opportunity to do it in a way that would really help and almost pay for itself.

*[Janine Dixon is Economist at Centre of Policy Studies, Victoria University; Helen Hodgson is Professor, Curtin Law School and Curtin Business School, Curtin University]*

# How Japanese research became the centre of a conservative culture war

KARIN NARITA  
THECONVERSATION.COM

The Japanese research community is in turmoil. On October 1, after less than three weeks as prime minister, Yoshihide Suga rejected the appointment of six scholars to the governing body of the Science Council of Japan (SCJ) in an unprecedented move. The decision was widely criticised, sparking protests that it amounted to an infringement of the academic freedom guaranteed by the constitution.

The SCJ was founded in 1949 as an autonomous public body to represent the country's community of researchers and provide independent policy recommendations to government. Though nominally under the jurisdiction of the prime minister, past appointments to the general assembly were nominated by the SCJ's selection committee and then confirmed by the prime minister as a formality.

Suga's rejection of six of the 105 nominees was the first time a prime minister did not make all the recommended appointments. The six rejected scholars are known critics of the policy agendas set by Shinzo Abe, Suga's predecessor and close political ally.

Though Suga denies the rejections had anything to do with the scholars' political beliefs, the move was widely condemned.

It may well be the case that these rejections are a political manoeuvre to legitimise reforms to the SCJ – and thereby the wider academic sector – by stirring up debate. On October 9, the government announced a review of the administration of the SCJ, hinting at changes to its budget.

Such moves fit into a wider context of increasingly nationalist interventions by Japanese conservatives in research and education.

CONSERVATIVE NATIONALISM

Since the second world war, education has been a contested political space in Japan. Directed initially by the Allied occupation, education was considered a public good, necessary to implement democratic norms.

In the 1980s, the premiership of the neoconservative Yasuhiro Nakasone profoundly influenced Japan's education systems, privatising universities and promoting cultural nationalism. This agenda marked a shift in the policies of the Liberal Democratic Party, which had dominated Japanese politics since 1955, and in Japanese conservatism more generally.

During the so-called "lost decade" of the 1990s, Japan experienced a series of financial, social and environmental crises. My ongoing research is looking at how conservatives blamed social disorder at this time on a loss of cultural coherence owing to globalisation and the perceived universalisation of socially liberal ideals, both in Japan and across the world. Since this period, Japanese conservatives have



argued that education should explicitly promote patriotism and duty to the nation.

Conservative thinkers such as Susumu Nishibe and Keishi Saeki have linked increasing capitalist financial movements and cross-border cultural exchanges. According to them, this cultural globalisation normalised socially liberal ideals and encumbered people's ability to identify with their nation's distinct culture. Such loss of national belonging across the world, they argue, has resulted in social and political crises as people search for a social identity. They also see it as a factor in the rise of religious and ethnic fundamentalism.

Researchers and academics have played a key role in this process of proliferating liberal social ideals. According to Nishibe, the true purpose of intellectuals is to introduce potentially controversial but innovative ways of understanding the world. But he argues that modern scholars have become blind to their own liberal values, undermining the possibility of critique.

These arguments are familiar: in anglophone academia, cultural conservatives have decried the so-called liberal values of multiculturalism and "political correctness" that they argue are silencing conservative voices. Elsewhere, this logic has played out to extreme ends: under the presidency of Jair Bolsonaro, Brazil has made significant funding cuts to humanities departments in order to banish leftwing ideologies. Most dramatically, in 2019 the Hungarian government illegally ejected the Central European University on claims that its founder, philanthropist George Soros, threatened to destroy Europe with migration and liberal values.

The fact that conservatives across the world uphold the same logic is in no way a coincidence.

The problem, for both Japanese and international conservatives, is not education

as such. They are happy to establish explicitly rightwing institutions, publish textbooks and build private schools. Rather, conservatives have redefined the purpose of education from a public good in itself to a means to culturally nationalist ends.

INTERVENTION IN UNIVERSITIES

In Japan, crucial to this project has been the 2006 reforms to the Fundamental Law of Education – considered the constitution for education. These turned education into a legal vehicle for imposing values on children that the state deems necessary, including "respect of tradition and culture and love of the national homeland".

In the past decade, the threat to education and research increased. In 2015, the Abe administration's patriotic ethos and plan to centralise control extended to universities – rousing extensive criticism from academics.

In late 2016, the prime minister's office requested access to a preliminary shortlist of nominations to the SCJ for the first time, signalling increasing interventionism in the selection process. In 2018, the government reinterpreted a 1983 law which governed the SCJ, concluding that the prime minister is not obliged to appoint recommended nominees. This dismantled decades-long consensus and set the scene for Suga's decisions in October.

The lack of an official explanation on why the six names were removed from the list of appointees hinders the ability to confirm the government's motives. But observers of Japanese politics and those concerned with academic freedom alike have ample reason to be uneasy about the future of independent research in Japan.

*[the writer is a PhD Candidate, School of Politics and International Relations, Queen Mary University of London]*

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# CAA to be implemented soon: Nadda

**SILIGURI (WB), OCT 19 (PTI):** BJP national president JP Nadda Monday said the execution of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act has been delayed due to the pandemic and asserted that the law will be implemented soon.

BJP which works for the development of all.

All of you will get the benefits of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act. It has been passed in Parliament. We are committed to it," he said at the meeting.

"Due to COVID-19 pandemic, implementation of CAA got delayed. But as the situation is slowing improving, work has started and rules are now being framed. It (CAA) will be implemented very soon. Nadda added.

He exuded confidence that the BJP will form the next government in West



Bengal after the state assembly polls in 2021 as the people of the state are fed up with the violence and cut-money culture of

the TMC government.

Nadda, who is on a day-long visit to take stock of organisational matters ahead of 2021

assembly elections, held separate meetings with BJP leaders of north Bengal region and social and religious groups.

# Single-day recoveries surpass fresh cases in Arunachal

**ITANAGAR, OCT 19 (PTI):** The number of COVID-19 recoveries in Arunachal Pradesh surpassed fresh cases on Monday, with 237 people recuperating from the disease, even as 55 new infections pushed the caseload in the northeast state to 13,406, a senior official said.

Barring 15, all new patients are asymptomatic and have been shifted to COVID care centres, State Surveillance Officer (SSO) Dr Lobsang Jampa said.

Of the 55 fresh cases, 25 were reported from the Capital Complex

region, six each from West Siang and Upper Siang and three from Changlang.

Two cases each were recorded in Lower Dibang Valley, West Kameng, Tirap and Tawang and one each from Shi-Yomi, Namsai, Lohit, Longding, East Kameng, Siang and East Siang.

"Two state police personnel from Changlang district are among the new patients, the SSO said.

Arunachal Pradesh currently has 2,824 active cases, while 30 people have succumbed to the

infection.

The number of those cured rose to 10,552, with the recovery rate now standing at 78.71 per cent.

The Capital Complex region -- comprising Itanagar, Naharlagun, Nirjuli and Banderdewa areas -- has the highest number of active cases at 1,406, followed by West Siang at 312, East Siang at 144, Changlang at 139, Lohit (111) and Tirap (102), Dr Jampa said.

As many as 2,93,164 samples were examined for COVID-19 so far, including 1,289 on Sunday, he added.

# Mountaineers trek to unexplored lake in Uttarakhand

**PITHORAGARH (U'KHAND), OCT 19 (PTI):** A five-member team of mountaineers has trekked to an unexplored lake at the base of the Sela pass located at a height of 20,000 feet here, according to expedition leader Yogesh Garbiyal.

"It is spread over 1-km area with serene and crystal clear waters," Garbiyal, who had scaled the Everest in 2017, told PTI.

The lake flows about three km north of the pass that links the Himalayan valleys of Vyas and Darma close to

the India-China border in the district, Garbiyal said.

He said they were in the process of informing the state government about the lake with a request to develop it for tourism purposes.

Garbiyal said the five-member team had

started its expedition, sponsored by Climbing Beyond Summits, on October 9 and concluded it on October 16 with the discovery of the lake.

Villagers in the area also expressed surprise over the discovery.

"We never heard

of the lake even from our forefathers," said Kunwar Singh Kutiya, a resident of Kuti village in Vyas Valley.

"Having a lake at such a height is rare and villagers would really be happy if it is developed for tourism purposes," he said.

# Jharkhand reports 385 new COVID-19 cases, 7 deaths

**RANCHI, OCT 19 (PTI):** Seven more people succumbed to COVID-19 in Jharkhand, raising the toll to 839, while 385 fresh cases pushed the tally to 96,352, a health department official said on Monday.

Three deaths were recorded in Ranchi and one each in Palamu, Koderma, Dhanbad and Deoghar.

Of the 385 new cases, 198 were reported from Ranchi, 23 from Bokaro, and 20 from East Singhbhum.

Jharkhand currently has 6,502 active cases, while 89,011 have recovered so far.

As many as 16,638 samples were tested for COVID-19 in the state on Sunday.

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# Rooney awaiting COVID-19 test result after friend's visit

**LONDON, 19 OCT [REUTERS]:** Wayne Rooney was "angry and disappointed" with a friend who had visited him despite being told to take a COVID-19 test and later testing positive, the former England captain's management said.

Rooney, a player-coach at Championship side Derby County, played in Derby's 1-0 home defeat by Watford on Friday, a day after the friend visited him at his home.

Under NHS guidelines anyone coming in contact with someone who tests positive for COVID-19 must isolate for 14 days.

"Wayne is angry and disappointed that he, his family and his club have been put in this position by someone acting secretly and in breach of government and NHS guidelines," Rooney's management said in a statement to British media, adding that he would take a COVID-19 test.

Derby said in a statement, without naming Rooney, that they were aware of the incident and that appropriate measures were taken in line with strict English Football League COVID-19 protocols and government guidelines.

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# Assam reports 3 coronavirus deaths, 318 new infections

**GUWAHATI, OCT 18 (PTI):** Assam reported three more fatalities due to COVID-19 and 318 new infections, the lowest in four months, taking the total to 2,00,709 cases, Health Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said on Sunday.

The overall positivity rate stood at 4.64 per cent against the total testing of 43,22,424 samples so far.

The state currently has a total of 28,158 active cases, and they are being treated at different hospitals and Covid Care Centres (CCCs) across the state, along with some being

at home isolation.

"Sad to share the demise of three #COVID patients today... My deepest condolences to the bereaved families & friends," Sarma said.

With this, the total number of persons losing their lives due to COVID-19 in the state has gone up to 868.

# Yokohama returns to Indian National Rally Championship



**NEW DELHI, OCT 19 (PTI):** The FMSCI Indian National Rally Championship 2020 will see a strong Japanese presence with tyre major Yokohama making a comeback into the country's premier motorsport championship.

Yokohama, which has made its presence felt across the Indian market over the last decade will once again associate with INRC, a welcome development for the sport in the country with scheduling going haywire amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

They will not only be coming on as partners but will also be competing in the championship proper under the banner "Team Yokohama."

Their team line-up comprises defending champion Chetan Shivram, Denn Thimmaiya, Lokesh Gowda, Vaibhav Marathe and Arjun Rao.

Thimmaiya will be competing in INRC 1 category driving the R2 Cedia, while Gowda and Shivram driving Cedia and Polo respectively will be leading their team's charge in INRC 2 category.

Rao will compete in INRC 3 driving a Polo and Marathe, driving a City -VTEC will exhibit his skills in INRC 4.

The team will be driving on Flagship ADVAN rally tyres, 185/65R15 A035 and 185/60R15 A035 for the Gravel sections and 185/60R13 A021 and 190/580R15 A006T for Tarmac sections.

Vamcy Merla, promoter of INRC and director of Champions Yacht Club is delighted at this new development.

"This is a great achievement on our part to be able to bring on such a reputed brand on-board the INRC. It is wonderful to have them with us and I really would like to thank them for showing their faith in the property," he said.

The 2020 Indian National Rally Championship will see a shortened calendar and will have a total of five rounds instead of six with two to be held in Itanagar in December, followed by three in South India (Coimbatore, Hampi and Bengaluru). The complete season will be wrapped up in a month and a half.

# Illegal gun factory busted in Bihar's Munger, 1 held



**MUNGER, OCT 19 (PTI):** An illegal gun-making factory was busted in poll-bound Bihar's Munger district on Monday, police said.

Acting on a tip-off, a house was raided in Terasi village in the Mufassil police station area and the gun factory was busted,

Superintendent of Police Lipi Singh said.

Firearms and equipment to manufacture those were recovered, she said.

Four country-made pistols, five 9 mm unassembled pistols, besides raw materials and other items to manufacture at least

10 pistols were seized, Singh said.

A person, identified as Vijay Sharma, was arrested, the officer said, adding that he is the owner of the house.

A case has been registered under the Arms Act and further investigation is underway, she said.

# Tripura reports 85 fresh COVID-19 cases, two fatalities

**AGARTALA, OCT 19 (PTI):** At least 85 more people tested positive for COVID-19 in Tripura on Monday, pushing the tally to 29,553, a health department official said.

The death toll rose to 328 with two more

persons succumbing to the virus, he said.

West Tripura district, comprising state capital Agartala, has accounted for 174 fatalities.

Tripura now has 2,675 active cases, while 26,527 people have recovered

from the disease. Twenty-three patients have migrated to other states, the official said.

As many as 4,33,691 samples have been tested for COVID-19 in the northeastern state so far, he added.

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## Shami was very clear on bowling six yorkers in Super Over: Rahul

**DUBAI, OCT 19 (PTI):** Kings XI Punjab captain KL Rahul lauded his pace spearhead Mohammed Shami for his ability and clarity of thought to bowl six yorkers in the Super Over while defending just five runs in their dramatic IPL match against Mumbai Indians here.

The match on Sunday night ended in a tie in the regulation 20 overs and KXIP could only score five runs in the first Super Over but Shami bowled brilliantly to restrict MI to the same score.

KXIP eventually won the match in the second Super Over.

“You can never prepare for Super Overs. No team does. So you have to trust your bowler’s gut. You trust your bowler, and let them believe their instinct and gut,” Rahul said at the post-match presentation. “He (Shami) was very clear he wanted to go with six yorkers. He has been phenomenal, and keeps getting better every game. It is important that senior players win the games for the team.”

Rahul, who was named man of the match for his 77, expressed happiness at the victory but said his side would not want to make a habit of winning like this. Even in the last game against RCB, KXIP could have finished the job earlier than they eventually did.

“It is not the first time. But we don’t want to make a habit out of it. We will take the two points in the end. It doesn’t always happen the way you plan so you don’t really know how to stay balanced.

“I was just hoping we get over the line because the boys have been working really really hard. In the games that we have lost, even then we have played well and just not been able to get over the line.”

### Manchester City’s Aguero must show he deserves new contract - Guardiola



**LONDON, 19 OCT (REUTERS):** Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola says Sergio Aguero can still play an important role for the club after returning from a serious knee injury but the Argentine striker has to show he can deliver on the pitch if he is to earn a new contract.

Aguero, who joined City in 2011 and is their all-time leading scorer with 254 goals, is out of contract at the end of the season and can speak to overseas clubs from January.

The 32-year-old sustained the injury in June and made his return in Saturday’s 1-0 home win over Arsenal.

“Sergio now has to show, like every one of us, that he deserves to continue here -- keep playing well, scoring goals and winning games

He said the wicket was slightly slower, increasing the significance of scoring quick runs in the Powerplay.

“I knew Chris (Gayle) and (Nicholas) Pooran... I trust them to take down spinners. So Chris coming in has made my job easier as a batter.”

On his side winning two back-to-back close matches, he said, “We still want to take it one game at a time. It is sweet after the kind of matches we have lost but the talk in the dressing room is to focus on the process.

“We know we need to win everything from here, but we can’t forget the processes that lead to a win.”

Mumbai Indians batsman Kieron Pollard said the match showed that every run counted.

“In T20 cricket, 1 run and 2 runs are very very crucial. I am sure it was great for viewership. KXIP got the better of us and deserved the two points. KL again batted beautifully, going down to a Super Over, congratulations to them,” he said.

“Around the 11-12 over, we knew we were a couple of overs behind. Getting 170-odd, that was a good total - above-par on a track that was on the slower side. With the dimensions, we thought we can defend that.”

Despite the loss, Pollard said his side played good cricket.

“It’s a matter of trying to improve each and every time. There are a couple of areas we need to improve on. We have a four-day break, enough time to reflect. The guys are confident in the dressing room.

“I was told that he (Rohit) is not feeling well (after the loss). We’ll see what happens. He’s a fighter,” said the West Indian who remained not out on 34 off just 12 balls.

-- and after that the club and I will decide,” Guardiola told British media.

“But if he’s playing in his level we don’t have any doubts that he’s a player to stay until he decides because he’s unique. He’s important for us, our fans and everyone.”

“But he was out four months and he has to start training regularly and start to score goals. Having Aguero on the pitch, we’re better, safer. We missed him in the important moments at the end part of last season.”

City, who are 10th in the Premier League with seven points from four matches, begin their Champions League campaign on Wednesday against Porto before a league meeting with West Ham United at the weekend.

# Paula Dunn: ‘I’m nice but I’m not weak. People get that mixed up’

**SEAN INGLE**

**LONDON, 19 OCT**

**[THEGUARDIAN]:** “Do I think the obsession with medals has gone too far? Absolutely,” says Paula Dunn, with a clarity that is striking and unusual from someone who operates in the higher stratospheres of British sport. “We’ve got to look beyond the medal table, because medals are just not enough.”

Dunn pauses. Takes stock. Reflects on the pressures in the UK Sport system and where, as we have seen in cycling and gymnastics, it can lead. “Don’t get me wrong, when we did really well in Rio it was lovely,” she admits. “But there is more to it than that. You’ve got a responsibility as well. You don’t want people coming out of a sport saying that they weren’t happy.”

These days the word trailblazer has become stale with overuse, but Dunn is certainly that and a whole lot more. She was the first woman to become a head coach at British Athletics when she took over the Paralympic programme after London 2012. The first black head coach, too. And an undisputed success story to boot: with Dunn at the helm Britain won 33 medals at the Rio Paralympics, four more than at the home Games in 2012.

But that, she admits with a laugh, doesn’t stop her waking up in a cold sweat thinking about UK Sport targets or filling out one of their spreadsheets predicting where her athletes might finish in Tokyo. “Any head coach that says otherwise is not telling the truth,” she says with a smile. “Of course you worry. Yes, you have to justify the public money that is invested in your sport – I am not naive – but some aspects of the job can be emotionally draining, especially when you have to make decisions involving athletes.”

Last week UK Sport said it intended to focus future funding of Olympic and Paralympic sport on medal potential over a 12-year period instead of four, and focus more on supporting “the development of the person as well as the performer”. It is a change in emphasis Dunn clearly believes is overdue. “I



always bear in mind that behind every number there’s a person. You can never lose sight of that. No athlete goes to the biggest event in their life to fail. So if negative things happen, you have to accept that: it is just one of those things. My job always is to protect and help athletes.”

When we speak on a crisp autumn day in Manchester, Dunn wants to hammer home another point: it is possible to succeed at the highest levels of sport being kind. In fact, she says, it is an advantage. “You can never be too nice. People think nice is weak. It isn’t. Because everybody says I’m really nice, and I am, but I’m not weak. People get that mixed up.”

Arguments between athletes, she insists, can be smoothed over with

a mixture of data and diplomacy – especially if they know that a coach is fair and has good intentions. “It’s the ability to listen more and talk less,” she says. “That way you hear what your athletes are saying – really hear them – and what they’re not saying. That gives you a real indication where they are mentally and emotionally; where they are in their time of life.”

Dunn also recognises the parallels between her and Christian Malcolm, UK Athletics’ new Olympic head coach, given both were inexperienced when they took over their current roles. So can Malcolm make the same leap she has over the past eight years?

“I really do think so,” she says. “I’ve had

a number of calls with Christian. The substance will remain private but he is very excited. When I came into the role people questioned me too. He is doing the right thing by speaking to a lot of people, but I keep telling him that the only way he can lead is to be himself. You have to be authentic.

“He’s got loads of really good qualities – he’s highly likeable, he is really knowledgeable, he has been in the GB system on the relay side, and he took the plunge and went to Australia as performance director. So I think he’s got more skills than people give him credit for.”

But what about the fact he has been a coach for barely six years? “Yes, but he’s going to learn on the job,” Dunn insists. “And I just think

everybody – whether it’s coaches, athletes or the media – just need to give him time to develop. I think he could be great.”

When Malcolm became head coach, several athletes, including Dina Asher-Smith, hailed it as a new era for the sport. Dunn agrees but adds a caveat. “It is, but at the same time no sport can sit on its laurels,” she says. “It can’t be: ‘We’ve got a black head coach for the Olympics and a black head coach for the Paras, when we tick that box we move on.’ This is something that we need to keep working at. We’ve definitely got more BAME [black, Asian and minority ethnic] coaches out there who have got really good and innovative ideas.”

For now, most of Dunn’s time is taken up with planning for next year’s Tokyo Paralympics. While she expects her young team to do well, she also wants to dampen expectations.

“Talent takes time to develop. And what makes it tougher is that the landscape of Paralympic sport has moved so quickly in the past two cycles.

“But I can promise you this: we will go there and give it 100%. If that gets us our medal target, brilliant. And if it doesn’t, but we come away with some great performances and personal bests, I will be proud of every last one of them.”

## After two morale-boosting wins, KXIP run into mighty Delhi Capitals

**DUBAI, OCT 19 (PTI):**

The nail-biting win over defending champions Mumbai Indians was certainly a morale-lifter but the inconsistent Kings XI Punjab have another tough battle at hand when they take on table leaders Delhi Capitals in an IPL match here on Tuesday.

Having lost two tight games they should have won at the start of the season, KXIP managed to get on the right side of the results in the last couple of games, although it was too close for comfort by their own admission.

Needing seven off the last two overs with nine wickets in hand, they should have wrapped

the game against RCB much before the last ball and even in the IPL’s first double Super Over against Mumbai Indians on Sunday night, the K L Rahul-led side could have closed it out in regulation time.

Death bowling and the form of star player Glenn Maxwell in a shaky middle-order remain a concern for a team that needs to win its remaining five games to make the play-offs.

The fact that KXIP have struggled this season despite having tournament’s top two run-getters in openers Rahul (525) and Mayank Agarwal (393) best sums up their erratic run.

On a positive note, the successful return of Chris Gayle has reduced the burden on the shoulders of the star openers, especially allowing Rahul to play more freely.

Nicholas Pooran has shown his lethality time and again but is yet to play a match-winning knock and the pressure is increasing on Maxwell the batsman, who is proving to be more useful as a spinner operating in the powerplay.

However, the team is likely to stick to him in the game against Delhi Capitals.

Delhi are clearly the team to beat in the tournament and have gained in confidence

with a close win against Chennai Super Kings on Saturday night.

While Prithvi Shaw needs to be back among the runs after a couple of ducks, his opening partner Shikhar Dhawan elevating his game bodes well for the team that has won seven out of the nine matches it has played.

Axar Patel has shown his utility not just with the ball but also with the bat. His three sixes off Ravindra Jadeja helped Delhi get over the line in the final over finish against CSK.

With an envious bowling line-up, Delhi have shown they can defend even below-par totals. Playing in the

absence of an injured Rishabh Pant, time is running out for Ajinkya Rahane to make an impact.

The match went into a Super Over last time the two teams met and more than Delhi, KXIP will be hoping that it doesn’t come to that again.

Squads: Kings XI Punjab: Lokesh Rahul, Harpreet Brar, Ishan Porel, Mandeep Singh, James Neesham, Tajinder Singh, Chris Jordan, Karun Nair, Deepak Hooda, Ravi Bishnoi, Arshdeep Singh, Glenn Maxwell, Mujeeb Ur Rahman, Sarfaraz Khan, Sheldon Cottrell, Mayank Agarwal, Mohammed Shami,

Darshan Nalkande, Nicholas Pooran, Chris Gayle, Murugan Ashwin, Jagadeesha Suchith, Krishnappa Gowtham, Hardus Viljoen, Simran SinghBench

Delhi Capitals: SquadPlayingShreyas Iyer (c), Kagiso Rabada, Marcus Stoinis, Sandeep Lamichhane, Ishant Sharma, Ajinkya Rahane, Ravichandran Ashwin, Shikhar Dhawan, Shimron Hetmyer,Alex Carey,Mohit Sharma,Prithvi Shaw,Lalit Yadav,Avesh Khan, Axar Patel, Tushar Deshpande, Rishabh Pant, Harshal Patel, Keemo Paul, Amit Mishra, Anrich Nortje, Daniel Sams.

Match starts at 7.30pm.

## Bumrah has taken over the mantle from Malinga: Pollard

**DUBAI, OCT 19 (PTI):**

Mumbai Indians all-rounder Kieron Pollard feels that pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah has taken over the mantle from Sri Lankan Lasith Malinga to become the lynchpin of the four-time IPL champions’ bowling attack.

After picking up the crucial wickets of KL Rahul, Mayank Agarwal and Nicholas Pooran in the stipulated 20 overs, Bumrah (3/24) bowled an excellent Super Over against Kings XI Punjab, conceding just five runs.

However, it was not enough as Mohammad Shami bowled an equally impressive over to lead the match to a second Super Over in which KXIP snatched a win at the Dubai International

Stadium on Sunday.

“He’s a world-class cricketer. He has been number one in a couple of formats for a long period of time. He has learned and has grown leaps and bounds for us at Mumbai Indians..We have comfort in him,” Pollard said at the post-match press conference.

“A couple of years ago, we had a fit and fair Lasith Malinga and he (Bumrah) has taken over that mantle now,” he added.

Malinga, the highest wicket-taker in the IPL, opted out this year citing personal reasons.

Chasing five runs in the first Super Over, skipper Rohit Sharma and Quinton De Kock failed to take MI across the finish line.

In the second Super Over, Pollard and Hardik Pandya helped the defending champions score 11 runs.

“Obviously there are decision-makers to make the decision, you know we can look at those things and say that’s where we lost the game but we played a very good game of cricket. We batted well,” said Pollard.

Mumbai have lost two games via Super Overs. They were defeated by Royal Challengers Bangalore earlier in the tournament.

Their five-match winning streak broken by KXIP, the defending champions are placed second with 12 points.

“Just a matter of improvement, each and

every time we step on the cricket field it is to improve and to do better. We will look back and analyse the game and we will come up with a better plan and hopefully get two points in the next game,” said the all-rounder.

KXIP pacer Chris Jordan, who bowled the second Super Over for his team, was delighted to be on the winning side.

“I feel like the way we have played a lot of our games this season, they could have been very easily ended with us on the winning side,” Jordan said during the post-match press conference.

“Unfortunately, that was not the case. I think from the last two games, specially the kind of team

spirit and camaraderie we have shown as an entire team and entire franchise has been second to none.

“Just glad that we have a little bit of luck going our way now but we can’t rest on that,” he added.

Jordan conceded 11 runs of the second Super Over. Chris Gayle then hit the first ball bowled by Trent Boult for a six before opener Mayank Agarwal cracked successive fours as KXIP notched up an incredible win to keep their IPL play-off hopes alive.

The presence of the big-hitting Gayle in the playing XI has also inspired the team.

“You can see the impact the legend himself, Gayle, made

in the last two games. Hitting a fifty after not playing for a while and then finish off the game in the Super Over for us. It is great to have, what I considered to be a great of the game, in our team. His energy is unbelievable,” Jordan said.

KXIP have got the better of MI and RCB in their last two games, however, KL Rahul and his men have been guilty of making their run chases too close and the pacer hopes his side can close in matches quicker.

“If we want to take it to the next level, we have got to keep doing simple things and hopefully finish off games a bit quick as well,” Jordan added.



## Belgium fears virus “tsunami” as virus cases keep soaring

**BRUSSELS (AP):** Bars and restaurants across Belgium shut down for a month and a night-time curfew took effect Monday as health authorities warned of a possible “tsunami” of new virus cases in the hard-hit nation that host the European Union’s headquarters.

The new measures aim to limit social interactions to slow down the exponential growth of the pandemic in the nation of 11.5 million people. The new surge of coronavirus cases has already prompted several hospitals to delay non-essential operations to focus on treating COVID-19 cases.

“We are really very close to a tsunami,” Health Minister Frank Vandenbroucke told broadcaster RTL.

According to the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, Belgium recorded more than 700 infections per 100,000 people over the last 14 days, the second-worst European record behind the Czech Republic, which had 828 per 100,000.

Yves Van Laethem, the COVID-19 crisis center spokesman, said Monday that 7,876 daily new cases were diagnosed on average over the past seven days, up 79% compared to the previous week. Van Laethem said the epidemiological situation could be even worse, given delays in the publication of test results.

To fight the spread of the disease, Belgium’s curfew will be enforced from midnight until 5:00 a.m., at least for a month. Alcohol sales will be banned after 8:00 p.m., while the number of people that residents can see socially outside their households will be reduced from three to just one all month.

People have been ordered to work from home wherever possible. Thousands of students have been affected as several universities have demanded that only one seat in five in lecture halls hosting more than 50 people can be occupied.

## Thai authorities seek to censor coverage of student protests

**BANGKOK, OCT 19 (AP):** Thailand’s embattled prime minister said on Monday that there were no plans to extend a state of emergency outside the capital, even as student-led protests calling for him to leave office spread around the country.

Police, however, indicated they were working to censor coverage of the demonstrations.

Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha’s government has already issued a decree that bans public gatherings of more than four people in Bangkok, outlaws news said to effect national security and gives authorities broad power to detain people.

None of that has been able to keep the mostly young protesters from gathering en masse across Bangkok the past five days to push their demands, which also

# Australia says US has resettled most of its 1,100 refugees

**CANBERRA, OCT 19 (AP):** The United States is expected to have resettled more than 1,100 refugees by early next year under a deal President Donald Trump reluctantly honoured with Australia, an Australian official said on Monday.

President Barack Obama’s administration struck a deal in 2016 to accept up to 1,250 refugees from Iran, Bangladesh, Somalia and Myanmar whom Australia had banished to Pacific island camps.

Trump condemned the deal as dumb but agreed to honour the US

commitment, subject to extreme vetting of the refugees.

The United States has resettled 870 refugees since October 2017 and around 250 more have received provisional approval to make new homes in the United States, Home Affairs Department deputy secretary Marc Ablong told an Australian Senate committee.

While resettlement had been disrupted in recent months by the pandemic, Ablong said Australia expected the last of the refugees accepted by the United States to be resettled by

March or April.

The resettlement deal is operating very effectively to date, Ablong said.

The end of the US agreement was expected to leave around 80 asylum seekers on the poor island nations of Papua New Guinea and Nauru.

Australia deterred asylum seekers from coming by boat in 2013 by banning those who have arrived by sea from ever being allowed to settle on the Australian mainland.

Australia pays Papua New Guinea and Nauru to house such asylum

seekers under deals that have been condemned by human rights groups.

Ian Rintoul, spokesman for the Australian advocacy group Refugee Action Coalition, said the fate of asylum seekers left on Nauru and in the Papua New Guinea capital Port Moresby was unclear.

The government’s got no solution for the people that will be left behind, Rintoul said.

New Zealand’s offer to take 150 refugees a year has been refused while the United States continues to accept them.

The government’s

policy of denying resettlement to those who try to arrive by boat includes those who received medical treatment in Australia then got court injunctions preventing their return to Nauru and Papua New Guinea. There were currently 1,226 such asylum seekers in Australia, Ablong said.

Some see the US resettlement deal as repayment for Australia agreeing to accept Honduran and Salvadoran refugees under a US-led resettlement programme from a camp in Costa Rica.

## China’s economy accelerates as virus recovery gains strength

**BEIJING (AP):** China’s shaky economic recovery from the coronavirus pandemic is gaining strength as consumers return to shopping malls and auto dealerships while the United States and Europe endure painful contractions.

Growth in the world’s second-largest economy accelerated to 4.9% over a year earlier in the three months ending in September, up from the previous quarter’s 3.2%, official data showed Monday. Retail spending rebounded to above pre-virus levels for the first time and factory output rose, boosted by demand for exports of masks and other medical supplies.

China is the only major economy that is expected to grow this year while activity in the United States, Europe and Japan shrinks.

The recovery is “broadening out and becoming less reliant” on government stimulus, Julian Evans-Pritchard of Capital Economics said in a report. He said growth is “still accelerating” heading into the present quarter.

Most Asian stock markets rose on the news of increased activity in China, the biggest trading partner for all of its neighbors. Japan’s Nikkei 225 index added 1.1% while Hong Kong’s Hang Seng climbed 0.9%. Markets in South Korea and Australia also rose.

China’s benchmark



Shanghai Composite Index lost 0.7% on expectations the relatively strong data will reduce the likelihood of additional stimulus that might boost share prices.

China, where the pandemic began in December, became the first major economy to return to growth after the ruling Communist Party declared the disease under control in March and began reopening factories, shops and offices.

The economy contracted by 6.8% in the first quarter, its worst performance since at least the mid-1960s, before rebounding.

The economy “continued the steady recovery,” the National Bureau of Statistics said in a report. However, it warned, “the international environment is still complicated and severe.”

It said China faces great pressure to prevent a resurgence of the virus.

Authorities have lifted curbs on travel and business but visitors to government and other public buildings still are checked for the virus’s telltale fever. Travelers arriving from abroad must be quarantined for two weeks.

Last week, more than 10 million people were tested for the virus in the eastern port of Qingdao after 12 cases were found there. That broke a two-month streak with no virus transmissions reported within China.

Industrial production rose 5.8% over the same quarter last year, a marked improvement over the first half’s 1.3% contraction. Chinese exporters are taking market share from foreign competitors that still are hampered by anti-virus controls.

Retail sales rose 0.9% over a year earlier. That was up from a 7.2% contraction in the first half as consumers, already anxious about a slowing economy and a tariff war with Washington, put off buying. Online commerce rose 15.3%.

In a sign demand is accelerating, sales in September rose 3.3%.

“China’s recovery in private consumption is gathering momentum,” said Stephen Innes of AxiCorp in a report.

China has reported 4,634 coronavirus deaths and 85,685 confirmed cases, plus three suspected cases.

Economists say

China is likely to recover faster than other major economies due to the ruling party’s decision to impose the most intensive anti-disease measures in history. Those temporarily cut off most access to cities with a total of 60 million people.

The International Monetary Fund is forecasting China’s economic growth at 1.8% this year while the U.S. economy is expected to shrink by 4.3%. The IMF expects a 9.8% contraction in France, 6% in Germany and 5.3% in Japan.

Private sector analysts say as much as 30% of China’s urban workforce, or up to 130 million people, may have lost their jobs at least temporarily. They say as many as 25 million jobs might be lost for good this year.

The ruling party promised in May to spend \$280 billion on meeting goals including creating 9 million new jobs. But it has avoided joining the United States and Japan in rolling out stimulus packages of \$1 trillion or more due to concern about adding to already high Chinese debt.

## Japan, Vietnam agree to boost defense, economic, energy ties



**HANOI, OCT 19 (AP):** Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga, in his first summit foray since taking office last month, agreed with his Vietnamese counterpart to step up defense and security cooperation in the face of China’s expanding influence in the region.

In talks in Hanoi on Monday, Suga and Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc set a basic agreement allowing Japan to export defense equipment and technology to Vietnam.

The deal was expected: Japan has been pursuing such agreements in recent years to bolster ties with Southeast Asia and provide a lifeline to its own defense industry.

Suga arrived in Hanoi late Sunday on the first stop of a four-day visit to Vietnam and Indonesia that he says is key to pursuing the free and open Indo-Pacific vision for multilateral economic and security cooperation to counter China’s growing power and protect sea lanes in disputed areas of the South China Sea.

Vietnam is crucial to achieving our vision of ‘the Free and Open Indo-Pacific,’ and our valuable partner,’ Suga told a joint news conference after his hour-long meeting with Phuc.

Japan, as an Indo-Pacific nation, will continue to contribute to the peace and stability in this region. Suga said Vietnam, at the center of the Indo-Pacific, was the most suitable destination for his first trip abroad as Japan’s leader.

Japan already has defense equipment transfer deals with the U.S., Britain, the Philippines and Malaysia, among other countries. Vietnam is a 12th partner.

Suga called the agreement a major step for a bilateral defense cooperation, saying he expects further developments. Details of possible equipment sales were not mentioned.

Japan most recently exported a radar surveillance system to the Philippines in August.

Suga and Phuc also signed agreements on cooperation in wide range of areas from economic cooperation including infrastructure, energy, environment and agricultural trade.

Japan is one of Vietnam’s top trading partners with two-way trade of 28.6 billion so far this year. Japan is also Vietnam’s largest overseas aid donor, providing 23 billion as of 2019 and accounting for more than a quarter of Vietnam’s foreign loans.

The government has been trying to entice Japanese companies to invest in Vietnam and other Southeast Asian countries to lighten the country’s dependence on manufacturing and other businesses in China.

In August, Vietnam agreed to buy six coast guard patrol boats worth 345 million from Japan to increase its maritime capacity. That deal comes amid China’s continuing development and militarization of artificial islands in the contested waters of the South China Sea.

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**SummitTIMES**





**RUNNING ERRANDS!** Actress Famke Janssen was spotted pushing her bike after doing some grocery shopping in NYC.

## Adele to host Saturday Night Live'

**LOS ANGELES, OCT 19 (PTI):** Singer Adele is set to make her debut as a host on late-night stand-up show Saturday Night Live (SNL) on October 24.

Adele will be joined by singer-songwriter H.E.R, who will serve as musical guest on the episode.

The 32-year-old Oscar-winner singer took to Instagram to share her excitement on hosting SNL for the first time.

I'm so excited about this!! And also absolutely terrified!

My first ever hosting gig and for SNL of all things!!!! I've always wanted to do it as a stand alone moment, so that I could roll up my sleeves and fully throw myself into it, but the time has never been right.

But if there was ever a time for any of us to jump head first into the deep end with our eyes closed and hope for the best it's 2020 right? Adele wrote alongside a photograph announcing the host, episode date and musical guest.

The British singer had previously appeared as a

musical guest on the US sketch show in October 2008, on the eve of the presidential election in November 2015.

She said it felt like "full circle", adding: "It'll be almost 12 years to the day that I first appeared on the show, during an election... which went on to break my career in America, so it feels full circle and I just couldn't possibly say no!"

Adele joins the likes of Drake, Jennifer Lopez and Harry Styles among the music stars who have presented the programme.

## Nia Sharma finally reacts to trolls she received for cutting a p\*nis-shaped cake

Nia Sharma turned 30 this September and she celebrated her birthday with her close friends. You won't believe but the actress actually cut 18 cakes on her birthday. The picture and videos from her birthday celebrations went viral. But, one cake of her birthday got her brutally slammed on social media. There was a 'penis-shaped' cake that netizens found extremely vulgar and some even called Nia shameless and slammed for insulting the Indian culture and a lot more. Nia's friends Reyhna Pandit, Rrahul Sudhir, Amrin Chakkiwala and Arjun Bijlani were seen in the party.

Now, Nia has reacted to the flak she received online. She told IANS, "I use social media to distract myself from stressful situations. I like to use social media in a fun way. I don't like to argue with people and get involved in baseless conversations. I try to learn from Instagram. I keep



checking several pages from where I can learn something or the other. Be it a make-up related page or a hair styling page, I devote time on social media on these things rather than paying heed to unnecessary arguments."

On the work front, Nia was last

seen in 'Naagin 4' with Vijayendra Kumeria and Rashami Desai. She recently won the trophy in the stunt-based reality show 'Khatron Ke Khiladi-Made In India'. There were reports that Nia will enter 'Bigg Boss 14' but she had turned down the offer.

## Liam Neeson's 'Honest Thief' notches No. 1 at box office

**LOS ANGELES (AP):** Liam Neeson's thriller "Honest Thief" stole the top spot at the box office in yet another quiet weekend of moviegoing.

The Open Roads Films movie brought in \$3.7 million in North America the weekend of its U.S. debut. The film, starring Neeson as a notorious bank robber who turns himself in but was double crossed by two FBI agents, opened in Canada last week.

The film also played well in markets including Miami, Chicago, San Diego and Atlanta, according to the studio.

"Honest Thief" overtook "The War with Grandpa," which claimed No. 1 last week. Despite coming in second, the comedy starring Robert De Niro earned \$2.5 million. It has garnered \$7.3 million domestically within a 10-day timespan.

## UK festival curator accuses UAE minister of sex assault

**LONDON (AP):** The chair of Britain's Hay literary festival said Sunday the event will not return to Abu Dhabi after one of the festival's curators alleged that she was sexually assaulted by the tolerance minister of the United Arab Emirates while working with him. Lawyers for the minister later denied her account.

Caitlin McNamara alleged she was attacked in February by Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak Al Nahyan, a member of Abu Dhabi's ruling family, the Sunday Times reported.

The Times said McNamara, who had travelled to the UAE to work on the launch of the literary festival there, claimed she was assaulted by the sheikh when they met at a remote island villa.

British lawyers for Sheikh Nahyan denied McNamara's account, saying he was "surprised and saddened by this allegation."

The Foreign Ministry of the UAE, a federation of seven sheikhdoms on the Arabian Peninsula also home to Dubai, said it does not comment on personal matters. When asked about the case, Britain's Metropolitan Police confirmed that a woman contacted the force on July 3 to report an allegation of rape, and said an initial statement has been taken from her.

## Vishal Bhardwaj to develop film franchise based on the works of Agatha Christie

**MUMBAI, OCT 19 (PTI):** Filmmaker Vishal Bhardwaj is set to adapt renowned British mystery writer Agatha Christie's works into a film franchise for Indian audiences.

Christie's crime stories centred on fictional detectives Hercule Poirot and Miss Marple, but Bhardwaj will be introducing a new pair of lead investigators taking inspiration from one of the Queen of Crime's famous stories.

According to a press release issued by the makers, the script is currently in

development, but details of which Christie novel is being adapted for the first film have not been revealed yet.

The filmmaker-composer, best known for his acclaimed Shakespeare trilogy Maqbool, (Macbeth) Omkara (Othello) and Haider (Hamlet), is producing the franchise through his banner Vishal Bhardwaj Films in collaboration with Agatha Christie Limited (ACL), headed by Christie's great-grandson James Prichard.

Bhardwaj said he is

excited to embark on this journey and explore the turmoil and emotional chaos of Christie's characters.

Agatha Christie had a tremendous skill of defining emotional chaos, dysfunctional relationships and the turmoil in her characters while engaging us in a riveting mystery.

"It is an honour to create an Indian franchise of a pair of young investigators looking to take over the world with their intelligence and charm. ACL have been

such amazing partners and we are all excited to be on this journey, the director said in a statement.

The first film, scheduled to go on floors early next year, will introduce a young heroine who is thrown into solving a murder, and teams up with an unlikely companion to unravel the case. The cast is currently being finalised.

Future films will follow the duo as they continue to investigate multiple murder mysteries.

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You can have the most brilliant ideas in the world, but they would mean nothing if you're unwilling to put in the work. The cards are urging you to observe how you are standing in your own way. Things to do today: recognise your greatest fear—the one that makes you want to never crawl out of your burrow. Take a shot of courage and do it anyway. Trust that you will emerge as a brand new version of yourself in the process.

### TAURUS:

Where your attention goes, your energy flows. The real question is: what are \*you\* paying attention to (read: incessantly obsessing over)? The cards are urging you to get your priorities in order. There are things that require your unwavering presence—and those are things you want to redirect your gaze towards. Single Venusians could be dealing with a classic case of 'too many tabs open'. You already know who is not a vibrational match for you. Quit kissing frogs as a sport.

### GEMINI:

What's the big deal about being busy, and why are we always glorifying it? Today, you're being asked to examine where this mentality stems from. Daily reminder: you don't need to be buried under a pile of work in order to feel worthy. Remember, the old structures are falling apart, making way for a new way of life—one that honours both the yin and yang aspects of creation. We always have a choice to decide where we want to vibrate at.

### CANCER:

The cards are bringing your attention to the balance between giving and receiving. It's true that you're giving your all, Cancer,

but what are you getting in return? Word for the wise: it's time to remind yourself of what you are truly worth. As you do, redirect your gaze towards yourself. Set some time aside to meditate and look within. If you're not one for stillness, consider swinging to the cosmic rhythm. The mysterious forces above have been trying to get your attention for a while now, as they have important messages that will help you transcend.

### LEO:

Sometimes, you have to jump in and engage with life fully. At other times, you have to step back and watch the show. Given the chaos that is about to ensue, you will need to play the role of the observer today, and yes, this means watching your triggers too. Remember, what others are saying (or not saying) has little to do with you. They could be projecting their own shadows onto you. Drawing boundaries wherever necessary will ensure they don't bleed all over your life.

### VIRGO:

Sometimes, things work out seamlessly. At other times, you face roadblocks at every step along the way. What are your circumstances revealing to you, dear Virgo? Could you be pushing against the flow? The cards are urging you to recognise what isn't a vibrational match for you, and let it go with love. Know that the pain associated with this loss is but transient in nature.

### LIBRA:

This chapter of your life can best be described as 'the unbecoming'. You're honouring the process of shedding old skin and letting go of dated beliefs. Healing is never a straight road. It consists of both the ebb and the flow. But you have a way

of making messy look beautiful. Trust that you will have blow-your-mind revelations when you sit down to converse with your wounds. This is also a time of assessing your relationship with your soul circle and nurturing the ties that bring a smile to your face. You know who your people are, Libra!

### SCORPIO:

Scorpio, the future looks especially bright from where you are standing. You're ready to embark upon a brand new adventure—and you want to hit the accelerate button now. The cards are urging you to take a moment to ground yourself before you get started, though. There are multiple opportunities that are vying for your attention, but not all of them are worth your time and energy. Learning to tap into your discretion \*and\* exercise the power to say no will come in handy.

### SAGITTARIUS:

If perfection could be achieved overnight, then our lives would look entirely different. But the truth is, it takes patience and perseverance to reach the desired destination—qualities that you are consciously cultivating at the moment. This is the time to become the best version of yourself, Sagittarius. Some of you could be dealing with ups and downs on the physical front. Remember, there's nothing like movement and exercise to stay on top of your game. Supplementing your regimen with the right kind of nutrition will help you achieve mental, emotional and physical balance.

### CAPRICORN:

They say there's a fine line between genius and insanity—but you wouldn't know anything about that, would you?

You erased what remained of the boundary a long time ago. So, instead of trying to be one with the muggles, observe the bizarre ideas coming through from your superconsciousness. Know that bringing them to life is in alignment with your soul's purpose. Remember your most precious gift as you set out on this brand new adventure: the ability to be consistent in your efforts, despite the fluctuations reflected in your outer world. Stay committed to your goals no matter what, Capricorn, and know that victory will ultimately be yours.

### AQUARIUS

We spend so much time dimming our sparkle and lowering our expectations, because we do not believe that we are actually capable of living our best lives. As a result, we make peace with a mediocre existence. But, what if you decided to reclaim your inherent power and create a reality that is in alignment with your soul's purpose? It's time to realise your highest potential, Aquarius. Overheard at the cosmic conference: you can live a life that is satisfying on the creative, emotional, spiritual, and financial front.

### PISCES:

"The minute I heard my first love story, I started looking for you, not knowing how blind that was. Lovers don't finally meet somewhere. They're in each other all along." This Jalaluddin Rumi quote is giving you all the feels and reminding you of where you are in your soulmate journey. It hasn't always been easy for the two of you. But, you honoured your vows and stood by each other through the turbulent times. This has made your hearts grow fonder. PS: If you're in the early stages of romance, Libra season will inspire you to give commitment a shot.