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Summit **T**IMES

Vol 06 | Issue 15 | Gangtok | Saturday | 16 January 2021

ON TOP OF THE NEWS

RNI No. SIKENG/2016/69420

Pages 8 | RS. 5

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CM completes 3-day tour of his constituency

AARON RAI
GANGTOK, 15 JAN:
Chief Minister PS Tamang completed a 3-day tour of his constituency, Poklok-Kamrang, with a public interaction programme at Sikkip Block Administrative Centre where he met people from Pabung-Tingrithang, Wok-Amchu and Mamlay-Kamrang GPUs on Friday.

Speaking to media-persons at the venue, M a m l a y - K a m r a n g Panchayat President, MB Mangar, informed that among the demands placed with the CM were those for new road-cutting, footpaths, school, bridge etc in the GPU.

Most of the people also sought assistance



for medical treatment, house construction, employment etc.

The Chief Minister's Coordinator, Nivin Kishor Chettri, informed that the Chief Minister made the effort to personally meet everyone from the three GPUs who sought to meet him and stated that many people benefited from this program.

The Chief Minister instructed the Secretaries of all the departments

the people, also handed over 35 work orders for projects ranging from Rs 2 lakh to Rs 5 lakh through the Natural Calamity Fund.

Over these three days, the Chief Minister met thousands of people from the nine GPUs of his constituency.

Speaking to reporters, Prakash Limbu, a Poklok-Kamrang resident, said that the Chief Minister's programme has proven very popular with the people who were delighted with the opportunity to meet and interact with the CM who also represents them in the Legislative Assembly. He commented that such access was not available to the people under the previous government.

10 months on, Kota's coaching business raring to reopen

KOTA (RAJ), JAN 15 (PTI): The coaching industry here is set to restart on January 18 after the Rajasthan government's nod to reopen schools and other educational institutes, closed for almost 10 months due to the coronavirus outbreak.

Home to at least 10 big coaching giants and 50 other institutes, the city has around 25,000 paying guest (PG) facilities and 3,000 hostels to cater to nearly 1.50 lakh students from across the country every year.

The institutes coach students preparing for competitive admission examinations of medical and engineering colleges.

The coaching business in Kota has an annual turnover of Rs 3,000 crore and employs at least 5 lakh people, according to those in the industry.

The Kota district administration has formed 11 teams, including health and police officials, to ensure compliance of the standard operating procedure (SOP) for COVID at the coaching institutes.

They are fully prepared for the resumption of classes in coaching institutes and schools with proper compliance of the coronavirus protocol from January 18 and have constituted 11 teams to oversee it, Kota Collector Ujjawal Rathore told PTI on Friday.

He said the teams will visit every coaching institutes to ensure the compliance of the guidelines.

According to the SOP, the number of students in a teaching session has been restricted to 50 per cent of total strength. Students will be checked for body temperature before being allowed to attend a class.

Classrooms will have to be sanitised after every teaching session and wearing of masks will have to be ensured.

Only one student will be allowed to stay in a hostel room and a separate isolation place will be reserved for

suspected coronavirus patients in every hostel and paying guest (PG) facility.

Allen Career Institute director Naveen Maheshwari said they have created a 31-bed hospital for students where all primary health care services are available.

An ultraviolet (UV) lighting system has been installed for sanitisation of classrooms, Maheshwari said. He said UV lights equipped with sensors have been fixed in the classrooms.

The UV lights automatically switch on for sanitisation as soon as students leave the class.

Meanwhile, a cleanliness drive is underway at hostels with caretakers and managers being explained about the government guideline, said an office-bearer of a body representing hostels.

Saheel Dogra, a Class 12 student who came to Kota from Mumbai, said he was happy to be here as it was difficult to concentrate on studies during the online classes.

Back in Kota, I have resumed my flow of studies and have learnt to schedule every task, said Aditi Sharma, who hails from Punjab's Amritsar and wants to be a scientist.

Expressing gratitude to the government for allowing reopening of coaching institutes, Ayush Goyal of Reliable Institute said they are committed to follow the government guidelines.

They are gearing up for the reopening of classes and have ensured the compliance of the guidelines, said Nitin Vijay, director of Motion Education.

He claimed that his phone has been busy with inquiries on resumption of classes.

Following the enforcement of the coronavirus lockdown in March 2020, around 50,000 students from parts of the country were sent back home through special buses and trains.

Final electoral roll registers 2.18% net increase over draft numbers

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 15 JAN:
The summary revision of the electoral roll of Sikkim, the final version of which was published today has reflected a 2.18% net increase over the draft electoral roll published on 16 Nov, 2020.

An official press communiqué from the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer of Sikkim informs that the total number of electors after final publication stands at 4,36,635 [Male: 2,21,721, Female: 2,14,914].

This year, 6,075 new voters in the age group of 18-19 years and 1,973 service voters have been

enrolled so far. There has been a total addition of 12,517 voters and deletion of 3,210 voters during this revision, the Office of the CEO-Sikkim informs

The annual special summary revision for updation of the Electoral Roll had begun on 10 Aug, 2020 and the actual revision was held from 16 Nov to 15 Dec.

The final publication of Electoral Roll w.r.t. 01 Jan, 2021 as the qualifying date was released today by the Joint Chief Electoral Officer-Sikkim, Pema Lhaden Lama, in the presence of representatives of recognised political parties.

Sikkim's under-20 daily count continues with only 13 new Corona cases

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 15 JAN:

Thirteen fresh cases of novel coronavirus were reported in Sikkim in the last 24 hours taking the state's tally of confirmed cases of COVID-19 to 6,024 on Friday. With this, Sikkim's daily infection count remained under 20, a lower rate of infection that has held through the new year thus far.

In the meantime, the number of recovered cases of COVID-19 in Sikkim reached 5,636 with the discharge of 12 more Covid-positive people from facility and home isolations.

There are currently 163 active cases of novel coronavirus in Sikkim, of whom two are admitted in the ICU facility of the COVID-dedicated STNM Hospital.

In his daily health bulletin on Friday, Health Department State IEC Officer, Sonam Gyaltzen Bhutia, informed that 13 new cases of novel coronavirus in the State were reported from the testing of 206 samples on Thursday.

While 11 new cases were detected in the RT-PCR testing of 159 samples, two more people were found positive for COVID-19 in rapid antigen testing of 42 samples. All thirteen new cases were reported in East District.

While providing details of the new cases, Mr Bhutia informed that three persons from Ranipool, one from Assam Lingzey, one from Singtam and one from near Aho Pul, Saramsa, in East District were found positive for COVID-19.



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NIFAA chairperson completes 4-day Sikkim tour

SUMMIT REPORT
RANGPO, 15 JAN:

Chairperson, National Integrated Forum of Artists and Activists, Pritpal Singh Pannu, left Sikkim today after completing a four-day official visit and were given a warm send-off by NIGAA members of Sikkim.

R-Day celebrations begin at Mangtabong with Tiger-5 tournament.

PRITAM LAMA GURUNG
GYALSHING, 15 JAN:

Republic Day celebrations have begun at Mangtabong village under Yuksam-Tashinding constituency in West Sikkim with an open Tiger-5 football tournament kicking off today.

Deputy Speaker Sangay Lepcha, who is also the area MLA, was present as chief guest for the opening ceremony, and in his address, assured that the SKM government will undertake developmental works in the area without any political bias.

He assured road



connectivity for Mangtabong where people have to currently walk 2 KMs to the road head. The tournament organizers inform that the demand for road connectivity was raised repeatedly

with the previous State Government but remained ignored. He also talked about extending the One Family-One Job scheme to those left out by the previous Government.

Also announced

today by the MLA were footpaths and efficient drinking water connectivity for the village as immediate assistance from the State Government.

A total of 38 teams are participating in the

Tiger-5 tournament, and the first match was played between Brothers United FC and Friends United.

The organising committee's president, Khabi Chettri, informed that the Republic Day celebration is being organised with the aim to attract the State Government's attention towards the village.

The opening ceremony event was also attended by retired police officer Tenzing Gyatso Bhutia, SKM advisor Khangzang Bhutia, SKM's CLC coordinator Kesher Kumar Khatiwada among others.

Governor meets Rangpo officials

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 15 JAN:

Governor Ganga Prasad convened a meeting with the officials of Rangpo Sub Division at Rangpo Tourist Lodge today, an official press release informs.

The meeting was attended by the SDM-Rangpo, SDPO, MEO Rangpo Nagar Panchayat, BDO Duga BAC, MO of Rangpo PHC, DE of Power



department (Rangpo Sub-division), who briefed the Governor

about the various welfare and developmental state and central government sponsored schemes underway in Rangpo Sub-division.

The Governor also reviewed the Covid-19 situation in Rangpo Sub-division, the release adds.

Earlier, the Governor performed Hawan at Kanchikamakothi Temple at Jalipool.

WhatsApp faces first legal challenge in India over privacy

SANDIP PHARTIYAL

NEW DELHI, 15 JAN (REUTERS): WhatsApp's updated privacy policy verges on user surveillance and threatens India's security, a petition filed in an Indian court said on Thursday, presenting another legal challenge for the Facebook Inc-owned messenger.

California-based WhatsApp said on Jan. 4 it reserved the right to share some data including location and phone number with Facebook and its units such as Instagram and Messenger.

That triggered outrage, including in its biggest market India where it has 400 million users.

The change has also met with a challenge in Turkey with the country's Competition Board this week launching an investigation into the messaging service and its parent.

In India, many users have began installing rival apps like Signal and Telegram, pushing WhatsApp to begin a costly advertising campaign to calm customers.

"It virtually gives a 360-degree profile into a person's online activity," lawyer



Chaitanya Rohilla said of WhatsApp's new policy in the petition to the Delhi High Court.

A copy of the petition, seen by Reuters, said Whatsapp was jeopardizing national security by sharing, transmitting and storing user data in another country with the information thus governed by foreign laws.

"WhatsApp has made a mockery out of our fundamental

right to privacy," it said.

WhatsApp has given users a Feb. 8 deadline to agree to the new terms.

"This type of arbitrary behaviour and browbeating cannot be accepted in a democracy and is completely 'ultra vires' (beyond its powers) and against the fundamental rights as enshrined in the Constitution of India," the

petition added.

It will be heard by the Delhi High Court on Friday.

WhatsApp did not respond to a request for comment. It has previously said the policy update does not affect privacy of messages with friends and family, as group chats are encrypted and the changes only relate to interactions with businesses.

SYS wants only local pundits and monks appointed at local temples and monasteries



SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 15 JAN:

Sikkim Yuva Sangathan today urged the Ecclesiastical Affairs Department to ensure that only local Pundits and Lamas were appointed at local temples and monasteries and end the practise of appointing outsiders to these places

of worship.

The appeal was made by the organisation at a press conference here this afternoon during which SYS president, TN Rizal, argued that Sikkim now had many religious scholars and youth who have studied the related theosophy

to qualify to discharge these responsibilities.

He suggested that a registration process be instituted for such local Hindu priests and Buddhist monks.

He believes that such a move could also address the unemployment problem in the State to some extent.

PIB webinar on R-Day celebrations on 'Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat' theme

GANGTOK, 15 JAN (PIB):

What exemplifies 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' is the culture and festivals which demonstrate the vibrance and vivacity of places of NE states, experts opined in a Webinar organised by Press Information Bureau, Guwahati on the topic "Celebrating Republic Day and 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' with the vivacity and vibrance of Festivals of North Eastern States' here today. Experts from Industry, entrepreneurial fraternity, Government sector along with academicians deliberated and discussed about the potential of North East from cultural, socio-economic growth, development and policy perspective.

Prof(Dr) ZR Azad, Aligarh Muslim

University, Uttar Pradesh said that festivals such as Bihu, Jonbeel Mela, Baishagu, Saraswati Puja and Ambubashi Mela, among others

demonstrate the enthusiasm and vibrance of the place. He said that all these festival helps

all to learn from each other and to develop an appreciation for others opinion and culture. He said that Republic Day

also depicts the ethos of commonness in culture of various places of the country. Talking about 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' where Assam and Rajasthan are grouped together, Dr Azad said that enthusiasm and elan

of festivals in Rajasthan, be it Camel festival in Pushkar, Udaipur Mewar Festival, Teej festival or Desert Festival in Jaisalmer, all of these demonstrate the zest and zeal of people.

Psychologist and

Clinical Hypnotherapist, Sayantani Sinha said that Bihu, Makar Sankranti, Pongal are cultural festivals as a reverence to environment. She said that along with festivals comes an opportunity and environment of mental and psychological development to analyse the huge diversity that is in this country and yet how all are working in tandem for the development of the nation. She said that the festivals are medium to connect emotionally and culturally with all and it demonstrates the structured connect which people of this country have for each other citizens. She said that festivals are also an occasion to experience the joy of diversity and to feel the vibrance of enthusiasm among people.

Field Exhibition Officer, Hiramani Das, Regional Outreach Bureau, Guwahati

said that the festivals opportunities for economic and societal development of the region. She said that Bihu

is a market for so many local products, whether it is textile or environment-friendly cuisine and tourism and hospitality sector. She said that developing knowledge infrastructure and learning for others culture helps to develop planned engagements between and among States.

Professional Sarod player, Mayukh Gangopadhyay said that knowledge infrastructure of the country are human resources including youth who are working in tandem for the development of the nation.

Advocate Delhi High Court, Abdur Rahman Mallick said that Celebration of Republic Day and festivals in 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' is an opportunity to appreciate diversified learning from people and by people of this country. Talking Constitution of India, he said that Republic Day is also a joyous celebration of the greatness and discipline of many stalwarts of this country, whose efforts have led to cultural and socio-economic development of the country.

Official, Nibedan Das, Regional Outreach Bureau, Guwahati said that festivals are opportunities to develop, analyse and harness the human resources talent of the citizens of the country. He further said that it is also an opportunity and experience of learning and interaction by varied activities such as knowledge sessions or information dissemination among people.

The webinar was managed and coordinated by Joint Director, Samrat Bandyopadhyay, PIB, Guwahati.

The interactive Webinar had enthusiastic participation of students, academicians and Cultural fraternity of Assam and North East. Field Publicity Officer, Sucharita Sahoo, Field Outreach Bureau, Barpeta welcomed the experts as the webinar delved into details on the various aspects of the topic such as Culture, Infrastructure and socio-economic development of North East, among others.

Sikkim's under-20 daily...

Among the new cases reported from in and around the capital are one person from near Tamang Gumpa in Sichey, one from Swastik, one from Deorali Girls School Road and one from near Lingding Dara in Indra Bye-Pass area.

Two persons from Rabongla in South District and one person from Gurung Gaon, Dikchu in North District have also tested positive, but since they got tested at the STNM Hospital Flu Clinic, they are being counted under East district.

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JOY-RIDERS RETURN TO DEORALI ROPEWAY



The lockdown over and Sikkim open for tourists, its more popular tourist must-do's are back in business. The Deorali-Tashiling ropeway managed by Damodar Ropeways, is now averaging upwards of 400 passengers, the company informs. Managing Director, Damodar Ropeways and Infra Ltd, Aditya Chamaria, comments in a press release, "This quaint kingdom turned state of Sikkim has always enraptured travelers. Whenever travelers plan a Pan India Itinerary, it is always on their bucket list. Our effort remains to give them a lifetime memorable and safe experience of our ropeway services."

Tendong YC carries out cleanliness drive at Chuba School

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 15 JAN:

Tendong Youth Club of Chuba, South Sikkim, carried out a cleanliness drive at Government Secondary School, Chuba, in association with the school staff and students on Friday. Tendong Youth Club was established in 2020 by the youth of Chuba-Perbing. The



cleanliness drive was led by club president Bishal Gurung and general secretary Manzil Gurung, a press release from Albert Gurung informs.

Social Distancing – lost in translation

SINGTAM, 14 JAN: There was a time not so long ago when social distancing used to be strictly implemented, and even today, when it suits the whims of the enforcers, it is enforced at taxi stands, schools, hospitals, funerals and marriages. But when it comes to Maghey Mela, even when the crowds are thin, the nature of the mela makes its observance absurd. And officials too conveniently look the other way. [from YOGEN THATAL]



COVID-19: India records 15,590 fresh cases

NEW DELHI, JAN 15 (PTI): India's COVID-19 caseload rose to 1,05,27,683 with 15,590 people testing positive for the infection in a day, while recoveries have surged to 1,01,62,738, according to Union health ministry data updated on Friday. The country's death toll increased to 1,51,918 with 191 new fatalities, the data updated at 8 am showed. The number of people who have recuperated from the disease surged to 1,01,62,738 pushing the national COVID-19 recovery rate to 96.53 per cent, while the COVID-19 case fatality

rate stands at 1.44 per cent. The COVID-19 active caseload remained below three lakh. There are 2,13,027 active coronavirus infections in the country which comprise 2.02 per cent of the total caseload, the data stated. India's COVID-19 tally had crossed 20 lakh on August 7, 30 lakh on August 23, 40 lakh on September 5 and 50 lakh on September 16. It went past 60 lakh on September 28, 70 lakh on October 11, crossed 80 lakh on October 29, 90 lakh on November 20 and surpassed the one-crore mark on December

19. According to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), 18,49,62,401 samples have been tested up to January 14 with 7,30,096 samples being tested on Thursday. The 191 new fatalities include 70 from Maharashtra, 19 from Kerala, 17 from West Bengal, 14 from Uttar Pradesh, 10 each from Chhattisgarh and Punjab, eight from Madhya Pradesh, six from Haryana, and four each from Delhi, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. A total of 1,51,918 deaths have been reported so far in the

country, including 50,291 from Maharashtra followed by 12,246 from Tamil Nadu, 12,155 from Karnataka, 10,722 from Delhi, 10,010 from West Bengal, 8,543 from Uttar Pradesh, 7,138 from Andhra Pradesh and 5,473 from Punjab. The health ministry stressed that more than 70 per cent of the deaths occurred due to comorbidities. "Our figures are being reconciled with the Indian Council of Medical Research," the ministry said on its website and added that state-wise distribution of figures is subject to further verification and reconciliation.

Sanitation workers among first to get Covid Vaccine at Goa Hospital

PANAJI, 15 JAN (PTI): Sanitation workers who attend to COVID-19 wards at Goa Medical College and Hospital (GMCH) would be among the first to be administered the COVID-19 vaccine in Goa as a nationwide inoculation drive starts on Saturday. GMCH Dean Dr Shivanand Bandekar said they have selected 100 sanitation workers attached to the hospital, including those hired through a private firm, for receiving the first doses of vaccine in the state. These workers have been attending



to COVID-19 wards of GMCH, he said. "These 100 safai karmachari (sweepers and other sanitation workers) will get a message on their registered mobile number after which they will report to the Covid vaccination center at the

hospital," he said. The state-run GMCH is among seven hospitals listed by the Goa Health Department where vaccination will be conducted in the first phase. "Someone can refuse to take the vaccine, so we don't know who will be

actually the first person to get the vaccine," a senior GMCH official said when asked who would be the first recipient as per the list. A patient examination hall in the hospital complex has been turned into vaccination centre with five booths. After getting the job, the person will have to stay inside the centre for half an hour where she or he would be observed for any adverse reaction, Dr Bandekar said. Some 5,000-odd healthcare workers attached to GMCH will be administered the vaccine in the first phase.



R-DAY FOOTBALL AT MARTAM: Ranka Football Club took on Martam Boys on Friday at the ongoing 72nd Republic Day Knock-out Football Tournament 2021 at BAC Martam Ground in East District. The match was won by Martam Boys. International athlete, Pema Dorjee Bhutia was present as the chief guest today. The tournament is being organized by Martam Sporting Club.

Pemayangtse archers lift Rapzor Lepcha Memorial Compound Archery Cup

SUMMIT REPORT
MANGAN, 15 JAN:

Pemayangtse archers outshot Green Tara at Namprikdang Ground on Friday to lift the Rapzor Lepcha Memorial Compound Archery Cup. The final match had Power Department advisor, Pintso Namgyal Lepcha, who is also the area MLA, present as the chief guest accompanied by Barfung MLA TT Bhutia. The tournament had begun on 08 January and was organized by the North District Archery Association in collaboration with Late Mondal Rapzor Lepcha Trust. The late Rapzor Lepcha was associated with many developmental works, education and socio-religious activities



during his tenure as Mondal in the 1970s. He was the first primary school teacher of Pentong Primary School, and later, in 1949, started Tingvong School from his house and also played an important role in the establishment and

development of Tingvong Monastery. The final day's festivities included a colorful cultural presentations presented by students of Dorjee Daayang Tutorial Institute of Pentok-Mangan. Also on the day,

North District Archery Association and Mondal Rapzor Lepcha Trust felicitated Thupden Rongkup, a well known archer and had participated in the Junior World Cup Archery Tournament in France in 1993.

"120% Fail" says farmer leader after 9th round of talks with centre

NEW DELHI, 15 JAN (NDTV): The ninth round of discussion between farmers demanding repeal of the three agriculture laws and the centre -- held days after the Supreme Court stayed their enactment "until further orders" -- ended today with no progress towards ending the stalemate.

"It was a 120 per cent failure. We suggested that the government remove the changes made to the Essential Commodities Act instead of scrapping it altogether. But the Agriculture Minister has not said anything on this," farmer leader Dr Darshanpal said. The next round of talks would be held on January 19, the day the court-appointed committee was likely to start consulting stakeholders to end the impasse.

To increase pressure on the government, the farmer unions have decided to go ahead and intensify their stir with a tractor rally on January 26. "Our proposed Tractor rally will be held, will be held, will be held," Dr Darshanpal added. Leaders of the 40 farmers' unions negotiating with the centre also said they want continued direct communication with the centre, "not brokers". They maintain they will not appear before the panel since the members were already in "favour of the farm laws". The government has agreed to engage directly with farmers, but said that if they want they can

go to the court-appointed committee as well. "The government and farmers should continue looking for solutions, formally and informally. Whatever we can agree on during these talks will decide the future course of action. The government is committed to follow the Supreme Court's order," Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar said. By agreeing to continue talks even

after the top court's decision to appoint a committee, it appears that negotiations may be held on two separate tracks simultaneously. During Friday's meeting farmer leaders also raised the issue of continued raids by central agencies on those supporting their movement logistically, and use of the stringent Unlawful Activities Prevention Act against them. The centre, which had

earlier blamed the raids on the state government, has said it will look into the issue, sources said. Meanwhile, some farmers have also started demanding Prime Minister Narendra Modi's intervention to resolve the talks that are being led by the Agriculture Minister, Food Minister Piyush Goyal and Minister of State for Commerce Som Parkash, who is an MP from Punjab.

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SummitTIMES

OF TOP OF THE NEWS

More Profitable to Sell French Fries

Leverage opportunities, harness potential... seize the day or rue

McDonald's might be grappling with franchise issues and partnership troubles in parts of India at present and Punjab is now known more its Udda problem, pesticide distress and Farmer Protest than the Green Revolution bonanza it delivered in the seventies to rescue us from our ship-to-mouth desperation, but until recently, both were serving as inspirational stories.

In these times of complaining and blaming, doubtful lockdowns and less than convincing vaccines, it would perhaps serve Sikkim well to pick from a moment not more than five years ago on what potential the right effort and right initiative can achieve.

Value addition- that's the mantra that spurs economic development and prosperity.

An entrepreneur from Punjab, who set up a McDonald's franchise on his land along the highway in Punjab, hit the nail on the head when he said, "It's more profitable to sell French Fries than grow potatoes." This entrepreneur, and others like him, were featured some years ago in a special on new movers and shakers from the Land of the Five Rivers - a tattered copy which fell out during a spring cleaning exercise recently and led to this piece. These individuals were bequeathed agriculture, which was in distress due to chemical overdose and over-farming, but they adapted their lands for other activities with tremendous success. The only ISO 9001 certified brick manufacturer is still a farmer from Punjab! This is a State where the peasantry is burdened by a Rs. 57,000 crore debt and yet it adapts, changes, adds, survives and prospers.

There is much that Sikkim can learn from Punjab. Let's look around. Agriculture, one keeps getting told is the main economic activity of Sikkim [most would believe it to be government service though], but how much has agriculture grown here? Despite the Organic Sikkim tag that they can now claim, how many youngsters does one see trying to leverage the Organic Mission with their better education to revolutionise [although revive would be the right word for Sikkim] agriculture in Sikkim? And this situation despite what promoters of chemical fertilizers might say, organic is undoubtedly the best value addition for farming in more ways than one. To start with, it saves the limited arable land from overuse, and for another, organic farming brings along with the tag of 'progressive farmer' which should provide the glamour to this old tradition to interest the youth.

Unfortunately, farming attracts fewer and fewer hands in Sikkim with each planting season. Large tracts fall fallow every year for want of interested farmers. It would not be wrong to surmise that large cardamom kept farming alive for slightly longer since large tracts could continue being live and profitable farms since plantations required fewer hands for the same amount of land.

But the interest in agriculture was perhaps lost quite some time back and an indication of this can be seen in how growers continue to look towards Spices Board or the Agriculture Department to do something about Sikkim's diseased Large Cardamom. Sikkim is the largest producer of large cardamom, its growers should have been the most sought after resource persons for all things large cardamom. That did not happen. Sikkim failed to leverage its commanding position and this was always apparent because very few growers gave any control over the trade or even knowledge about it. The Farmer-Producer Organisations should have addressed this, but don't appear to have done so.

Opportunities had come knocking for farmers and growers with grand national and international level flower and horticulture festivals some years back. These were not just events for Sikkim to show-off its floricultural and horticultural strength, but more importantly for growers here to meet and interact with buyers, understand markets and study and prepare for demands. The concerned departments should have ensured wide attendance of local growers and mediated the leveraging of opportunities for farmers here to capitalize on. It will have to be the hands in the field to seize opportunities waiting to be grabbed. It will be for the growers here to start planning for French-Fry futures for their potato farms. And to clarify... this is not just about potato growers.

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One Year Since We First Reported on This Coronavirus - What We've Learned, and Still Need to Know

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A year ago, I wrote an article for The Conversation about a mysterious outbreak of pneumonia in the Chinese city of Wuhan, which transpired to be the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. At the time of writing, very little was known about the disease and the virus causing it, but I warned of the concern around emerging coronaviruses, citing Sars, Mers and others as important examples.

Since then - and every day since- we continue to learn so much about SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19, finding new ways to control the pandemic and undoubtedly keep us safer in the decades that will follow. Here is what we have learned since last January and what we still need to learn.

LESSONS LEARNED

Initially, the disease that we now call COVID-19 was described in terms of a lung inflammation, or pneumonia, in older people. But we now know that SARS-CoV-2 infection can result in a wide range of symptoms in people of all ages, spanning from no symptoms at all to systemic inflammation and death. And then there are the lingering symptoms that many suffer from - so-called "long COVID". We are also beginning to tease apart the different phases of the disease, the damage caused to organs (such as the heart and brain), and the role of co-infections with bacteria and fungi.

In January 2020, there was limited evidence of human-to-human transmission. If there was, it was thought to be similar to its cousin virus SARS-CoV-1, which causes Sars, in that infection spreads relatively late in the disease, when symptoms are at their peak. Yet early studies showed that spread between people was highly efficient for SARS-CoV-2, and that it could happen fast and before the worst of the symptoms began. This made it hard to control without sensitive and specific tests using the now-famous PCR test. Social distancing, hygiene and masks would help limit the spread alongside isolation and quarantine.

At first, there were no treatments or vaccines against COVID-19, apart from support in hospital, such as providing oxygen when patients had difficulty breathing or antibiotics when they catch a secondary bacterial infection. In the months after



January, researchers rapidly tested new therapies against COVID-19, identifying dexamethasone, and have developed many safe and highly effective vaccines against COVID-19 that are now in use.

FUTURE QUESTIONS

Although we are learning daily about COVID-19, several important scientific questions remain that will shape the future of SARS-CoV-2, and humanity, for decades. The first is how will SARS-CoV-2 evolve, adapt and change over the next year in the face of natural or acquired immunity through vaccination?

A second, less academic point would be whether this is important. Our treatments and public health measures will still work, but what about our vaccines? We continue to track, predict and understand SARS-CoV-2 evolution with regards to vaccine "escape", and all our available evidence suggests it is minimal at best and that our current vaccine platforms are robust enough to withstand any changes if needed. We must also remain alert to the chance of SARS-CoV-2 establishing itself in another species, such as mink.

Then there is the question of how SARS-CoV-2 will interact with the other viruses that circulate in humans. The human respiratory tract is home to several viruses that circulate together - often in a single person. These viruses promote or impede the infection of other viruses. We now know that thanks to

social distancing, the spread of most of our respiratory viruses, such as influenza and RSV, has been severely restricted. How will they "react" when mitigation measures, such as social distancing, end?

Finally, we must identify the origin of SARS-CoV-2 to prevent the continued spill-over of SARS-CoV-2-like (or indeed other pathogenic coronaviruses) into humans. We know that SARS-CoV-2 probably emerged recently in south-east Asia and that ultimately the virus was in a horseshoe bat. But the biological and ecological steps it took to reach humans remain obscure. Solving this puzzle will help safeguard our health for decades to come, in the same way as has been achieved for swine and avian flu infections.

As I said in my article a year ago, these epidemics "are a constant reminder of the need to invest in research into emerging virus biology and evolution, and ultimately to identify safe and effective drugs to treat - or vaccines to prevent - serious disease". The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated that science and scientists can and will deliver results, given the right financial and societal support. How then we will apply the lessons of COVID-19 to other serious problems, such as emerging infections, antimicrobial resistance and climate change?

[the writer is Research Fellow, Virology, Queen's University Belfast]

Misogyny in the Capitol: Among the Insurrectionists, a Lot of Angry Men Who Don't Like Women

MONA LENA KROOK
THECONVERSATION.COM

Among the various forms of violence on display during the U.S. Capitol insurrection, one has been largely overlooked: misogyny, or hatred toward women. Yet behaviors and symbols of white male power were striking and persistent features of the riots.

Members of the overwhelmingly male crowds defending a president well-known for his sexist attacks, embraced male supremacist ideologies, wore military gear and bared their chests in shows of masculine bravado. They even destroyed display cabinets holding historical books on women in politics.

Actions targeting House Speaker Nancy Pelosi give the clearest illustration. Members of the mob broke into her office and vandalized it. Items like mail, signs and even her lectern proved to be particularly popular trophies - symbolizing an attack on Democrats and the House Speaker, but also against one of the most powerful women in American politics.

'NANCY, BIGO WAS HERE YOU BITCH'

While partisan differences often drive political violence, misogyny can play an underappreciated role, especially when directed at women in prominent leadership positions. Misogyny punishes women who fail to live up to patriarchal standards, like those who dare to participate in the supposedly "male world" of politics.

In my new book, "Violence against Women in Politics," I illustrate what this problem looks like around the world. In addition to physical harm, such violence can include threats, property damage and sexist rhetoric and imagery intended to intimidate women and delegitimize their political participation.

Attacks on Pelosi, while partisan in nature, also contained many elements of misogyny. Pelosi was in physical danger as pro-Trump rioters roamed the Capitol building hunting down elected officials. News cameras filmed a man carrying zip-tie handcuffs entering and then exiting the speaker's office, where members of her staff remained barricaded in a room for more than two hours.

Acts of vandalism and theft were accompanied by speech disparaging

and belittling Pelosi as a woman. In the hallway outside her suite of offices, angry rioters tore the leadership nameplate off the wall as crowds chanted, "Get her out!"

In a video, a woman claimed she helped break down the door to Pelosi's office. Once inside, "somebody stole her gavel and I took a picture sitting in the chair flipping off the camera." She proudly announced "and that was for Fox News" - a station notorious not just for its far-right politics, but also for its on- and off-camera sexism.

A photo of Richard "Bigo" Barnett, sitting with his feet up on a desk in Pelosi's office, solicited perhaps the strongest reaction. One feminist writer asked, "Have you ever seen a clearer photo of arrogant male entitlement? The legs apart, the foot on the desk, the smile ... this guy isn't just happy he's broken into the Capitol building. He feels like he's putting a woman in her place by violating and defiling her space."

Consistent with this interpretation, Barnett later told a reporter: "I wrote her a nasty note, put my feet up on her desk, and scratched my balls." The message read: "Nancy, Bigo was here you

bitch." Another paper left on the desk amplified this message, warning in red ink: "WE WILL NOT BACK DOWN."

VIOLENT RESTORATION OF A RETROGRADE WORLD

Gendered slurs similarly appear in one of the first cases pursued by the FBI stemming from the riot.

Cleveland Meredith was charged with unregistered possession of firearms and unlawful possession of ammunition. FBI agents also discovered misogynistic text messages on his mobile phone threatening violence against Pelosi, like "Thinking about heading over to Pelosi C**T's speech and putting a bullet in her noggin on live TV," "I'm gonna run that C**T Pelosi over," and "Dead Bitch Walking."

Misogyny in the Capitol attacks indicates that rioters, both male and female, did not simply wage an assault on democratic institutions. They also sought to violently restore a retrograde world in which men, especially white men, hold all the power.

[the writer is Professor of Political Science and Chair of the Women & Politics Ph.D. Program, Rutgers University]

Nepal-India Joint Commission meeting starts in New Delhi

SURESH RAJ NEUPANE & ANIL GIRI
KATHMANDU/ NEW DELHI, 15 JAN [KATHMANDUPOST]:

The Sixth Meeting of the Nepal-India Joint Commission has started in the Indian capital New Delhi.

Foreign Minister Pradeep Gyawali and his Indian counterpart S Jaishankar are leading their respective delegations at the sixth session of the Joint Commission, which is the highest level mechanism between the two countries to look after the entire gamut of Nepal-India bilateral relations.

Ahead of the Joint Commission meet, Gyawali and Jaishankar held a restricted meeting at Hyderabad House where crucial issues like cooperation on Covid-19 vaccine and boundary among others were discussed, according to a Nepali diplomat in Delhi.

Foreign Minister Gyawali was accompanied by Foreign Secretary Bharat Raj Poudyal and Nepal's Ambassador to India Nilamber Acharya.

Like wise, External Affairs Minister Jaishankar was accompanied by Indian Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla and India's Ambassador to Nepal Vinay Mohan Kwatra.

"The restricted meeting was part of the to-be-followed Joint Commission meeting," the official told the Post from Delhi over the phone.

Gyawali arrived in New Delhi on Thursday to participate in the meeting. Though the border row is high on Nepal's agenda, India on Thursday had hinted that talks on the issue are unlikely.

Just as Gyawali landed in Delhi, India's Ministry of External Affairs said that the Joint Commission and border issue are two different things.

Gyawali, however, had told the Post that the border issue too falls under the Joint Commission.

Before the Joint Commission meeting, Gyawali and Jaishankar held a one-on-one bilateral talk. Details of the meeting were not immediately available.

A day before Gyawali embarked on India visit, Nepal's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that the boundary issue, among other things, will be discussed with India.

"The meeting of the Joint Commission will discuss the whole gamut of Nepal-India relations, including trade, transit, energy, boundary, Covid-19 cooperation, infrastructure, connectivity, investment, agriculture, tourism and culture," the ministry said in a statement.

Assam forms panel to identify 'collaborators' of illegal migrants

GUWAHATI, 15 JAN [SHILLONGTIMES]: The Assam government has constituted a five-member committee for initiating immediate and proactive steps to identify the intermediaries, facilitators and collaborators of illegal migrants from across the international border into the state and initiate legal action to bring them to justice, officials said here on Wednesday.

The Special Director-General of Police (Border) Mukesh Agrawal confirmed the setting up of the panel on Tuesday following a discussion with the state Chief Secretary Jishnu Barua on January 11.

Agrawal, a senior IPS officer, in his notification, said: "The committee has been constituted to take immediate and proactive steps to identify the intermediaries, facilitators, collaborators facilitating the infiltrations of illegal migrants from across the international border into Assam and initiate legal action to bring them to justice.

"According to a senior official of the Border Wing under the Home Department, the panel headed by IPS officer Subhrajyoti Borah, the commandant of the 7th Assam Police Battalion based in western Assam's Kokrajhar district, would strengthen the existing mechanism of dealing with illegal migrations, which is always a key issue in Assam.



Agrawal's notification, available with IANS, said that the Deputy Commissioner of Police (Border), the Superintendents of Police (Border) of all districts, Superintendent of Railway Police (Border) and other concerned officials would take legal action in their respective jurisdictions on the recommendation of the five-member team.

It said: "They would also render necessary assistance to the committee in performing its task including utilisation of border staff of the districts as and when required by the committee."

The Deputy Inspector of Police (Ranges) would supervise the progress of the work of the committee and follow-up action being taken in their respective ranges.

"The Guwahati-based Commissioner of Police and the Inspector General of Police for the Bodoland Territorial Region would also oversee the progress of the work of the panel.

The modernisation of police stations, Assam government is all set to launch a scheme for the infrastructural development of the Border Outposts (BOPs).

He said that in the first phase of the scheme, 50 BOPs would be upgraded and an amount to the tune of around Rs 100 crore has been earmarked for the purpose. Subsequently, other BOPs of the state would be covered under the scheme.

"The sealing of the India-Bangladesh border is the topmost priority for making Assam free from illegal migrants from across the international border and for this purpose the border is being fenced by physical and non-physical barriers," the official said.

The 263km India-Bangladesh international border along Assam

is being guarded by the Border Security Force (BSF) while the 267 km Indo-Bhutan international border is manned by the Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB).

A second line of defence is being provided by the Assam Police. Besides, Assam shares 2616.1 km interstate borders with six northeastern states, excluding Sikkim.

The Assam Police Border Organisation was set up in 1962 as a unit of the State police's Special Branch. However, it began functioning independently in 1974. Presently, the border wing is manned by 4,037 personnel of different ranks, of which 3,153 are sanctioned by the Centre under the Prevention of Infiltration of Foreigners scheme while 884 are sanctioned by the state government.

Heritage conservationists carry out symbolic protest for conservation of Kamal Pokhari

KATHMANDU, 15 JAN [KATHMANDUPOST]: Heritage conservationists on Friday carried out a symbolic protest, demanding the conservation of Kamal Pokhari, a centuries-old pond in Kathmandu, which is being restored by the Kathmandu Metropolitan City as a recreation centre with small artificial ponds at four corners and a fountain at the centre.

The protesters painted their faces with the mud from the pond and said that it's a shame that the authorities have failed to learn a lesson from the restoration work of Rani Pokhari and protect Kamal Pokhari.

The pond has been emptied of water to carry out the restoration work. Though many local residents of the area are happy with the ongoing restoration work, hydrology experts say the plan noticeably fails in understanding the purpose of a pond and that the general public is unaware of the loss the ambitious beautification project will cost: ecological imbalance.

"The main purpose of a pond is to recharge groundwater; it is to maintain the temperature of the surrounding and to mitigate urban floods in the area," Prakash Amatya, a water conservationist, had told the Post in December, last year. "But this whole project disregards these



purposes and focuses only on the beautification to develop it as a recreational space."

Kathmandu Metropolitan City hopes to complete the restoration by May this year.

According to authorities of the restoration project, the ongoing first phase of the project focuses primarily on the beautification of Kamal Pokhari.

"We are working to beautify Kamal Pokhari and we have not used any concrete," Prem B Shrestha, engineer and project coordinator of the Kamal Pokhari restoration project, had earlier told the Post.

Amatya, however, had refuted this claim saying concrete has been used below the water.

Environmentalists and heritage activists remain unconvinced with the approach of the restoration. They fear that Kamal Pokhari is going the Rani Pokhari way.

"The Rani Pokhari we now see only serves the purpose of beauty, it

does not serve the large purpose it once used to, of mitigating floods and maintaining the water cycle of the area," said Amatya. "If we don't raise our voices now, Kamal Pokhari is going to be next. A pond's function goes beyond its social aspect, it serves for the balance of nature."

For long, environmentalists have been challenging the government's way of restoring ponds in the country. When a boring system was placed in Rani Pokhari to replenish the pond, heritage activists and water experts demanded the authorities remove the deep wells from the pond for months.

But the authorities of the project have not conducted any detailed study of the area to address its historicity; rather they have been approaching the pond only as a mere development project to appease the locals of the area, say experts and researchers.

Kamal Pokhari over the years has

also suffered with encroachment of its areas. Years back Kamal Pokhari was spread over 40 ropanis, said the people the Post talked with in December last year. But with years, the

size of the pond has shrunk. As Kathmandu continues to urbanise rapidly, open spaces like Kamal Pokhari will be integral to keep nature in balance, conservationists say.

Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine gets emergency use approval in Nepal

ARJUN POUDEL
KATHMANDU, 15 JAN [KATHMANDUPOST]: Nepal's drug regulator on Friday granted emergency use approval to a Covid-19 vaccine developed by the University of Oxford and pharmaceutical giant AstraZeneca and manufactured in India.

The Department of Drug Administration's decided to grant emergency use authorisation to the Covishield vaccine being manufactured by the Pune-based Serum Institute of India, on Friday, the department said in a statement.

"We have given emergency use approval to Covishield," Bharat Bhattarai, director-general at the department, told the Post. "Now the Covishield vaccine can be imported and administered in Nepal."

Emergency use authorisation (EUA) is granted for some drugs and vaccines by authorities such as the US Food and Drug Administration during a declared emergency when officials can make a judgment that the drug is worth releasing—even without all the evidence that would fully establish its effectiveness and safety. Such a decision is taken when there's enough evidence to suggest that patients have benefited from the drug/vaccine.

On Wednesday, the department had issued a notice calling on manufacturers of vaccines listed by the World Health Organization or their authorised agents to apply for emergency

use authorisation at the earliest.

At least three vaccine manufacturers—two of them Indian and one Chinese—responded to the call and applied for emergency use approval in Nepal, according to Bhattarai. While Serum Institute's application was approved on Friday, applications from the Hyderabad-based Bharat Biotech and the Beijing-based Sinopharm are being reviewed.

India issued its emergency use approval for Covishield and Bharat Biotech's Covaxin on January 3.

Neighbouring Bangladesh, which pre-ordered 30 million doses of the vaccine, gave its nod to Covishield on January 7.

The decision comes at a time when Nepal's Foreign Minister Pradeep Gyawali is in India on a three-day visit. Nepali officials are hopeful that a government-to-government deal could be signed for the supply of vaccines during the visit.

The DDA's announcement also comes a day ahead of India's planned rollout of the vaccine, dubbed as the world's biggest vaccination drive ever.

Nepal has been looking for at least 12 million doses of Covid-19 vaccine to inoculate 20 percent (or 6 million) of its population and is planning to roll out vaccines first for health-care workers and volunteers, people above 60 years and other frontline workers.

As of Friday, Nepal has reported 266,816 Covid-19 cases and 1,948 deaths.

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Magnus Carlsen facing challenges both old and new at 'Chess Wimbledon'

LEONARD BARDEN

LONDON, 15 JAN [THE GUARDIAN]: Magnus Carlsen expects to start back on the winning trail on Saturday when Norway's world champion aims for yet another first prize at Tata Steel Wijk aan Zee in the Netherlands, the "chess Wimbledon". The 30-year-old's record to date in chess's most prestigious and competitive annual invitation stands at seven first prizes and three second places in 13 attempts.

Round one starts at 1pm on Saturday, with rest days on 20, 25 and 28 January before the final round on 31 January. Live commentary will be available on major chess sites.

Wijk is the tournament where Carlsen struts his stuff, a showpiece for the No 1's all-round skills, a venue where he has seen off many major rivals and ambitious new talents. His recent setbacks online are a different matter: rapid and blitz chess at fast time limits, where a missed tactic or a mouse slip can spell instant defeat, have little relevance to Carlsen's over-the-board achievements.

His official rating remains at a stellar 2862, although his all-time



record of 2889 and the magic round number of 2900 are currently out of immediate reach. After Stavanger in October, where his run of 125 games without loss was ended by Poland's Jan-Krzysztof Duda, Carlsen may want to make a fresh attempt at a new rating peak.

Some psychological effects could remain from the champion's defeat by Wesley So in the Skilling Open, whose final was carefully designed to coincide with Carlsen's 30th birthday and its tropical beach gourmet breakfast, incongruously arranged without seafoods. Skilling was followed by the Airthings Masters, where Carlsen was eliminated by the creative Russian Daniil

Dubov, found himself checkmated in the process, and described it as a "collapse" and a "deep funk".

Dubov was listed to compete at Wijk, but on Thursday the Muscovite withdrew, citing a Covid-19 case near to him. He has been replaced by Germany's Alexander Donchenko, 22, ranked No71 in the world.

Stavanger, won by Carlsen ahead of 17-year-old Alireza Firouzja, has been the only other elite over-the-board tournament during the lockdowns. That was a six-player double-rounder, whereas Wijk will have its normal 14, although without spectators or the normal master and amateur

subsidiary events.

Due mainly to the effects of the pandemic, the overall quality of the field at Wijk is lower than usual, with eight of Carlsen's 13 opponents ranked outside the global top 20. Dubov is the most dangerous of these, but otherwise they are second-line grandmasters who are likely to struggle against a world champion. Past greats José Capablanca, Alexander Alekhine, Bobby Fischer and Garry Kasparov all used to score high percentages against the bottom half in mixed fields.

Fabiano Caruana, America's world No 2 who won Wijk 2020 ahead of Carlsen, and was third to Carlsen and Firouzja at Stavanger,

major boost.

David Howell was a convincing winner of last weekend's online centenary Caplin Hastings with an unbeaten 9/11, which included impressive wins in contrasting styles. Howell's endgame skills saw off the seven-time British champion Michael Adams, whose attempted fortress with rook and bishop against queen fell into checkmate, then he refuted Luke McShane's eccentric opening. Howell v Ameet Ghazi reached the rare ending of queen and g pawn against queen, where Black failed to put his king on the unlikely but correct square a2, diagonally distant from the pawn's queening square so making it hard for White to force a queen exchange.

A 12-player online all-British event could also be the right format for Hastings in future, creating its own individual niche rather than inviting negative comparisons with Wijk. Up to six 2600+ elite grandmasters, two qualifiers from the online British championship, two or three young talents, and one or two wildcards would provide a credible Hastings Premier to boost British chess and attract actual and potential top players.

Athletic Bilbao sink Real Madrid in Super Cup to rule out clásico final

SID LOWE

MADRID, 15 JAN [THE GUARDIAN]: The Spanish football federation did their bit to ensure a clásico final for the Super Cup; Real Madrid, on the other hand, did not. Athletic Bilbao forced a change of plans, dancing around in a circle and singing at the end of a long, tense night in which they took Madrid's place in Sunday's final against Barcelona with a 2-1 victory.

And, yes, "Madrid's place" is the right phrase. The "draw" for the semi-final had been managed to keep Madrid and Barcelona apart until a game that was set up to be the RFEF's showpiece event, even if it is to be played in an empty stadium in Andalucía rather than Saudi Arabia as planned. Sometimes football refuses to be told what to do - which is precisely what makes it so good.

Athletic and Real Sociedad, the two great Basque rivals who last year eliminated Madrid and Barcelona in the Copa del Rey - but are yet to play the final having refused to do so without their fans - have rebelled against the established order again.

On Wednesday, it took a miraculous performance from goalkeeper Marc-André ter Stegen, and then a penalty shootout, for Barcelona to defeat Real Sociedad in Córdoba.

La Real had been the better side but had been beaten, denied a place in the final in Seville. Athletic would not be: a little under 24 hours later they knocked out Madrid in a match that, while it didn't make it to extra time, did run deep into the 98th minute, everyone left waiting heart in mouth for one last VAR check after Sergio Ramos tumbled to the floor.

In the end, no foul was given and the final whistle followed in Málaga. Two first half goals from Raúl García had been enough; Karim Benzema's strike with 15 minutes remaining was not, Madrid falling short of a comeback. The final minutes had been nervous. Marco Asensio hit the woodwork three times, Benzema had an equaliser ruled out for offside, and there was that late, late video review.

Just 10 days after taking over as manager, Marcelino García Toral was into a final with his new team. If that makes it sound like Athletic were fortunate, that

is not really the story of this game. Thibaut Courtois made the night's outstanding saves, twice denying opponents running through, and until the final assaults Asensio had been a man alone: those shots came from individual moments at a time when Madrid were creating little collectively.

The last time these two teams faced each other, just over a month ago Raúl García had been sent off inside a quarter of an hour. He admitted afterwards that he felt he owed his team, and he repaid that debt amply here. By half time he had scored twice: the first a tidy finish after Iñaki Williams had allowed Dani García's ball to run through to him, the second a penalty after Lucas Vázquez had hauled down Iñigo Martínez.

Athletic had caught Madrid high up the pitch - Vázquez especially - and although they had little of the ball their lead felt logical. It might have been bigger too when Iker Muniain headed just wide early in the second half. That prompted a reaction from Madrid at last. Asensio hit the bar, smashed the post, and hit the bar again inside 10 minutes. Still it didn't flow, there was little clarity, but the threat was increasing. And as fatigue crept in for Athletic, chances arrived. Madrid started finding space and opportunities, particularly down their right flank.

On 72 minutes, Benzema finished off Casemiro's headed pass back to him. The flag went up for offside but VAR eventually gave it. Madrid were in this, although they needed Courtois to deny Asier Villalibre as he escaped into the area soon after. Benzema then scored a second which was ruled out, and Ramos headed a deep cross wide before the board went up.

"When you see six minutes you think 'crises'," Marcelino admitted, although Athletic could have ended it. Racing clean through, Williams waited too long and was denied by a diving tackle from Casemiro in the 92nd minute, setting up a frantic finish.

Ramos tried to reach a cross on 94 minutes, Ferland Mendy struck over the bar a minute later and then with time up, one last attack, and Ramos went down. The wait was a long one, keeping Athletic hanging on, nerves frayed until the clock showed 97.55. In the end, though, it was worth it.

Arsenal remain in midtable after 0-0 draw with Palace

LONDON, JAN 15 (AP): Arsenal's three-match winning streak in the Premier League ended with a 0-0 draw against Crystal Palace as the Gunners missed a chance to keep their momentum going and climb up the table.

Arsenal remained rooted in 11th place with 24 points, while Palace stayed in 13th with 23 points.

We'll take it, Palace winger Eberechi Eze said on Thursday.

It's a good point to take.

Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta was under severe pressure before Christmas after the team's worst start to a season since 1974. But wins over the festive period against Chelsea, Brighton and West Bromwich Albion moved his team back into midtable and in sight of the European positions.

But Thursday's game saw his team revert back to its old form, lacking creativity in midfield and cutting edge up front.

Arteta partly blamed fatigue, saying his players lacked some freshness and some quality in the final third.

We lacked the last pass or the last shot. We had to generate more to win that game," he said.

Arsenal controlled the



Ray Lewington kept shouting right, right at the top of his lungs to urge his players to keep the ball on Aubameyang's weaker right foot.

Manager Roy Hodgson lauded his team's performance, saying he was happy to come away with a clean sheet.

It was a fantastic piece of discipline and hard work from the players, he said. It was a good evening for us.

He added: If we keep playing the way we did today, I think there's points in the bag.

Arsenal missed the pace and creativity of left back Kieran Tierney, who was rested as a precaution with muscle tightness.

They did defend very well with loads of players," Bellerin said.

"I felt that the little spark of creativity was missing today. Today, we didn't have that little bit of luck that we needed.

Arteta also acknowledged that the absence of Tierny, who will have an MRI scan on Friday, was a big factor.

He's a real threat and the way we attack on the left is really important, but he is injured, the manager said.

We needed to find other options. We knew the plan, but the execution wasn't enough today.

match against Palace in the opening stages of the first half with the home side's clearest chance coming in the 20th minute.

Captain Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang cut inside from the left and unleashed a curling shot that appeared to fool goalkeeper Vicente Guaita. He wildly palmed the ball just in front of him and then mispunched before collecting it.

But Palace slowly grew into the match, putting Arsenal under pressure in midfield

and on the counterattack. The visitors came close from a free kick in the 39th when James Tomkins leaped above center back Rob Holding and headed the ball against the crossbar.

Three minutes later, Christian Benteke beat defender David Luiz in an aerial duel to a cross from Tyrick Mitchell and the forward's close-range header nearly beat Bernd Leno. But the goalkeeper's leaping fingertip save was enough to push the ball out

of danger for a corner.

Arsenal piled on the pressure at the start of the second half, creating a number of chances with Hector Bellerin firing just wide after Palace failed to clear and the ball fell to him in the 46th.

Aubameyang's scoring drought continues in the Premier League. After his chance in the first half, Crystal Palace defenders did everything to keep the forward from taking the ball on his favored left foot.

Palace assistant manager

Marnus Labuschagne century revives Australia against injury-hit India

SYDNEY, 15 JAN [AAP]: Marnus Labuschagne's century has piloted his side to 274-5 at stumps on day one of the series-deciding fourth Test in Brisbane, where India's unheralded attack exposed Australia's early lack of ruthlessness.

India's bowlers, boasting a combined 13 Test wickets at the toss, are believed to be the most inexperienced attack Australia has confronted since 1880.

The tourists' injury crisis became bleaker with confirmation that spearhead Jasprit Bumrah (abdominal) and offspinner Ravichandran Ashwin (back) would be two of four enforced omissions.

India could have been excused for

dropping their bundle when Navdeep Saini limped off during his eighth over, having suffered a groin injury that would prevent him from bowling again on Friday.

Likewise when fellow paceman Shardul Thakur left the field in obvious discomfort late in the day, having fumbled a return catch offered by Cameron Green on 19.

But the depleted visitors, as they have done throughout a four-Test series locked at 1-1, showed plenty of character in front of a sold-out and socially distant crowd of 12,998.

David Warner and Marcus Harris both departed in the opening nine overs

as Australia crashed to 17-2, while Steve Smith (36) and Matthew Wade (45) both failed to convert starts.

Labuschagne, who was dropped on 37 and 48, shook his head in disbelief after a mistimed pull shot resulted in a skied edge and his dismissal on 108.

It had been a textbook Gabba hundred from the leading run-scorer of the series, who worked hard early then cashed in as bowlers started to tire.

Green and Tim Paine, unbeaten on 28 and 38 respectively, may yet fashion an imposing first-innings total.

But Paine, who opted to bat first on what he expected to be a "pretty good batting wicket for the first few days",

would have loved nothing more than to sit in the dressing room throughout the day.

Such a scenario looked likely during the Labuschagne-Smith and Labuschagne-Wade stands, worth 70 and 113 runs respectively.

An all-run four in the first over after lunch signalled Labuschagne's intent, while another all-run four helped him reach three figures after a superb cover drive.

Labuschagne brought up his half-century in 145 balls, barely acknowledging the milestone, then only needed a further 50 deliveries to race to his first Test ton since last year's SCG Test.

Captain Ajinkya Rahane, having a grassed a regulation chance at gully offered by Labuschagne when Australia were 3-93, will wonder what might have happened if India held onto one of three dropped catches.

Smith is also likely to be cursing himself.

The batsman, who otherwise scored freely and looked fluent at the crease, became offspinning allrounder and former IPL teammate Washington Sundar's maiden Test scalp.

Harris handed Thakur his first wicket at the highest level, while Wade was Thangaraju Natarajan's first Test victim.

More than 100 individuals arrested for Capitol Hill riots, says FBI

WASHINGTON, JAN 15 (PTI): US security agencies have arrested more than 100 individuals for their criminal activities in last week's siege of the Capitol and are monitoring an extensive amount of concerning online chatter ahead of President-elect Joe Biden's inauguration on January 20, FBI Director Christopher Wray said.

The violence on January 6 by outgoing President Donald Trump's supporters temporarily halted the counting of Electoral College votes and resulted in the deaths of five individuals, including a police officer.

We and our partners have already arrested more than 100 individuals for their criminal activities in last week's siege of the Capitol and continue to pursue countless other related investigations, Wray said during a meeting with Vice President Mike Pence.

And those help not only prevent those



individuals from any effort to repeat that kind of activity but also should serve as a very stern warning to anybody else who might be inclined to try to engage in that activity, he said.

Wray also said that law enforcement was aware of and monitoring an extensive amount of concerning online chatter ahead of President-elect Biden's inauguration next week, but added that

authorities were having to sift through what's aspirational versus what's intentional.

The FBI, he said, is looking at individuals who may have an eye toward repeating that same kind of violence that was seen at the Capitol Hill last week.

I mean, from January 6 alone, we've already identified over 200 suspects. So we know who you are, if you're

out there, and FBI agents are coming to find you, he said.

It was Wray's first public appearance since rioters stormed the Capitol.

The Justice Department also announced on Thursday evening that the FBI had received more than 140,000 tips identifying rioters and had opened about 200 subject case files.

Pence thanked the

FBI's aggressive posture on bringing to justice those who desecrated the seat of the democracy last week.

As the president made clear yesterday, we are committed to an orderly transition and to a safe inauguration, and the American people deserve nothing less," Pence said.

More than 100 individuals arrested for Capitol Hill riots, says FBI.

Rare conviction of South Sudan soldiers for rape raises hope

YEI, SOUTH SUDAN (AP): First, the soldiers stole their belongings. Then they took their food. On their third and final visit, the woman said, the soldiers raped her and her daughter-in-law until they were unable to walk.

What sets these assaults in South Sudan apart from many other rapes by soldiers in the troubled country is this: The women brought the men to court and won.

Ten years after South Sudan gained its independence and two years after its own deadly civil war ended, large-scale fighting has subsided but clashes continue between communities and between the government and groups that did not sign the peace deal — and the use of rape as a weapon remains rampant. Justice is exceedingly rare, but the September conviction has raised hopes that such crimes will increasingly be prosecuted.

"I was traumatized," the older of the two women, a 48-year-old mother of eight, told The Associated Press in Ye, a town in the southern state of Central Equatoria where she now lives. The AP does not typically identify people who say they have been sexually assaulted unless they grant permission, and the woman said she continues to fear for her safety and is too afraid, for instance, to return to her home village of Adio.

She said she has found some solace in seeing her two attackers convicted and sent to prison after she reported the rape in May to South Sudan's army chief when he visited her village. A new army chief of staff, responding to growing frustration with such crimes, sent military judges from the capital, Juba, to oversee the case and those of 10 other women and girls who also came forward.

In the end, 26 soldiers were convicted, some for rape but others for offenses including looting. It was the first time soldiers had been convicted of rape since the 2016 rampage at the Terrain Hotel, where five international aid workers were gang-raped and a local journalist was killed.

The army hopes the trial will be a warning to its troops.

"We apologize, we won't let it happen again, and we'll arrest people who do it," said Michael Machar Malual, head of civilian-military relations for the army in Central Equatoria state. A government spokesman did not respond to a request for comment.

The woman hopes the verdict will encourage more survivors to speak up in a country where sexual assault is a scourge.

Some 65% of women and girls in South Sudan have experienced sexual or other physical violence, the United Nations children's agency said in 2019.

Between July and September, the U.N. reported an 88% increase in conflict-related sexual violence from the previous quarter even as overall violence dropped. It said there were more than 260 "violent incidents" in total during the period, but it did not specify how many involved sexual violence.

The villages around Ye have been hit hard as fighting continues between government forces and the National Salvation Front, which did not sign the peace deal.

Civilians say they are caught in the middle, with women often accused by soldiers of supporting the rebels — and assaulted — especially if their husbands aren't around.

In February, three women and a 14-year-old girl were raped by soldiers about 40 kilometers (25 miles) from Ye, according

to a report by the independent body charged with overseeing the implementation of the peace deal. One woman was gang-raped while held at gunpoint, the report said.

When the AP visited Ye in December, civilians and soldiers said the situation was improving and there had been fewer reports of sexual violence since the trial. The once-bustling town and nearby villages are slowly returning to life after the war.

Yet some residents said they feel as unsafe as ever. A group of women walking home from the market said they hide their food in the bushes, worried that hungry soldiers will steal it from their homes. An economic crisis in South Sudan fueled by a drop in oil prices and the fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic means soldiers haven't been paid in months — and experts are warning of famine.

Rights groups have hailed the recent case as important — but only a first step — and are pushing the government for more accountability.

"This should be a lesson for those with power, especially those with guns, to know that they are not above the law," said Riya William Yuyada, executive director of Crown the Woman South Sudan, an advocacy group that has pressed the government for accountability.

A hybrid court is meant to be established as part of the peace deal to try people accused of committing wartime atrocities, but implementation is slow. Nyagoah Tut Pur, a researcher with Human Rights Watch, noted that those convicted of such crimes are often lower-level officers, and senior leaders should be held responsible. She added that accountability must also include compensation and services for survivors.

N.Korea holds huge military parade as Kim vows nuclear might

SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA (AP): North Korea displayed new submarine-launched ballistic missiles under development and other military hardware in a parade that underlined leader Kim Jong Un's defiant calls to expand the country's nuclear weapons program.

State media said Kim took center stage in Thursday night's parade celebrating a major ruling party meeting in which he vowed maximum efforts to bolster the nuclear and missile program that threatens Asian rivals and the American homeland to counter what he described as U.S. hostility.

During an eight-day Workers' Party congress that ended Tuesday, Kim also revealed plans to salvage the nation's economy, hit by U.S.-led sanctions over his nuclear ambitions, pandemic-related border closures and natural disasters that wiped out crops.

The economic setbacks have left Kim with nothing to show for his ambitious diplomacy with President Donald Trump, which derailed over disagreements about sanctions relief in exchange for North Korean denuclearization steps, and pushed Kim to what is clearly the toughest moment of his nine-year rule.

Kim's comments are likely intended to pressure the incoming U.S. government of Joe Biden, who has previously called the North Korean leader a "thug" and accused Trump of chasing

spectacle rather than meaningful curbs on the North's nuclear capabilities. Kim has not ruled out talks, but said the fate of bilateral relations depends on whether Washington abandons its hostile policy toward North Korea.

North Korean state TV on Friday aired edited footage of the parade which showed thousands of civilians and troops roaring and fireworks exploding overhead as Kim stepped out of a building and took his spot at a podium in Kim Il Sung Square, named after his grandfather and the country's founder.

Kim, wearing a black fur hat and leather trench coat, waved and smiled widely as his troops chanted "Let's defend Kim Jong Un with our lives!" and "Protect with our lives the Workers' Party of Korea's Central Committee led by Great Comrade Kim Jong Un!"

Reports and video from state media suggested that Kim did not make a speech during the parade.

His defense minister, Kim Jong Gwan, said in a speech that North Korea's military would "pre-emptively marshal our greatest might to thoroughly punish hostile forces" if they threaten the North's safety.

Military aircraft flew in formation across the dark sky, using what appeared to be flares to form the symbol of the Workers' Party — a hammer, brush and sickle.

Flagraving spectators, unmasked despite a fervent

domestic campaign to fend off the coronavirus, cheered as troops rolled out some of the country's most advanced weapons, including submarine-launched ballistic missiles described by the official Korean Central News Agency as the "world's most powerful weapon."

The new type of submarine-launched missile was larger than the ones North Korea previously tested.

The North also displayed a variety of solid-fuel weapons designed to be fired from mobile land launchers, which potentially expand its capability to strike targets in South Korea and Japan, including U.S. military bases there.

KCNA said the parade featured other missiles capable of "thoroughly annihilating enemies in a pre-emptive way outside (our) territory." But it wasn't immediately clear whether the description referred to intercontinental ballistic missiles.

Photos and video released by state media didn't appear to include weapons that could be definitely identified as ICBMs.

During a previous military parade in October, North Korea unveiled what appeared to be its biggest-yet ICBM. Its previous long-range missiles demonstrated a potential ability to reach deep inside the U.S. mainland during flight tests in 2017.

North Korea has been developing submarine-launched ballistic missile systems for years. Acquiring an operational system would alarm its

rivals and neighbors because missiles fired from under water are harder to detect in advance.

Still, Kim Dong-yub, an analyst at Seoul's Institute for Far Eastern Studies and a former military official who participated in inter-Korean military talks, said the North's presumably new submarine-launched missiles could possibly be engineering mockups that require further development before they are ready to be tested and deployed.

While Kim Jong Un vowed during the congress to develop nuclear-powered submarines capable of firing nuclear-armed ballistic missiles, it would take "considerable time" for North Korea to overcome financial and technological difficulties and produce such systems, the analyst said.

Leif-Eric Easley, a professor at Ewha University in Seoul, said the way North Korea featured the submarine-launched missiles in the parade suggests that a test related to them could be North Korea's first provocation for the Biden administration.

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a statement that it is studying the weapons displayed by North Korea but didn't immediately release a detailed assessment.

Japanese Chief Cabinet Secretary Katsunobu Kato said Tokyo is monitoring North Korean missile developments with "great concern."

Nuclear-powered

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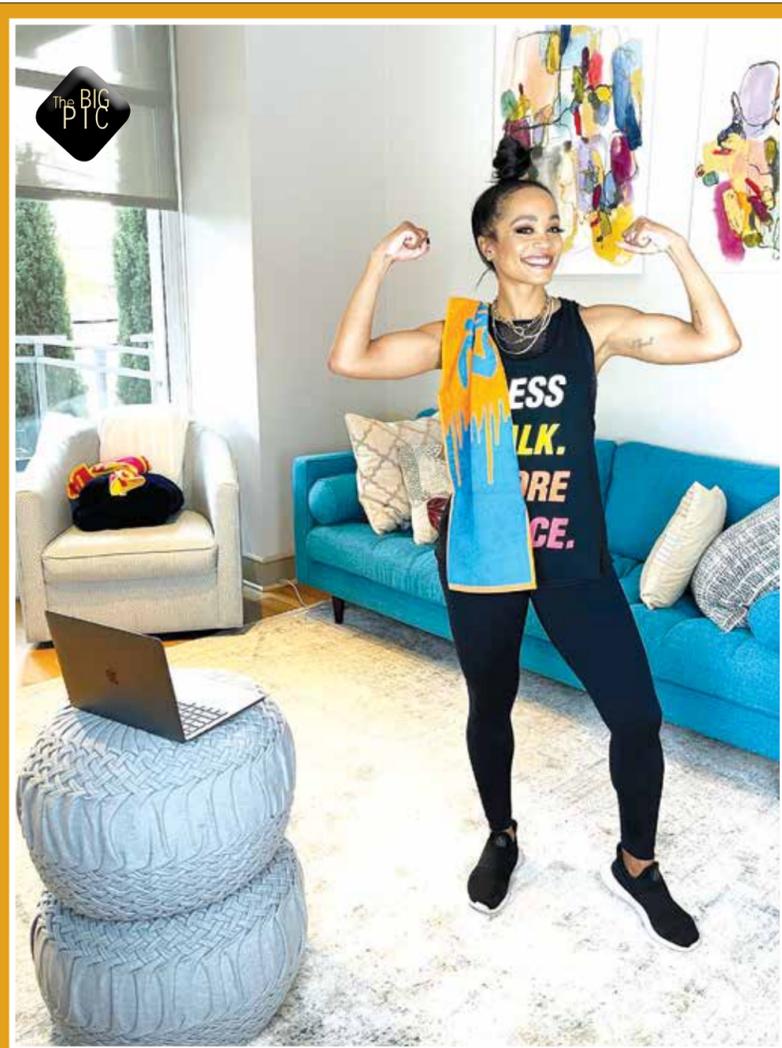
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SummitTIMES



HAPPY STEPS! Sporting new Zumba Wear apparel, former Bachelorette Rachel Lindsay showed off her moves during a virtual Zumba dance fitness class, encouraging everyone to shake off their stress and Step Into Happy this year.

Disneyland ends annual passes 10 months after virus closure



ANAHEIM, CALIF. (AP): Disneyland is ending its annual pass program 10 months after the theme park shut down because of the coronavirus pandemic, the theme park said Thursday.

The park in Anaheim, California, said it would begin issuing pro-rated refunds to eligible passholders.

"Due to the continued uncertainty of the pandemic and limitations around the reopening of our California theme parks, we will be issuing appropriate refunds for eligible Disneyland Resort Annual Passports and

sunsetting the current program," Ken Potrock, president of Disneyland Resort, said in a statement. He said the park will develop new membership offerings for when it can reopen.

Disney officials would not say how many people hold these passes or how much the move will cost the company.

The announcement comes the same week that Disneyland allowed county health officials to use its parking lot for a large-scale coronavirus vaccination site.

Disneyland closed in March and has not reopened

since because coronavirus metrics in the county where the park is located have not declined to the levels required by the state.

California health officials have said large amusement parks like Disneyland can only reopen once transmission reaches minimal levels, and then park capacity will be limited to 25% and reservations required.

California has seen a surge in coronavirus cases in recent months that has prompted a shutdown of many businesses and nighttime curfews in much of the state.

Documentary series on Demi Lovato to debut in March

LOS ANGELES, JAN 14 (PTI): "Demi Lovato: Dancing With the Devil", a new documentary on the life and career of the pop singer is scheduled to air on YouTube in March.

According to Variety, the four-part documentary series will be directed by Michael D Ratner, who helmed the "&Music" series for the erstwhile short-form streaming platform Quibi.

The project will focus on the most turbulent times faced by Lovato, including her physical, emotional and mental health.

"Dancing With the Devil" will see the 28-year-old singer open up about every aspect that led to her nearly fatal overdose in 2018 and lessons in the aftermath.

"For the first time, you'll be able to see my chronicle of struggle and ongoing healing from my point of view. I'm grateful that I was able to take this journey to face my past head-on and finally share it with the world," the "I Love Me" hitmaker said.

The upcoming project follows "Demi Lovato: Simply Complicated", the singer's 2017 doc which was released on YouTube.



According to Ratner, the docuseries is a "real window into the life of one of the biggest stars in the world, who is simply a human being".

"Demi's willingness to explore the darkest elements of her life is going to leave the audience with a complete understanding of everything she's been through and ultimately where she is going," he said.

"We are excited to continue sharing Demi's brave story. YouTube Originals is

committed to telling real stories about the complexities of life and for Demi to use our global platform to open up about this chapter is something we are very proud of," added Susanne Daniels, global head of original content at YouTube.

The first two episodes of "Dancing With the Devil" will launch on Lovato's YouTube channel on March 23, followed by the next two episodes that will be released weekly.

Emma Thompson joins cast of Netflix's 'Matilda'

LOS ANGELES, JAN 15 (PTI): British star Emma Thompson has boarded the cast of the screen adaptation of "Matilda".

Based on the popular musical stage play version of Roald Dahl's classic story, the film is a Netflix and Working Title project.

Thompson will play Miss Trunchbull, the cruel headmistress and antagonist of the piece, reported Entertainment Weekly.

The story follows the titular five-year-old girl, who uses her powers of telekinesis to overcome bullies, including her family and her school's principal Miss Trunchbull, and protect her friends.

Child star Alisha Weir will essay the role of Matilda in the movie, which will also feature "Captain Marvel" actor Lashana Lynch as Miss Honey, the kindly teacher who encourages Matilda and her telekinetic gifts.

Matthew Warchus, who directed the original play, will return to helm the feature adaptation.

Tony winner Dennis Kelly is also coming back to pen the screenplay.



Tim Bevan and Eric Fellner of Working Title will produce the project with Jon Finn, and Luke Kelly of The Roald Dahl Story Company and Netflix.

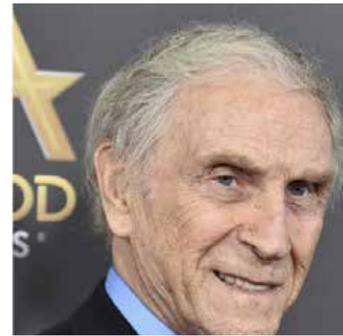
Noted character actor Peter Mark Richman dies at 93

LOS ANGELES (AP): Peter Mark Richman, a character actor who appeared in hundreds of television episodes and had recurring roles on "Three's Company" and "Beverly Hills 90210," has died. He was 93.

Richman died Thursday at his home in the Woodland Hills area of Los Angeles of natural causes, publicist Harlan Boll announced.

Born in Philadelphia, Richman was a pharmacist but turned to acting. He joined the Actors Studio and in 1953 he starred on stage in the play "End as a Man." He appeared on Broadway in "A Hatful of Rain" and "Masquerade." He also portrayed Jerry in more than 400 New York performances of Edward Albee's "The Zoo Story," Boll said.

His moves included 1958's "The Black Orchid" with Sophia Loren, "The Strange One," "The Naked Gun 2 1/2:



"The Smell of Fear" and "Friday the 13th, Part 8."

Bu he was best known for his TV work, appearing in more than 500 episodes of various shows over a decades-long career, from "Bonanza" and "The Fugitive" to "Star Trek: The Next Generation."

He starred as lawyer Nick Cain in the short-lived 1960's NBC series "Cain's Hundred" and had recurring roles as an attorney on the 1980s hit "Dynasty" and the 1970's show "Longstreet."

In the 1970s and 1980s he was Suzanne Somers' father, the Rev. Luther Snow, on "Three's Company," appeared as Lawrence Carson in a few episodes of "Beverly Hills, 90210" and was C.C. Capwell for nearly 30 episodes of "Santa Barbara."

Richman also wrote plays, including the acclaimed "4 Faces," a novel, short stories and an autobiography.

In 1990, he received the Silver Medallion from the Motion Picture & Television Fund for outstanding humanitarian achievement.

Richman is survived by his wife, Helen, five children and six grandchildren.

ARIES:

We may glorify the new to no end, but, the truth is, the unknown is always terrifying, mostly because we know so little of what awaits us on the other side. Aries, remember that you are known as the initiator of the zodiac for a reason. So, trust your instinct and become the trailblazer that you are. The good thing is, you have been blessed with a mentor who is providing you with just the advice you need to face your inner demons and move forwards and onwards.

TAURUS:

The new moon has you feeling all kinds of feels, Taurus. The beginning of the year may have been dreary, however, you're certain that things are about to take a turn for the better now. Let this newfound optimism help you hop, skip and jump into the future you have always envisioned for yourself. There is so much you want to create, so much you want to breathe new life into. There's never been a better time to play the role of the initiator. PS: trust that your angels and your guides are working closely with you.

Tip: Hop, skip and jump into the future you have always envisioned for yourself.

GEMINI:

The answers you seek are within you, Gemini. We repeat: the answers you seek are within you. So trust what you're being guided towards. Take a step in the right direction without your logical mind getting the better of you. Remember, people will always show you what they want you to see. But, if you observe them closely and pay attention to their body language, you'll

become aware of the unseen. Bottom line: Trust your instincts as far as the people in your life are concerned too.

CANCER:

It's a 'say yes to life' kind of day in the Cancer HQ. You are becoming aware of all the ways in which you have been holding yourself back and are determined to flirt with the unknown. The good thing is, you don't have to swim into the deep waters by yourself. Your tribe is swimming by your side, reminding you of who you are and holding space for you to awaken to your hidden potential. Accept this invitation, wild child, and know that in doing so, you will discover a whole new aspect of yourself.

LEO:

Leo, now is the time to move forward, and the time to move forward is now. So don't waste time going back and forth on your decision. Don't waste time doubting your potential. What you want to do instead is dive into the deep waters and figure it all out as you go alone. Remember, your angels and guides are working closely with you at this point, helping you manifest the vision you've always had for your life.

VIRGO:

You're in the mood to bring in the weekend like a boss, preferably with a glass of wine in one hand and your favourite book in the other. A ritualistic bath, complete with herbs and salts (that wash your sorrows away), also sounds like a wonderful idea. Things may be far from perfect at the moment, but obsessing over what's amiss isn't going to solve a thing. The best thing you can do for yourself is take a breather, nurse yourself back to good health *and* count

your blessings. Remembering that you're in charge of your own happiness will make all the difference, Virgo.

LIBRA:

Motivational author and speaker Brene Brown famously said, "People who wade into discomfort and vulnerability and tell the truth about their stories are the real badasses." Just the words of wisdom you need to hear today, January 2021 sees you letting go of the masks you've been hiding behind and coming into your own. This is your time to step onto the centre stage, Libra, and claim your place in this world. If that requires you to tell the truth about who you are, so be it. Know that you're inspiring your audience to discover their magic much in the same way.

SCORPIO:

Take one step towards the Universe, and the Universe will take ten steps towards you. We repeat: Take one step towards the Universe, and the Universe will take ten steps towards you. It's all about the new in the Scorpio HQ. It's all about the weird and the wonderful too. What's giving you the courage and confidence you lacked before is remembering that your angels and guides are right here with you.

SAGITTARIUS:

You can continue doing what you have been doing all your life, and you'll be perfectly fine—or you can change things up for yourself and take on the challenge to break past your own boundaries. Answer the call, Sagittarius. Answer the call to live your highest potential and create your best life. Remember, change is happening now. So make the most of

the energetic support you are receiving.

CAPRICORN:

Capricorn, you've been doing that thing where you compare your journey to that of others and feel miserable about where you are now. Being harsh on yourself is not a superpower you want to be proud of. The cards are urging you to take a moment, breathe, and lovingly gaze at your creations. You have already accomplished so much, and you are well on your way to success. So keep facing your true north and know that the mysterious forces above and below are holding space for you to fulfill your sacred mission.

AQUARIUS:

Here's the thing, Aquarius: You always have the option to repeat the story 'I am the way I am because...' or make peace with what happened, and choose to move on. The past does not define you. It is your vibration that determines your reality—and whether you will wake up in heaven or hell every morning. So make a conscious decision to let bygones be bygones as you open yourself to the love, blessings, and abundance that you're being offered in this moment.

PISCES:

There comes a point in every journey where you realise that the past does not define you, and that you have the power to create the life you want. Friday sees you reclaiming the reins and going after what has always been yours. There will be people who remind you of the old story or project their fears onto your path. Your task is to filter out what no longer serves you as you remember who the hell you are.