



KATE MIDDLETON AND PRINCE WILLIAM TAKE PART IN SOCIALLY DISTANCED REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY EVENT
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GHANA'S POLITICS HAS STRONG TIES WITH PERFORMING ARTS. THIS IS HOW IT STARTED

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GABRIELLA BROOKS AND LIAM HEMSWORTH COZY UP AS THEY CELEBRATE LUKE HEMSWORTH'S BIRTHDAY

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Summit **TIMES**

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ON TOP OF THE NEWS

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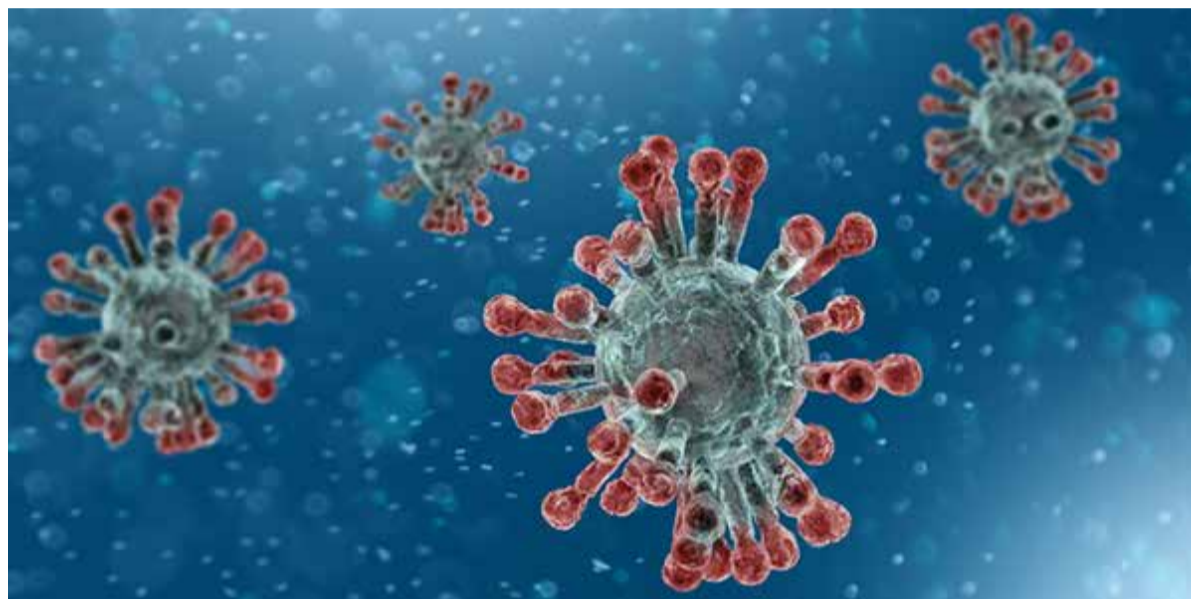
Another death takes Sikkim's COVID toll to 79

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 09 Nov: Sikkim recorded one more COVID-19 related death with the passing away of an 80-year-old woman from Chisopani in South District on Sunday. This is the 79th COVID-19 related death in the State.

In the daily health bulletin on Monday, Health Department State IEC Officer, Sonam Gyaltzen Bhutia informed that the patient was taken to the District Hospital, Namchi, on 08 Nov as she was not feeling well. However, she was declared brought dead on arrival in the hospital.

On testing by RAT, she was found positive for COVID-19 so the death has been registered as a COVID-19 death with comorbidities as she was suffering from hypertension. He informed that Namchi Municipal Council has conducted the cremation as per



COVID protocol.

In the meanwhile, with no RT-PCR testing with VRD Lab in STNM Hospital was closed on Sunday, only 12 fresh cases of novel coronavirus have been reported in the last 24 hours in Sikkim. Sikkim's tally of confirmed cases of COVID-19 reported so far has reached 4257, in which 268 are active cases of

novel coronavirus.

The figure of discharged patients of COVID-19 has also improved to 3826 with the release of 16 more patients from isolation facilities on Sunday.

Twelve new cases of novel coronavirus have been reported from the testing of 51 samples on Sunday, in which three were detected in TrueNat

testing of 17 samples and nine in the rapid antigen testing of 34 samples.

Of the 12 fresh cases of novel coronavirus in Sikkim, seven have been reported in East District, three in West District and two in South District.

In TruNat testing, a two-day old child from Namthang, one from Sichey and one from Burtuk were found positive

for COVID-19.

Likewise, one from Sangkhola, two from Lumsey and one from 9th Namli in East District, one from Gyalshing, one from SSB Uttarey and one from Lower Fambong in West District and one from Chisopani and one from Singhithang, Namchi were also found COVID-19 positive in rapid antigen testing.

India records 45,903 new COVID-19 cases, 490 more deaths

NEW DELHI, NOV 9 (PTI): India's COVID-19 caseload rose to 85,53,657 with 45,903 new infections being reported, while the number of people who have recuperated from the disease crossed 79 lakh, pushing the national recovery rate to 92.56 per cent, according to the Union health ministry data updated on Monday

The death toll from the disease climbed to 1,26,611 with 490 new fatalities being registered, the data updated at 8 am showed

The total number of people who have recuperated from the disease surged to 79,17,373, pushing the national recovery rate to 92.56 per cent while the case fatality rate stands at 1.48 per cent

The number of active cases of COVID-19 remained below 6 lakh for the 11th consecutive day. There are 5,09,673 active cases of the coronavirus infection in the country as on date which comprises 5.96 per cent of the total caseload, the data stated

India's COVID-19 tally had crossed the 20-lakh mark on August 7, 30 lakh on August 23 and 40 lakh on September 5

It went past 50 lakh on September 16, 60

lakh on September 28, 70 lakh on October 11 and crossed 80 lakh on October 29

According to the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), a cumulative total of 11,85,72,192 samples have been tested up to November 8 with 8,35,401 test being conducted on Sunday

The 490 new fatalities include 125 from Maharashtra, 77 from Delhi, 59 from West Bengal, 26 from Uttar Pradesh, 24 from Kerala, 22 from Karnataka and 20 from Tamil Nadu

A total of 1,26,611 deaths have been reported so far in the country including 45,240 from Maharashtra, followed by 11,391 from Karnataka, 11,344 from Tamil Nadu, 7,294 from West Bengal, 7,206 from Uttar Pradesh, 6,989 from Delhi, 6,791 from Andhra Pradesh, 4,318 from Punjab and 3,760 from Gujarat

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

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



CM returns from Delhi visit

GANGTOK, 09 NOV (IPR): After his official visit to New Delhi, the Chief Minister returned to the State this morning. He was accompanied by Minister for Urban Development De-

partment, Arun Upreti.

On his arrival, he was accorded a warm welcome at Bagdogra airport by the Political Secretary to CM, Confidential Secretary and other dignitaries.

Reinventing Diwali with seed crackers

MANISH SAIN

NEW DELHI, NOV 9 (PTI): When the skies turn hazy with pollutants and millions gasp for breath, it's time for a Diwali rethink on how to combine celebration with caution. And some innovators are ready with at least one answer seed crackers' that burst not with sound and light but flowers, fruits and vegetables.

So imagine, not crackers exploding into a thousand ephemeral stars in the night sky or bursting on the ground with a deafening boom but rockets' blooming into marigolds, anaars' sprouting into amaltas or a charkha' releasing an onion sapling.

It's a paradigm shift from the de-rigueur firecrackers but seed crackers' are the perfect solution, particularly in a pandemic year when the high levels of pollutants pose a severe threat to coronavirus patients, entrepreneurs said as the National Green Tribunal on Monday imposed a total ban on firecrackers

across the Delhi-NCR region till November 30.

Roshan Ray, founder of Seed Paper India, is among those experimenting with seed crackers, eco-friendly if a little pricey.

After reading about continuously spiking air pollution post-Diwali year after year and the respiratory problems caused by it, Ray decided that a change of mindset was required and went back to the drawing board to reinvent Diwali.

When people think of firecrackers they associate it with burning and smoke and sound. So we need to change people's mindset that crackers don't need to be burst but they can be grown into different plants. We need to understand that we can celebrate without harming the environment, the Bangalore-based Ray told PTI.

Ray's rockets' turn into marigold flowers, bijli bombs' into medicinal tulsi plants and hydrogen bombs' into juicy tomatoes.

They are shaped like the usual firecrackers including 'sutli bomb', 'hydrogen bomb', and 'anaar' for the sake of a nostalgic feel, but the seed crackers don't burst. They grow into various vegetable plants, the 36-year-old green entrepreneur said.

SDF MOURNS SANCHAMAN LIMBOO'S PASSING AWAY

Chamling remembers Sanchaman Limboo as "vocal, bold and truthful"

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 09 NOV: Sikkim Democratic Front party president, Chief Minister Pawan Chamling, has condoled the demise of Sanchaman Limboo, the fourth Chief Minister of Sikkim. Mr Limboo was also a senior member of the SDF and has served as Deputy Chairperson, State Planning Commission, and Advisor to the CM during the SDF Government.

In a statement released today, Mr Chamling underlines that the late leader's contributions as Minister and Chief Minister will remain etched in the Sikkimese conscious forever because of his exceptional service and that his contributions towards the development of the Limboo language will forever remain immortalized.

"I am deeply saddened by the sudden demise of former Chief Minister Sanchaman Limboo. We were colleagues in the Sikkim Legislative Assembly for a number of years. He was senior to me in the SLA. He was elected as an MLA in 1979 and became a Minister. I was first elected in 1985. He served impor-

tant portfolios in Health and Education as a cabinet minister," Mr Chamling writes.

Mr Chamling highlights that the late Mr Limboo was a "vocal, bold, truthful and extremely sincere politician who had no guile or malice."

"He spoke for causes he felt deeply and he stood firmly for those causes and he became the fourth Chief Minister of Sikkim from 17 June to 12 December in 1994," Mr Chamling shares.

"To me, personally, he was my dear friend who was a part of my family. Our long friendship holds numerous memories for me which I will always cherish. We were likeminded and shared a similar passion in social, cultural, other non-political matters and development of Sikkim and welfare of the Sikkimese people as well. We often had long discussions on matters concerning them. I found him to be a complete human being endowed with intelligence, goodness and decency. With him gone from us, I feel an enormous loss - not just of a senior politician and

former Chief Minister but also of a great human being. On a personal level, I feel the loss as if it was my own family member," Mr Chamling confides.

The Sikkim Democratic Front also held a condolence meeting on Monday in the memory of former Chief Minister, Sanchaman Limboo, here at SDF Bhawan on Monday, and offered two minutes silence and prayers to mourn his passing.

An SDF press release issued by senior vice-president and former Speaker of Sikkim Legislative Assembly, KT Gyaltzen, conveys the party's deep sorrow on the passing away of Mr Limboo, who is held up as a "dedicated senior member of the Party."

The SDF Party recollects and respects the services and contributions made by him to the Party and the State and expresses deep condolences to the bereaved family members for this irreparable loss, the release states.

SDF has remembered him as a very humble person who led a disciplined life and a leader who was well respected and loved by all.

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BSNL Sikkim circle declared Independent Unit by Union Minister

GANGTOK, 09 NOV [IPR]: Chief Minister, PS Tamang called on the Union Minister of Law and Justice, Electronics and Information Technology and Communication, Ravi Shankar Prasad on 08 Nov at New Delhi.

The Chief Minister thanked the Union Minister for his gracious

declaration of the Independent Administrative Unit of BSNL in Sikkim. Mr Prasad informed him that the Chief General Manager will be posted soon in Sikkim and also discussed the fulfilment of the Digital India campaign, a vision of the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi.

The digital medium

has been a boon for all, especially during the time of the pandemic which has enabled to carry out various works without any hurdles. The Union Minister was kind enough to assure that the Union Government will give maximum support for the development of Special Economic Zone in the State.

It's a nascent business but growing, slowly and steadily.

From a barely countable number in 2018 to an odd 500 the next year, Ray has managed to sell over 7,000 boxes so far this year. Each box contains seven different types of seed crackers.

It feels good that people are taking interest in the concept. I know we cannot replace a habit with another just like that. It takes time. I am happy about the progress, he added.

The seed crackers are made by using plantable seed paper or containing a seed ball inside the cracker, which is usually made by recycled paper. A seed ball, made with paper pulp or soil, provides protection against predators and adverse weather.

While Ray has tried to maintain a visual resemblance to the real firecrackers, Tanmay Joshi from Gram Art Project decided to go beyond the nostalgic value and send a message through his seed crackers.

His Diwali rocket can turn into a climber laden with cucumbers instead of bursting into a cloud of poisonous smoke for momentary joy. And a zaamen chakkar rises from its ashes to become a red onion.

People were unable to find fun in

seed crackers. They were unable to connect. So we decided to make the design meaningful in one way or another, Joshi, who operates from Paradsinga village in Madhya Pradesh's Chhindwara district, said.

Buried upside down, the rocket's leg' gives the initial support to a climber like cucumber to grow.

It is symbolic in the sense that a rocket bursts in the air and gives joy to people for a few seconds, but this cucumber rocket will feed a family for a few months, he added.

The knowledge of Indian traditional farming gave Joshi the idea to add an action relatable in the context of Diwali -- a Phoenix chakkar' that contains an onion seed ball.

You have to burn this 'Phoenix chakkar' to get ash, which is traditionally used as a potassium supplement in onion cultivation, and cover the burnt residue with soil, water regularly. Then see this chakkar' rise from the ashes, just like a Phoenix, to transform into an onion sapling, Joshi said.

His company has also come up with an eco-friendly alternative of an anaar' that sprouts into the beautiful amaltas. While the traditional anaar' creates a cascade

turn to pg 02

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PMVDY launched in Sikkim

Gangtok, 09 Nov [IPR]: Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana (PMVDY) was launched in Sikkim by the Union Minister for Tribal Affairs, Govt of India in the presence of CM, Sikkim, Prem Singh Tamang (Golay) on 01 Oct, 2020 via video conferencing.

It is one of the components of Minimum Support Price (MSP) for Minor Forest Produce (MFP) Scheme of Ministry of Tribal Affairs. It supports Minor Forest Produce (MFP) market development thereby ensuring fair returns to the tribal gatherers. It aims to lead MSP for MFP program through value addition by tribal SHGs to the MFP procured by them under MSP through establishment of common use facilities for value addition to be called Van Dhan Kendras. The scheme is set up for tribal community owned MFP centric Multipurpose Van Dhan Kendras in tribal dominated area. Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India (TRIFED) Ltd is the Central monitoring Agency for the Yojana under Ministry of Tribal Affairs.

The State, in the first phase of the Yojana, will be setting up Van Dhan Vikas Kendras (VDVK). The Department of Science and Technology is the State Nodal Department for the Yojana. The Department of Cooperation is the State Project Implementing Agency (Department). The Sikkim Schedule Castes, Schedule Tribes and Other Backward Community Corporation (SABCO) Ltd are the Co-Implementing Agency. The same has been notified vide Notification NO 59/HOME/202, dated 30.09.2020.

80 VDVKs will be set up across the State and each VDVK will comprise of preferably women self-help group or similar other groups like JFMC/Cooperative/other MFP

gatherers, group in the identified cluster area with the total of 300 members for each VanDhan Vikas Kendra. The composition of SHGs shall comprise of 60% of the tribal members in the State as a whole and shall include members from other weaker section of the society as notified by State Government.

At the onset, the process of identifying 80 VDVKs have been completed and both Nodal as well as Implementing Departments are continuously taking input and guidance from Trifed on implementation of the Yojana. In connection to this an online Training programme on Data collection and uploading of details of SHG for the Pradhan Mantri Van Dhan Yojana was held on 5/11/2020. The program was attended by officers of State Nodal Department i.e. Department of Science & Technology and State Implementing Agency i.e. Cooperation Department and field supervisors and surveyors. It may be mentioned that 80 VDVKs so identified in cluster has Multi-Purpose Co-operative Society Ltd. of the respective GPU as field level mentoring organization. The 3 (three) hour long training was conducted by Regional Office of TRIFED, Guwahati and the main resource person for the training was Senior Program Associate TRIFED. In the session, departmental officials and field workers were given practical training on use of VAN DHAN App for collection and uploading of beneficiaries' details to enable process the data for the preparation and monitoring of progress of the project. The field workers are tasked to visit households of beneficiaries for collection of required information and submit to the implementing agency over the next one month.

Sikkim L-T Tribal JAC mourns Sanchaman Limboo's demise

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 09 NOV: Sikkim Limboo Tamang Tribal Joint Action Committee has mourned the demise of former Chief Minister of Sikkim, Sancha Man Limboo.

"He was a principled and visionary leader, whose contribution in

development Sikkim is indelible. His demise is a huge loss for the State which is hard to fill," a press release from the Committee states.

Sikkim Limboo Tamang Tribal Joint Action Committee has expressed its heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family.

SKM begins youth coordination meetings in West Sikkim

PRITAM LAMA GYALSHING, 09 Nov:

After completing a series of youth coordination meetings in North, East and South Districts of the state, Sikkim Krantikari Morcha started its series of youth coordination meetings for West Sikkim from Pelling today.

The coordination meeting at Pelling was conducted for Yuksam-Tashiding and Yangthang Constituencies.

The meeting chaired by UDHD and Transport Minister, Sanjit Kharel had the presence of SLA Deputy Speaker, Sangay Lepcha, PHE Minister, Bhim Hang Subba amongst others.

Youth of Yuksam-Tashiding and Yangthang constituencies were addressed by the SKM functionaries today.

A similar meeting is scheduled to be held on 11 Nov at Soreng for three constituencies of Zoom-Salghari, Daramdin and Soreng-Chakhung. Another meeting is scheduled to be held on 12 Nov at Sribadam for Maney-



bong-Dentam, Rinchenpong and Gyalshing-Bermiok Constituencies.

PHE Minister and Yangthang MLA, Bhim Hang Subba, talked about how SKM government has prioritized the youth of the state.

Newly appointed Chairpersons are all young and have been given an opportunity to serve the people, which is also an example of SKM's focus on the youth, he said. He informed that as per the direction from the Chief Minister various departments of Sik-

kim Government are preparing schemes for the welfare of the youth.

SLA Deputy Speaker and Yuksam-Tashiding MLA, Sangay Lepcha in his brief address, called upon the youth of the state to take advantage of the opportunities initiated by the SKM Government.

UDHD and Transport Minister, Sanjit Kharel who is also the Vice President of SKM State level youth wing, recalled how SKM came to power. Alleging that rumours are being spread on social

media by SDF and anti-social elements, he urged the youth not to believe them. He further accused the previous SDF government of using youth just for votes.

Transport Chairman, Basant Tamang, SIDICO Chairman, Janak Gurung, PHE Chairman, Hari Narayana Subedi, SKM youth wing president, Lakpa Moktan, State youth wing general secretary, Pujan Rai, SKM West District coordinator, Nandu Gurung were also present in the meeting.

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OBITUARY

With profound grief we would like to inform that our dear son, brother, and friend Pem Ong Pazo is no more with us. He died in his sleep due to cardiac complications on the morning of 31st October, 2020.

Pem Ong was born to Passang Obed and Primrose Pazo on 2nd July 1978 and he was 42 years old when he passed away. He completed his schooling from St. Paul's School, Darjeeling and went on to do his Bachelor of Engineering from the University of Bombay. In the course of his career he also completed his Masters of Business Administration from the National Education Management, Ahmedabad.

During the span of his professional career he held various positions in the corporate world and his last post was that of Assistant Vice President at Ican solutions, a private consultancy based in Mumbai.

Pem Ong lived his life as a passionate soul and dedicated himself to serving others and making people happy. He was a foodie and a great cook also. He was intelligent, witty and was a jolly person to be around with. All those acquainted with him know him to be a beautiful person.

Due to Covid SOPs his cremation was done in Mumbai and his ashes have been brought to his hometown in Gangtok. The funeral service will be conducted at Bakthang Cemetery on 19th November, 11 am where his mortal remains will be buried next to his father.

The family members request all well wishers to follow the Covid protocols of staying at home, avoid any visits at this time and to keep him in their prayers.

*Primrose Pazo, mother
Palden Ongchu Pazo, eldest brother
Mikma Ongmu Pazo, sister in law
Punol Ong Pazo, nephew
Panu Ongri Pazo, youngest brother,
Rojana Tamang, sister in law
Punzong Ong Pazo Lepcha, nephew*



Reinventing Diwali ...

of sparks with toxic smoke for a few seconds, the amaltas tree stands shrouded in a flowing sheet of yellow flowers every summer for years to come.

Among the many takers for the idea is Delhi-based photographer Ankit Gautam.

I have loved firecrackers since childhood, and the air wasn't so bad till a few years ago. But with the air pollution I stopped buying or bursting firecrackers. Now, I am going to try the seed crackers for sure, said the 26-year-old, who has grown a green thumb during the lockdown period.

However, the price is a deterrent.

Ankita Verma Mehta, a Gurgaon-based HR manager, for instance, said the idea is noble but the cost made him think twice before eventually deciding against it.

It's a low cost seed sold at commercially higher prices. It is like seed rakhis I bought for kids at home. These were basic rakhis with two-three seeds and that cost me not less than Rs 300-400, Mehta said.

A box containing two coir pots and seven seed crackers anaar', chakri', tikli', lakshmi bomb', rocket', sutli bomb', and naagin ladi' -- costs Rs 749 at Jaipur-based startup 21Fools.com, which collaborates with Gram Art Project.

The pricing, according to Divyanshu Asopa, founder of 21Fools, will come down after more people start taking interest.

"We make sustainable handcrafted products which are unique because each and every product is manually made, printed and fabricated by our local craftspeople's community.

"The cost can only go down when we hit huge numbers and are able to sell products across different sales channels which we are planning to do by next summer," Asopa explained.

But the trend could well have begun.

For the first time, the makers and sellers of seed crackers like Gram Art Project and 21Fools said, the response has been good as the stock has flown off the shelf.

"We have sold all 1500 packets a week before diwali," said a beaming Asopa.

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

LAND FOR SALE

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

FOR RENT

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

GENERAL LAND FOR SALE

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

Building for sale

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

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Esmrite Pradhan wins Lumanti Phykhyn 2020

SUMMIT REPORT
SINGTAM, 09 Nov: Esmrite Pradhan has won the Lumanti Phykhyn 2020, the Newa Online Folk Dance Competition organised by the Newa Bhay Bowney Kuthi, Singtam Sakha. She was representing the Dentam branch of the Guthi. Akriti Pradhan (Tadong) and Rabina Pradhan (Namchi Sakha Guthi) were declared 1st and 2nd runner-ups, a press release informs.

The competition was held at the Nepali Dharamsala here with limited crowd keeping the Covid protocol in mind, the release adds.

Bhanu Pradhan, OSD to CM was present as the chief guest.

Other winners at the competition were; Judges Prize Trophy to Deepkala Pradhan and Rosa Pradhan (Hathi Phusse, Dalapchand) while consolation prizes were awarded to Sujata Pradhan (Turing), Taku Swan (Daramdin Sakha Guthi), Manju Pradhan (Namchi Sakha Guthi), Kamaray Sakha Guthi, Deepjyoti Pradhan (Sichey Sakha) and Khan-du Sakha (Dentam).

The sponsors of the awards - Tripti's, Pancha Buddha, Shyam Pradhan, Manish Pradhan, Jiwan Pradhan and Motichand Pradhan - were also presented mementos.

The chief guest, in his address, appreciated the works carried on by Newa Bhay Bowneykuthi, Singtam Sakha, and lauded the participants for their efforts.

The organisers also congratulated the chief guest on his appointment as OSD to the Chief Minister and presented him a memento to mark the appointment.

Dr Ema Pradhan and Dr Nilima Pradhan, both from Singtam, were also felicitated and thanked for their service towards society.

Dr Ema Pradhan runs the Aesthetic Clinic with branches in Siliguri and Tadong, while Dr Nilima Pradhan has set up Life Active Physiocare Centre at Lal Bazaar, Singtam.

Bharat Scouts and Guides distribute face masks

SUMMIT REPORT
GANGTOK, 09 Nov: Sikkim State Bharat Scouts and Guides of different schools today distributed face masks in remote areas of the state on the occasion of the 70th Foundation Day of Bharat Scouts and Guides.

A press release informs that they also took part in cleanliness drives and collection of funds.

Students of St Joseph's Convent school, Martam, Sudunglakha Secondary School, Mulukey Secondary School, St Xavier's School, Pakyong, took part in the program.

Face marks were distributed to the monks of Namthang Monastery by SCC on the occasion of Lhabab Duechen. State Chief Commissioner, Dr HP Chhetri blessed all the members during the program.

State pays tribute to former Chief Minister Limboo



GANGTOK, 09 Nov (IPR): Chief Secretary SC Gupta and DGP A Shankar Rao paid tribute to the former Chief Minister of Sikkim Late Sanchaman Limboo by laying wreaths and offering prayers at Development Area, Gangtok today. The senior officials of the State Government also paid tribute and offered prayers.

Late Sanchaman Limboo passed away after a prolonged illness at the age of 73 at Gangtok on 08 November. His body has been taken to his native village in Hee Gaon, West Sikkim, today and the funeral would take place on 10 November. The late Mr Limboo

was a respected leader of the Sikkimese people who served the State in various capacities.

As a mark of respect to late Sanchaman Limboo, seven days State mourning shall be observed from 09 to 15 Nov, 2020. The National Flag shall be flown at half mast on all buildings where it is

flown regularly.

Further, the State Government Offices, Educational Institutions and Public Undertakings shall remain closed throughout the State of Sikkim on the day of funeral i.e. on 10 Nov, 2020. The last rites of late, Sanchaman Limboo will be observed with full State honours.

Rotary Club donates sanitary pad vending machine

SUMMIT REPORT

GANGTOK, 09 Nov: The Rotary Club of Gangtok donated a sanitary pad vending machine and an incinerator to Kyide-khang School today. The equipment has been provided under the district grant of the Rotary District 3240, a press release informs.

Although the school is not open completely, the vending machine and incinerator were handed over to the Principal of the School.

The sanitary pad vending machine donated will not only save



the environment but also will help the girl child to maintain hygiene and good health, the release adds.

GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
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GANGTOK, SIKKIM

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

The Education Department, Government of Sikkim invites Request for Proposal (Technical & Financial bids) from reputed and experienced registered Company/Proprietorship firm/Partnership firm/Trustees/Consortium to participate in competitive bidding for selection of an Implementing Agency to **Survey, Design, Build, Finance, Execute and Transfer of Greenfield Institute for Higher Education (An Institute of Excellence/Centre of Excellence) at Chakung, West Sikkim** as a Turnkey Project on a Lump sum basis under Public Private Partnership in a Design, Build, Finance and Transfer (DBFT) mode.

The details of the Request for Proposal (RFP) can be viewed and downloaded from the website www.sikkimtender.gov.in.

R.O. No. 133/IPR/Pub/Classi/20-21
Date: 08/11/20

Secretary
Education Department
Government of Sikkim

STATE POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD SIKKIM
FORESTS AND ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT
GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM
DEORALI, GANGTOK - 737102

APPEAL

The festive seasons of Durga Puja (Dashain) and Diwali, the festival of light & flowers is approaching once again. You may be aware that the Government has banned the manufacture, sale & bursting of all types of sound and light emitting fire crackers in Sikkim through Gazette Notification No. 544 dated 19th December 2014.

Further, all are aware that plastic is non bio-degradable and its use leads to environmental problems. Hence all are requested to refrain from using any plastic items during the festive occasion to prevent littering and generation of plastic waste.

The State Pollution Control Board Sikkim solicits kind co-operation of every one in making this "ban" successful and keep the State of Sikkim clean, green & pollution free. The State Pollution Control Board-Sikkim also wishes all a very happy and pollution free Dashain & Diwali 2020.

State Pollution Control Board
Forest & Environment Department
Government of Sikkim

RO No. 116/IPR/Pub/Classi./20-21
Date. 21.10.2020

SOCIAL JUSTICE & WELFARE DEPARTMENT
CHILD PROTECTION SCHEME
GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM

No. **233** /SJ&WD/CPS/2020 Dated: **09/11/2020**

NOTICE

Reference Notice no: 1000/ SJ&WD/CPS/2020 dt: 20/03/2020, this is to inform all eligible applicants for the post of **PROGRAMME OFFICER, LEGAL-CUM-PROBATION OFFICER, PROTECTION OFFICER AND ACCOUNTANT**, that the written examination which had been postponed due to the outbreak of COVID-19 and lockdown, is re-scheduled as under:

Sl no.	Post	Date of Examination.	Morning/ Afternoon Session
1.	Legal-cum-Probation Officer	05/12/2020	Morning Session
2.	Programme Officer	05/12/2020	Afternoon Session
3.	Protection Officer	06/12/2020	Morning Session
4.	Accountant	06/12/2020	Afternoon Session

Timing: Morning paper - 10.00 am to 12.00 pm
Afternoon paper - 1.00 pm to 3.00 pm

Venue: Tashi Namgyal Senior Secondary School, Development Area, Gangtok, East Sikkim.

Hall tickets/ Admit cards issued earlier are cancelled due to the change in venue. Fresh Admit Card will be issued from 11/11/2020 to 03/12/2020 from 10.00 am to 4.30 pm in CPS, Social Justice and Welfare Department, Lumsey, Gangtok, East-Sikkim.

Applicants should bring 02 (two) nos. of their recent passport size photographs and acknowledgement slip for collecting the Admit Card.

Additional Secretary cum Director
Additional Secretary cum Director,
Social Justice & Welfare Dept.,
Govt. of Sikkim

R.O. No. 141/IPR/Pub/Classi/20-21
Date: 09/11/20

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT ENGINEER
URBAN DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
GOVERNMENT OF SIKKIM
GIALSHING

No: 240/GSD/UDD/West Dated: 21/10/2020

INVITATION FOR BIDS

On behalf of the Governor of Sikkim, Assistant Engineer(W), Urban Development Department, Gyalshing, West Sikkim, invites percentage rate bids among the eligible bidders as per the Notification No: 515/R&B/PWD/Secy, dated 12th June 2018 and memo no.566/R&B/PWD/Secy dated 26/08/2018 through competitive bidding within the territorial jurisdiction of Gram Panchayat/ Urban local bodies where the work is to be executed. The details of works are listed below:

Sl No	Name of works	Bid value (Lakhs)	Bid security 2.5% of the bid value (Rs.)	Cost of tender/ bid form (Rs)	Completion period
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Beautification of Yuksom Bazaar in West Sikkim.	Rs. 75.21 Lakhs	Rs. 1,88,033/-	Rs. 15,000/-	3 months
2	Carpeting Works from Red Panda Turning to Kyongsa Girls School in West Sikkim	Rs. 54.40 Lakhs	Rs. 1,36,000/-	Rs. 15,000/-	3 months
3	Restoration of Road Works and Construction of Storm Water Drain at Soreng in West Sikkim	Rs. 46.53 Lakhs	Rs. 1,16,325/-	Rs. 2,500/-	3 months
4	Construction of Toilet at Rinchenpong in West Sikkim.	Rs 15.21 Lakhs	Rs. 38,025/-	Rs. 1000/-	3 months

The date and time for submission of completed bid document is as under.

i)	Date of submission of application with Bank receipt validated enlistment and address proof for issue of tender documents (excluding Tender Form)	23/11/2020 1000 Hrs to 1600 Hrs
ii)	Date of issue of tender form on Submission of T.D.R. (as Earnest Money)	23/11/2020 & 24/11/2020 1000 Hrs to 1600 Hrs
iii)	Last date for submission of bids	26/11/2020 1000 Hrs to 1200 Hrs.
iv)	Date of opening of bids	26/11/2020 1200 Hrs to 1600 Hrs

The committee reserves the rights to accept or reject one or all the tender without assigning any reason thereof.

NOTE -

- Recent notification No. 104/R&B dated: 08/10/2020 shall be applicable.
- All tender process shall be conducted in the Office of Assistant Engineer, Gyalshing, West Sikkim.

Assistant Engineer (W)
Urban Development Department

Bees, neither Buzzing nor Busy

Talk more about the pollinators

The Baramati sub-division under Pune district in Maharashtra is a rural belt of pomegranate and onion growers. Some of the farmers, those who became part of a pilot project - Madhu Sandesh - have been reporting bumper crop this year. In fact, not only has the volume of their produce grown substantially, the quality too has been markedly better. The pilot project was launched in November 2015, for farms to report a substantial turnaround within a year should get everyone interested.

Growers are reporting harvests of around 12 tonnes from farms which used to otherwise yield between 7 to 8 tonnes. Sure, these could be cyclical variations, but traditional growers would know that, Hence, when they credit the improvement in volume and quality to honey bees, everyone should sit up and take note, especially horticulturists in Sikkim who continue to struggle with failing crops and poor quality. Under the Madhu Sandesh project, farmers were trained to rear honeybees on their farms and use them extensively for pollinating their pomegranate and onion seeds. So dramatic have the improvements been that more farmers are lining up to take the training and those who already have honeybee hives in their farms, are looking around to install more, even on rent! There is nothing earth-shatteringly new in the Baramati experience given that colony collapse (of bees) and the resultant effect on fruit orchards across the world have been much discussed worries in these times of climate change and ecological distress. Unfortunately, not enough people are speaking of this phenomenon in Sikkim. But if one were to look around, the warning signs are aplenty.

Farmers from Dzongu have been complaining of falling produce in their orange orchards. Local orange produce could be in decline elsewhere as well. It has been several decades since the State lost its North Sikkim apples [although one hears off and on about attempts to revive apple orchards there]. Large cardamom plantations stand devastated across the State. Between an entire Board devoted to spices and a department charged to look after Horticulture, an explanation remains awaited. Although one hears often about mischievously named crop diseases afflicting the fruits and frequent reference to the advanced age of the [large cardamom] plantations, these only explain the symptoms which are manifesting in the fields and not the overall crop failure. There have even been reports of disease-resistant strains being developed and attempts to promote improved plantation management practices. What one does not hear being discussed as often is the health of pollinators in Sikkim's fields. Agriculture does not require pollination, but horticulture, every expert will agree, is not possible without pollinators. Fruit-bearing trees flower to attract pollinators, and the number of pollinating agents is directly proportional to the number and health of fruits borne. Bees are among the most prolific and important pollinators and the role of wild bees in pollinating large cardamom, as against the damage that honey bees can wreck, has been studied and documented. The same applies to oranges and apples, which are also serviced by a host of other insects.

Study of declining produce in orchards elsewhere in the world has flagged shortage of pollinators as the main culprit. Bee populations are in unexplained decline across the world and even casual surveys will prove this to be the case here as well. It is perhaps important then that horticultural issues facing Sikkim should start at the basics by checking first on the presence and health of pollinators in the farms. Another good place to pick up some tips would be Baramati, and a study tour to that corner of Pune might prove a good excursion. The Bee experiment also ties in well with Sikkim's Organic Mission. In Baramati for instance, a substantial part of the training was on how to use pesticides and fertilizers without affecting the bees. That worry does not exist in Sikkim since chemical pesticides and fertilizers which are known to wipe out bee colonies are not used in farms here [unless that form of farming is being reconsidered]. These are all ideas and suggestions and would be of some consequence if there was some follow-up.

WRITE US:

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

China's push for Mandarin education in Inner Mongolia is a tool for political repression

SHANNON WARD
theconversation.com

In early September, Human Rights Watch reported widespread protests over the expansion of Mandarin Chinese teaching in Inner Mongolia's schools. This new bilingual education policy threatens the Mongolian language and represents a broader policy of active assimilation that threatens the maintenance of linguistic diversity in China, more generally.

Inner Mongolia is an autonomous province in the People's Republic of China. With its integration into mainland China in the early 20th century, the province's Han Chinese population expanded, while its Mongolian population dwindled. Today, ethnic Mongolians form the largest minority in Inner Mongolia.

China's constitution promotes the languages of officially recognized minority communities, including Mongolians, in education. Since its founding, the People's Republic of China has generally supported a two-track education system: one for minority students who live in autonomous regions and counties based on their recognized, written native language, and one for the majority Han Chinese students, based on the nation's official standard language, Mandarin.

My own research with children and families from greater China investigates the widespread yet deeply personal effects of assimilationist language policies.

CHANGING EDUCATIONAL POLICIES

This summer, the Inner Mongolian Education department announced changes to the province's primary school curriculum. Currently, Inner Mongolia's schools use Mongolian as the language of instruction for all subjects other than Chinese and foreign languages. The new policy will introduce Mandarin textbooks for three subjects: language

and literature, morality and law (politics), and history.

This will significantly reduce the number of hours of Mongolian instruction each day. The new policy effectively shifts the meaning of bilingual education from Mongolian schooling that teaches Mandarin Chinese as a subject to Mandarin schooling that teaches Mongolian as a subject.

In the short term, local Mongolian teachers will have to adapt to using Mandarin, and face heightened job insecurity. In the long term, the change will transform students' educational trajectories, with university-level majors and subjects that are now taught in Mongolian becoming obsolete.

In response, communities in Inner Mongolia have engaged in active protests. Alongside demonstrations in the streets, parents are refusing to send children to school, and children are running away from their classrooms.

The Southern Mongolian Human Rights Information Center links protests over the new policy to at least nine suicides and thousands of arrests. On Aug. 23, it reported the shutdown of Bainnu, China's only Mongolian-language social media site, as a way of curtailing this political activism.

MINORITY RIGHTS

The news from Inner Mongolia is part of an ongoing struggle for language recognition and rights by minority communities in China. China is an ethnically and linguistically diverse country, home to 55 officially recognized minority ethnic groups and an estimated 297 languages. Extensive state support for the development of any minority language education is relatively rare. Indigenous communities in North America, for example, are today tasked with actively revitalizing their languages after the devastations of residential schooling and English-only curricula.

Over the past 20 years, China has radically expanded the use of standard Mandarin in schools.

The news from Inner Mongolia seems to emanate from China's so-called "Second Generation Ethnic Policy" that promotes national unity through cultural and linguistic assimilation. Scholars have noted that the endpoint of the Second Generation Ethnic Policy has already been borne out among Tibetans and Uighurs. Any overt display of social and cultural otherness — including linguistic diversity — is often read as a threat to national unity.

COLONIALISM AND LINGUISTIC ALIENATION

Despite anxieties over the loss of the Tibetan language, Tibetan families in China often choose to send their children to Mandarin rather than Tibetan schools, to ensure their socio-economic mobility.

Multilingual Tibetan children often self-identify as Mandarin speakers when they begin attending Mandarin schools and form peer relationships outside of the home. This shift in linguistic identification can cause ruptures in family relationships, with young children actively avoiding Tibetan language interactions with their parents and grandparents.

In 1986, Kenyan writer Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o wrote of the consequences of his own colonial English education: "The colonial child was made to see the world and where he stands in it as seen and defined by or reflected in the culture of the language of imposition."

When children lack access to mother-tongue education, they lose the opportunity to create a vision of their selves through their community's shared worldview. More than 30 years later, children continue to be faced with this same paradox: success in school means alienation from their native languages, families and communities.

[the writer is Assistant Professor, Anthropology, University of British Columbia]

Ghana's politics has strong ties with performing arts. This is how it started

EDMUND JOHN COLLINS
theconversation.com

Towards the end of the Kwame Nkrumah era in 1966, a number of highlife artists wrote songs critical of him as Ghana's president. But during the period leading up to independence in 1957 and the early years of independence, most Ghanaian popular artists and entertainers wholeheartedly backed Nkrumah and his Convention People's Party.

It is on this support by local popular artists for the independence struggle, as well as Nkrumah's Pan African and "African Personality" ideals, that this article focuses.

In the late 1940s and early 1950s, "concert party" popular theatre groups staged pro-Nkrumah plays. Among them were the Axim Trio and Bob Ansah's. Bob Vans actually changed the name of his Burma Trio concert party to the Ghana Trio in 1948. This was nine years before "Ghana" became the country's official name.

In 1952 the guitarist E.K. Nyame formed his Akan Trio concert party, which for the first time fully integrated guitar band highlife into the concert dramas and performed exclusively in the vernacular. His motives were partly political. As he once told me, he wanted to get away from the "colonial ideology and British mind". E.K. Nyame's guitar band also wrote and released on record 40 highlifes in support of Nkrumah.

Some of the other highlife guitar bands that supported Nkrumah were those of Kwaa Mensah, I.E. Mason, the Fanti Stars, Bob Cole, Yaw Adjei and Otoo Larte.

Moreover, the highlife influenced Ewe borborbor drum and dance music created in the Kpandu area around 1950 became so closely identified with his political party that this neo-traditional recreational music became known as "Nkrumah's own borborbor".

The more urbanised and prestigious highlife dance bands also supported Nkrumah: like Broadway, Squire Addo's London Rhythm Band, the Modernaires, the Red Spots, Joe Kelly's band and E.T. Mensah's Tempos, which played at Convention People's Party rallies and released records like Kwame Nkrumah, General Election and Ghana Freedom Highlife.

Not only did the Tempos record pro-Convention People's Party

highlifes, but the band's brilliant blend of highlife and jazz, as well as its use of sophisticated up-to-date imported instruments to play African songs, became the sound-symbol or zeitgeist ("spirit of the age") for the early optimistic independence era.

NKRUMAH'S QUID PRO QUO

Nkrumah recognised the vital

bands and concert parties in Ghana's independence struggle there were a number of other reasons why Nkrumah supported the popular performance as a third prong of his national performing arts policy.

Firstly, as Ghana's independence movement was spearheaded by the mass Convention People's Party, it

wrote a song that lamented the assassination of Nkrumah's Congolese colleague Patrice Lumumba. Other pan-African highlife themes are found in some of the releases of E.K. Nyame, Otoo Larte, the Builder Brigade band, S.S. Ahima, the Ramblers, Broadway — and the Uhuru dance band which derives its name from the East African



role of local popular entertainment in the independence struggle and the creation of an African identity. This led him to endorse numerous state and parastatal highlife bands and concert parties. These included the Cocoa Marketing Board, Black Star Shipping Line, State Hotels, Armed Forces, the Workers Brigade and the Farmers Council.

The coup in 1966 led to some interesting dynamics. One was that the military National Liberation Council that overthrew Nkrumah showed it understood the power wielded by the popular artists. This was demonstrated by the case of Ajax Bukana. A Nigerian musician and comedian, he came to Ghana in 1952 and literally became Nkrumah's personal "court jester". As a result of his close association with Nkrumah, Bukana was briefly imprisoned by the police criminal investigation department immediately after the 1966 coup.

Indeed the link between popular artists and Nkrumah was so strong that after the anti-Nkrumah coup the new government not only dissolved the two entertainment unions but also put a three week ban on the movement of touring concert parties.

OTHER REASONS FOR NKURUMAH'S SUPPORT

Besides the active role of highlife

is not surprising that the popular music and drama of the masses was also drawn into the struggle. Indeed the so-called "veranda boys" from whom Nkrumah drew so much of his backing were of the same "intermediate" class from which most Ghanaian (and other African) popular musicians and actors were drawn. These "intermediates" were neither elite nor peasant, but cash-crop farmers and newly urbanised Africans who performed semi-skilled work. In short the same rural and urban masses that the Convention People's Party drew its main support from.

Yet another reason for Nkrumah's endorsement of the popular arts is that, compared to ethnic based traditional music, highlife music and the concert party were "non-tribal" art forms popular throughout Ghana. For instance, although the text of highlife songs and concert party dramas was mainly in the Akan and Ga languages, the Ewe, Hausa and Pidgin English languages were also sometimes used. Local popular dance music and drama therefore provided an artistic lingua franca suitable for Nkrumah's trans-ethnic nation building policy for polyglot Ghana.

Yet another was the pro-Convention People's Party concert musician and actor Bob Cole, who in 1961

Swahili word for "freedom".

Several highlife bands accompanied Nkrumah and represented Ghana at Pan African and international events. One particular case was that of the Tempos, who visited Guinea just after its independence in 1958 when, as E.T. Mensah told me, he was gifted money by President Sekou Touré. At that time Ghanaians were particularly popular in Guinea, as the country had received a substantial loan from Nkrumah to overcome its initial problems at independence. The French colonial government had sabotaged the new nation's infrastructure before quitting.

On this theme of pan-Africanism it should also be noted that Ghanaian highlife music is not only "non-tribal", it has some roots and extensions in other West African countries (particularly Liberia, Sierra Leone and Nigeria). Indeed during the 1950s highlife music spread throughout sub-Saharan Africa.

In short, highlife not only provided Nkrumah with a ready-made artistic vehicle that projected trans-ethnic national aspirations, but also became a Pan African artistic idiom that symbolised the birth of sub-Saharan Africa's first modern independent nation.

[the writer is Professor, Department of Music, University of Ghana]

Bangladesh captain keen to help Md Sporting win I-League



KOLKATA, Nov 9 (PTI): Mohammedan Sporting Club's Bangladeshi recruit Jamal Bhuyan is keen to help the legacy team win the I-League and revive its glory days.

For the Bangladesh national team captain, the long stay in the eastern metropolis will also be an opportunity to connect with his roots, as his ancestors had lived here before Independence.

Newly promoted I-League side Mohammedan SC have named Jamal as one of their latest signings ahead of their next campaign.

"An offer from the I-League is very good for me. So when Mohammedan Sporting approached me I asked around to know more about their rich history,"

Jamal told the AIFF website.

"They just earned promotion and now want to win the league. I felt that this is the kind of intent I want to play with, and that I can make an impact there."

Being from Bangladesh, the 30-year-old will look to settle quickly into life in Kolkata and feels that knowing Bengali will help him develop a connection with the local players.

"I think the environment and culture in Kolkata will be very similar to the one we experience back here in Bangladesh," said Jamal. "My family used to stay in India before Independence," said Jamal.

"That was a long time back, but I am really

looking forward to it as it will be kind of getting back to the roots as well."

The Bangladesh captain has enjoyed a healthy rivalry with the Indian team in the international arena and has not lost to their neighbours on the three occasions they faced off.

Jamal feels a special motivation when it comes to playing against India on the international arena.

"It's always special to play against India, because India is like an elder brother to Bangladesh. And you always want to beat your elder brother when you play against him," the Bangladesh captain laughed.

Looking back at the 2022 FIFA World Cup qualifier that was played

in Kolkata last year, Jamal said that the entire team was charged up ahead of the game.

"That day I sensed a different atmosphere in our camp when I woke up. Everybody wanted to do well against India."

"Right from the morning we were cheering each other up, telling everyone to pick up the essentials, do our morning stretches properly and be ready for the game. That match meant a lot to us," he said.

"In the stadium, the galleries were already full by the time we had come in for our pre-game warmups. That's when we felt that this is going to be a really good game. The crowd was amazing."

The holding midfielder had played a crucial

role in the game. While he was carrying out his duties in the heart of the midfield, Jamal also had the added task of marking his Indian counterpart, ace striker Sunil Chhetri.

"Sunil is an icon and a legend in India. He's scored so many international goals, so we always had our eyes on him. The coach and I spoke about the game and he told me, 'you have to stop Sunil,'" recalled Jamal.

"So I was focusing on not letting him get any chances. Whatever move he made, I went with him. My job that day was to cut him off from the rest and frustrate him." While the Bangladesh captain neutralised Chhetri, he also managed to play a role in his side taking the lead in the first half, as he provided the assist for Saad Uddin to nod in a free-kick.

The Blue Tigers responded via Adil Khan in the second half, as the teams shared the spoils.

"Some of the fans recognised me when we were going around the city after the game. They came to me and told me about how well I had played. I was quite taken aback," he said.

"I had initially felt that they would maybe throw taunts at me because I was on the opposing side. But they showed a lot of respect, and as a player, you really appreciate that."

Mizoram to partly withdraw forces from Assam border, BSF to be deployed



AIZAWL, 09 Nov (PTI): Mizoram would withdraw a section of its forces from the border with Assam and Border Security Force (BSF) personnel will be deployed in their place, a senior official said on Sunday.

The decision was taken at a meeting, chaired by Union Home Secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla, between the chief secretaries of Assam and Mizoram, he said.

Addressing the press after the meeting, Mizoram Chief Secretary Lalnunmawia Chuaungo said a unanimous decision was taken that Mizoram will withdraw its forces from the disputed areas and the blockade on National Highway-306 on the Assam side will be lifted.

The traffic movement from Assam is likely to resume on Sunday evening or Monday, he said.

Residents of Lailapur village and nearby areas in Assam's Cachar district are on an economic blockade since October 28, demanding the with-

drawal of Mizoram forces from what they claimed as Assam's territory, officials said.

Mizoram refused to budge, claiming that state forces are deployed within its territory.

Mr Chuaungo said the main agenda of the chief secretary-level meeting was to find a short-term solution -- withdrawal of forces and lifting of the blockade.

"We will pull out a part of our forces to deploy BSF personnel in the disputed areas. The blockade in Assam will also be lifted and traffic movement is likely to resume on Sunday evening or Monday," he said.

Mr Chuaungo said the Centre was keen on resolving the interstate dispute between Mizoram and Assam, and is constantly in touch with both the governments. Three companies of the Border Security Force (BSF) have arrived in the state on Saturday, he said.

One company and two platoons of BSF will

be deployed at Vairengte, two platoons at Saihapui "V" village in Kolasib district and one company at Thinglun village in the Mamit district.

However, a section of the state forces will remain deployed on the disputed areas to maintain peace among the Mizo people, he said.

The border dispute between Mizoram and Assam intensified on October 9 when a hut and plantations were destroyed allegedly by officials of Assam's Karimganj district on a farmland near Thinglun village in west Mizoram's Mamit district.

The tension further escalated when residents of Vairengte in Mizoram's Kolasib set on fire several temporary bamboo huts and stalls during a violent clash on the night of October 17. At least seven people from Mizoram and few others from Assam were injured in the clash. Though several dialogues were held, normalcy could not be restored in the area.

Jharkhand reunites UP woman with family after 9 months

MEDININAGAR (JHARKHAND), Nov 9 (PTI): The Jharkhand administration has reunited a woman hailing from Uttar Pradesh with her family nine months after she got separated from them, officials said on Monday. The 33-year-old woman, whom the administration has identified as "partially mentally unstable", was found wandering in Daltonganj railway station in Palamu district in February, they said.

She was taken to a facility, where officials ascertained by her accent that she hailed from western Uttar Pradesh and by her occasional mumblings that she was either from Etah or Aligarh, Palamu Deputy Commissioner Shashi Ranjan said. IAS trainee officer Dilip Pratap Singh Shekhawat contacted the Etah and Aligarh district administrations and showed them the woman on video calls, following which her family members were traced, he said.

It was found that the woman hails from Etah and is married to a man in Aligarh, the official said. Her husband and two children, aged 10 and 12, came to receive her in Daltonganj on Sunday. She immediately recognised them and was reunited with her family, he said.

The administration, through several aspects of her behaviour, concluded she is "partially mentally unstable", the official added.

There's no retirement age for writers: Ruskin Bond

NEW DELHI, Nov 9 (PTI): For prolific author Ruskin Bond, there's no retirement age for writers and life would be intolerable if he did not have the freedom to write every day.

He considers himself a "fortunate person", having been able to make a living for nearly 70 years by doing what he enjoys most: writing.

Bond has come out with yet another book "How To Be A Writer" which gives a glimpse into the writing credo of the man who has had an incredibly successful writing career.

The book is peppered with nuggets of practical advice for every person who is aspiring to write and be published - all told in Bond's characteristic understated, tongue-in-cheek, humorous style. Writing, for Bond, is the simplest and greatest pleasure in the world.

"Putting a mood or an idea into words is an occupation I truly love. I plan my day so that there is time in it for writing a poem, or a paragraph, or an essay, or part of a story or longer work; not just because writing is my profession, but from a feeling of delight," he says.

"Life would be intolerable if I did not have this freedom to write every day," he feels.

"The important thing is to keep writing, observing, listening and paying attention to the beauty of words and their arrangement."

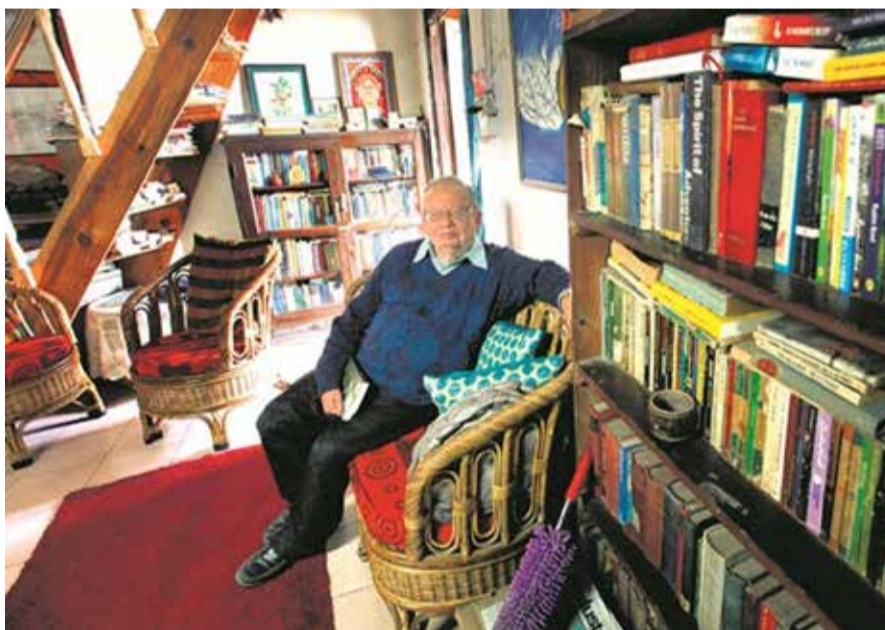
According to Bond, he writes not to please everyone but himself.

"I am grateful for my continued independence and the necessity to keep writing for my living and for those who share their lives with me and whose joys and sorrows are mine too. An artist must not lose his hold on life. We do that when we settle for the safety of a comfortable old age. But there is no retirement age for writers," he

writes in his book, published by HarperCollins India.

He believes being alone is vital for any creative writer though that

failure, some recognition, but also long periods of neglect and critical dismissal. However, he has no regrets.



does not mean that one must live the life of a recluse.

"People who do not know me are frequently under the impression that I live in lonely splendour on a mountain top, whereas in reality I share a small flat with a family of 12 - and I'm the 12th man, occasionally bringing out refreshments for the players!"

Still he prefers solitude.

"I am not, by nature, a gregarious person. Although I love people, and have often, on an impulse, made friends with complete strangers, I am also a lover of solitude."

He prefers walking alone to walking with others.

"That ladybird or the wild rose would escape my attention if I was engaged in a lively conversation with a companion. Not that the ladybird is going to change my life. But by acknowledging its presence, stopping to admire its beauty, I have done obeisance to the natural scheme of things, of which I am only a small part."

As a writer, Bond has known hope and despair, success and

"I have enjoyed the writer's life to the full, and one reason for this is that living in India has given me certain freedoms which I would not have enjoyed elsewhere. Friendship, when needed. Solitude when desired. Even, at times, love and compassion."

Wherever Bond goes, he meets young writers, or young people who want to write, and they always ask him questions. So what is it that a person requires the most to become a writer?

According to Bond, some of the qualities are: love of books, language and life; an observant eye; a good memory; enthusiasm; optimism and persistence.

He advises aspiring writers to read, saying books are essential for the creative mind, and good readers become good writers.

He also talks about writing routine, importance of notes, finding own style and voice, creating characters, different steps in publishing and never giving up in the book, which has illustrations by Shamika Chaves and Chaaya Prabhat.

6 new cases push Mizoram's COVID-19 tally to 3,096

AIZAWL, Nov 9 (PTI): Mizoram's COVID-19 tally rose to 3,096 on Monday as six more people, including two Border Security Force (BSF) personnel, tested positive for the infection, a health official said.

Three new cases were reported in Aizawl district, two in Kolasib and

one in Mamit, he said.

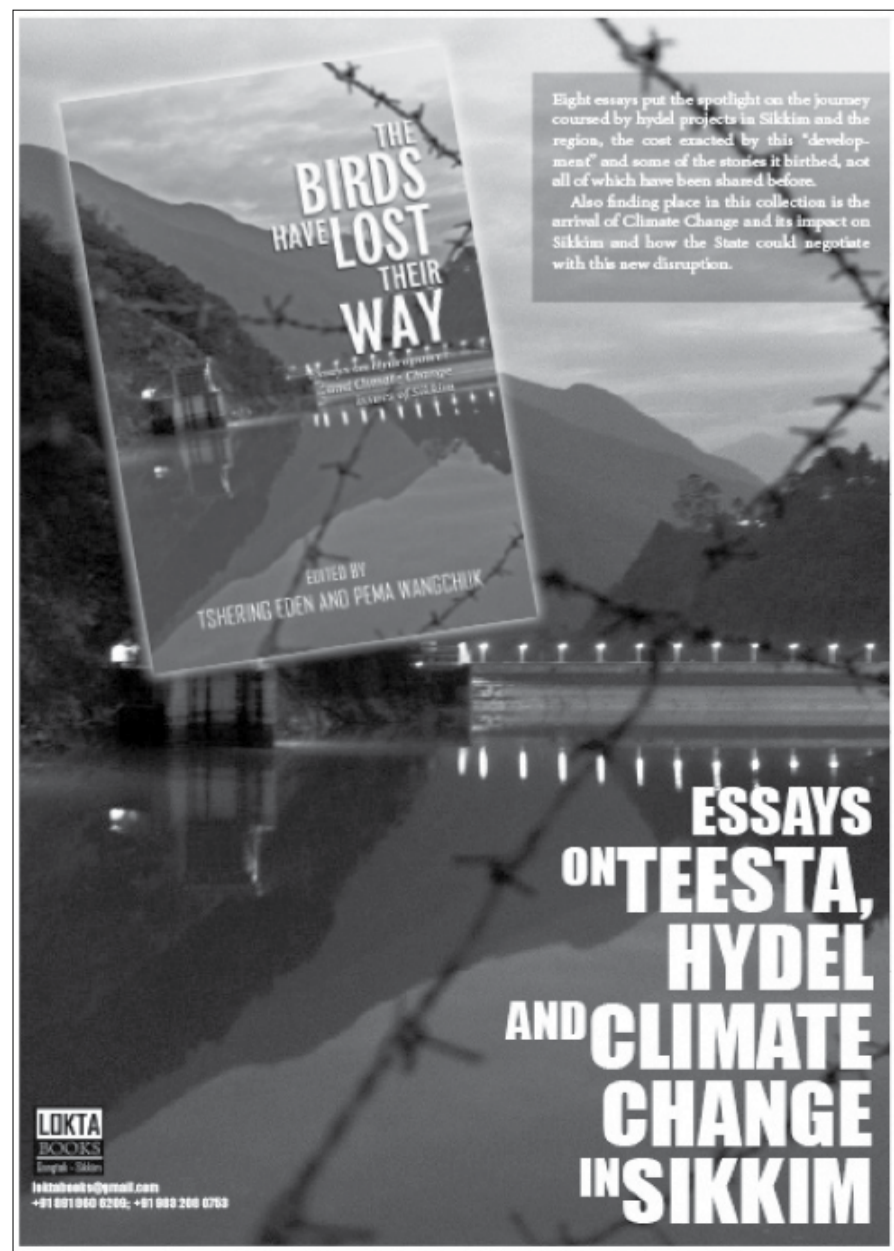
All the fresh infections were detected during rapid antigen tests, the official said.

Three new patients have travel history, while the remaining three infections were detected during contact tracing, he said.

Mizoram now has

476 active coronavirus cases, while 2,618 people have recovered from the disease and two patients have succumbed to the infection so far, the official said.

The state has so far tested 1.23 lakh samples for COVID-19, including 170 on Sunday, he added.



Johnson finishes 6th in final race of NASCAR career

WASHINGTON, Nov 9 (AP): Jimmie Johnson strode into the final news conference of his NASCAR career wearing a black hat with "One Final Shot" on the front.

Told he was the first driver in the room after Sunday's race at Phoenix Raceway, the seven-time Cup champion had a quick response.

"I won something this year," he said.

Johnson closed out one of the greatest careers in NASCAR history by finishing fifth at Phoenix first among the drivers not in the Cup playoffs.

The 45-year-old spent some of the final moments in his No. 48 car pumping his fist and shouting from the window at Hendricks Motorsports teammate Chase Elliott after the 24-year-old won his first Cup championship.

After his final news conference, Johnson tossed cans of beer to his crew and toasted former crew chief Chad Knaus back out on the track.

A solid finish to a stellar career.

"It was nice to be competitive out there, but my bucket's full," Johnson said.

"NASCAR has been so wonderful for me. This journey has been more than I could have dreamed of or expected. Last couple years weren't as I would have dreamed up, but I've experienced the highest of highs and worked with the greatest of people."

Johnson announced last year this would be his final NASCAR season so he could spend more time with family, run a partial IndyCar season next year and pursue other ways to keep the adrenaline flowing.

Knaus also ran his final race Sunday -- he's moving to an executive role with Hendricks Motorsports -- as did Clint Bowyer, who finished 24th.

Bowyer is headed to the Fox Sports booth after 15 full Cup seasons and 10 career wins. A former Xfinity Series champion, he won races for Chevrolet, Toyota and then Ford after replacing Hall of Famer Tony Stewart in the No. 14 when he retired in 2016.

A solid career, just not like Johnson's.

Johnson and Knaus teamed up to dominate NASCAR for more than a decade in the No. 48, pulling in a record-tying seven championships, including a staggering stretch of five straight. Hall of Famers Richard Petty and Dale Earnhardt are the only other drivers with seven championships. Labeled boring early in his career, Johnson proved to be anything but, becoming a popular pitchman, fan favorite and one of the most well-liked drivers on the circuit.

When Johnson's final race was over, the respect was evident as crewmembers from every team lined the wall to high five the popular driver before he rides off into the sunset.

Bilal Fawaz: 'I became best friends with darkness and pain a long time ago'

DONALD McRAE LONDON, 09 Nov [THEGUARDIAN]: After being abused as a boy in Nigeria and trafficked to London at 14, boxing and piano playing gave him hope and at 32 Bilal Fawaz is finally able to fight professionally.

"There is beauty in darkness," Bilal Fawaz says with a poetic flourish as we sit on an old bench outside the Cricklewood Boxing Gym in this stark corner of north-west London. "I became best friends with darkness and pain a long time ago."

The sky is sombre, with black clouds rolling in, and Fawaz talks with electrifying force. He is a newly professional boxer but his past is haunting and his future uncertain. Fawaz was abused as a boy in Nigeria and then trafficked to London.

It took him 16 years to win the right to remain legally in the UK but, despite being stateless, Fawaz fought six times for England and won the national ABA light-middleweight title in 2012.

He believes he would have fought for GB in the 2012 and 2016 Olympics had he not been a refugee.

He is now 32 and finally able to fight professionally. Yet, despite signing a deal in September with MTK Global, the management company which has more than 300 fighters on its books, led by Tyson Fury, Fawaz has entered another lockdown in destitution. He did not receive a penny when joining MTK and, while waiting for his licence to be granted by the British Boxing Board of Control, he will not make his paid debut before next February. Fawaz is worried he could end up being homeless again.

"I'm not easily scared," he says with a sudden smile. "Every key on the piano makes a sound. Even the sad keys make a beautiful sound. And the happy keys sound really good because without the sadness you would not appreciate them. I've been through adversity but it gives me strength to look forward."

Fawaz was held in detention centres twice by the Home Office as it tried to deport him and, while he tells me about being so depressed that he cut himself, it was amid incarceration that he learned to play the piano. Boxing and piano-playing, to Fawaz, both offer hope. "It's a different journey but the same destination. Three plus four is seven. Eight minus one is seven."



"Different journey, same destination. Whether it's boxing or music, I feel the same sensation."

When did he last play the piano? "Yesterday. When I play I feel tranquility. It's the same feeling whenever I write music or I'm in the ring and everything flows perfectly. You should hear me play. I'm good. I can make you cry on the piano."

There are heavy black tyres, rather than a piano, in the barren grounds surrounding the gym. Fawaz uses a sledgehammer to pummel the tyres but now, deep in conversation, we return to a darker violence. "When I was a kid in Nigeria my mum beat me to the point where I was bleeding on several occasions," he says. "She took her depression and regret out on me. She was too young to have kids so she had emotional problems."

Fawaz's mother came from Benin and, as he says, "My dad is Lebanese. I didn't see him because he was a businessman. He never spent a significant amount of time for me to feel I had a dad."

The beatings scarred him -- as did the bullying in school in Lagos. "I'm too black to be called white and I'm too white to be called black. I was the odd one out and people would say: 'Go back to your country.' I would tell them: 'I was born here.' But they bullied me and treated me as an outcast."

Fawaz was taken from his mother by a man claiming to be his uncle who promised to reunite him with his father in London. "It was all malarkey and shenanigan. I was trafficked into this country when I was 14 and kept in a house

in London. I felt like a slave because I wasn't allowed to leave. I couldn't go to school or the shops. I was slapped, beaten with a flip-flop, and told I had to clean the kitchen and do everything in the house. I eventually escaped and someone found me in the street, crying. They took me to social services."

While he was in care Fawaz was introduced to boxing. He showed a natural aptitude and after a few months he was beating fighters who had boxed for years. His talent was nurtured and after years of work he became England champion in 2012. He even fought for England against Nigeria but he remained stateless. Fawaz recalls sparring Josh Taylor, the current IBF and WBA light-welterweight world champion: "Taylor is the best in the world. He uses his intelligence and when we sparred you could see our similar attributes. So I would definitely have fought in the Olympics if I was allowed. I was England champion and London champion at different weights."

His hopes of turning professional were blocked by the struggle to remain in the UK once he turned 18. Frank Warren and Barry McGuigan wrote letters of support to the Home Office -- with Warren suggesting Fawaz would earn around £230,000 within his first two years as a pro. The Home Office remained determined to deport him to Nigeria.

"But my father had never registered my birth in Nigeria," he explains. "So the Nigerian Embassy said I'm not Nigerian. The Home Office

arrested me and took me to a detention centre. They released me after a while due to my mental condition. But they locked me up again one year later. It was the same agenda and the Nigerian Embassy said: 'Why are you bothering us? This boy is not Nigerian.' My father had died so I couldn't claim any citizenship with Lebanon either. I belonged nowhere."

There were positive moments in detention. "Everyone was invested in PlayStation but I saw the music room which no one used. I started practising the piano. I tried a certain sequence. I miss the keys. The next day I was better. Then, one day, I can play the sequence. Practise and persistence."

He recently released a short album of his music, under the name Statelezz, but his detention was mostly troubling. Fawaz shows me the scars on his upturned arms and wrists. "It was very depressing because I was locked in a room. It was the same sensation as my mum and dad abandoning me or when I was brought here as a kid. I felt worthless. I started cutting myself with a blade from a shaving stick. The real pain was inside me. I had fought for this country in the ring and they still said: 'We don't want you here.'"

"I was in excruciating pain emotionally and I couldn't relinquish the frustration. They say the same part of your brain lights up when you're hurt both emotionally and physically. So I cut myself and blood came out of my arm. I felt relief but, of course, it didn't last. Cutting yourself is

not good but I was on medication. The Home Office knew about it and still locked me up. They inserted a dent in my life and mental health. They took away my best years of boxing and it was an unlawful detention."

Fawaz's life changed in June when, while sitting on a bus in London, he took a call from his immigration lawyer. He had been granted leave to live and work in the UK for at least 30 months. His face lights up. "I never had that feeling before. It was unfamiliarly pleasant. It felt like a square because I was complete at last. Every corner was connected. I pressed the button on the bus and ran out. I kissed the ground. I didn't care about coronavirus. I was crying. Until then I was just a number to the Home Office: F1289212. It's no surprise I was depressed and they prescribed me medication in hospital."

Is he still on medication? "No. I'm OK now."

All morning, despite the bleak memories, Fawaz has had such a spark about him. Whipping off his shirt he turns to Tom Jenkins, our photographer, and beams. "Catch my sass, bro."

Fawaz could be a star if he can perform in the ring as grippingly as he talks. But he is still struggling and in dire need of help. "I had to pay £160 for my professional licence and I have £5,000 arrears owing on my accommodation. I couldn't pay rent because of the coronavirus. They threatened to kick me out and if they do that where am I going to stay? I have nothing tangible until my pro

debut." How is he managing to live? "People give me donations, £50 here and there. I do some personal training but that's stopping because of coronavirus. I really need a sponsor because life is very hard. I smile a lot but it hurts. There is so much uncertainty. They could issue an eviction notice and say: 'Bilal, sorry, we can't accommodate you.' But worrying does not change a problem. It only enhances it. It's what you do about it that matters."

What kind of fighter is he? "I'm a strategic boxer. I box like Muhammad Ali whether I dazzle or set traps like a hunter. If you chase a rabbit around the forest it's going to outrun you. But if you set a trap, and wait, it will fall into your control. My ambition is to become world champion. That's guaranteed. I've sparred with Mikkel Kessler, Josh Taylor, Billy Joe Saunders, so many big names. Four weeks ago, Billy Joe turned around after sparring eight rounds with me and said: 'This boy is going to be world champion.'"

There are times when Fawaz reminds me of Chris Eubank Sr -- even if there is less artifice to him. He laughs. "I used to be bad, talking like: 'Innit, you get me big man, blah blah.' But I've trained myself to speak in this manner which is different to the streets. I decided to change my demographic."

Fawaz seems certain that boxing is only the start. "I've perfected the art of boxing but I don't really like punching people in the face and making them bleed. Once I become world champion, acting will become my priority. I can evoke such emotion. I can cry on cue. I could cry right now."

He laughs instead. "Nothing can stop a man of conviction. If you believe you can do something, you will do it. We are sentient beings. We are amazing creatures. We just need to use our brains more. Many people don't know how to strategise, how to articulate, how to put things into perspective. When they see an obstacle, they are demotivated. When I see an obstacle I am motivated. I believe I will be a world champion and then an actor and, by believing it, it is 50% done."

Just before we say goodbye, and he opens the dark green door to the gym so he can resume working hard as a boxer, Fawaz says one more simple sentence. He sounds defiant rather than sad: "If you don't fight for yourself, who will fight for you?"

Defenders still can't stop 39-year-old Ibrahimovic

MILAN, Nov 9 (AP): Last week it was an acrobatic overhead winner that belied his 39 years.

This week it was a towering header in stoppage time that secured AC Milan a 2-2 draw with Hellas Verona on Sunday and a two-point lead atop Serie A entering the international break.

Game after game, Zlatan Ibrahimovic keeps showing that his markers are defenseless against him inside the penalty area.

So much so that Ibrahimovic was asked if he thought that Italian defenders had dropped in level in the eight years between his first and second stints with Milan.

"Or maybe Ibra is stronger," was his reply, with a laugh.

The Swedish great scored braces against Bologna, bitter rival Inter Milan in the derby, and Roma this season. His eight goals in five matches -- he missed two games after testing positive for the coronavirus -- top the Italian league's scoring chart.

"I think he can play until he's 45 in our league," retired Italy defender Giuseppe Bergomi said last weekend.

"I really mean that."

Having lost 3-0 at home to Lille in the Europa League on Thursday to end a 24-match



unbeaten run in all competitions, Milan fell behind 2-0 to Verona before Franck Kessie whose flicked shot was deflected in off a defender and Ibrahimovic rallied the Rossoneri.

Antonin Barak and Mattia Zaccagni scored for Verona.

It wasn't all easy for Ibrahimovic this time, though. He missed a penalty with a miserable effort high over the bar at his first chance to

equalize, then ruined a potential equalizer from Davide Calabria with a handball before finally finding the target three minutes into added time by leaping over a defender.

"Fortunately the break for international duty is here, because I need rest," Ibrahimovic said. "I didn't have the sharpness and usual determination I have in front of goal. I just felt like I wasn't all there."

Milan is two points ahead of Sassuolo, three ahead of Napoli and Roma and four ahead of Juventus and Atalanta.

CRUCIAL CAICEDO

Lazio scored another stoppage-time goal to rescue a 1-1 draw at home to Juventus.

Juventus appeared to be heading for a win and into second spot after Cristiano Ronaldo's first-half goal but substitute Felipe Caicedo pounced deep in stoppage time.

Caicedo had netted a stoppage-time winner in Lazio's last league match against Torino and also scored late at Zenit St. Petersburg on Wednesday to salvage a 1-1 draw in the Champions League.

"We were convinced something would happen," Caicedo said.

"Juventus didn't play for the last 15 minutes. We never give up."

Lazio was missing a number of players, including European Golden Shoe winner Ciro Immobile, after conflicting results for tests for COVID-19.

Juventus took the lead in the 15th minute when Juan Cuadrado beat a couple of Lazio defenders on the right before sending in a low cross for an unmarked Ronaldo to tap in from point blank range.

Already flooded, South Florida feeling wrath of Eta

FORT LAUDERDALE, FLA. (AP): Beaches and coronavirus testing sites were closed, public transportation shut down and some evacuations in place early Monday after Tropical Storm Eta made landfall in the Florida Keys, bringing heavy rains to already flooded city streets after leaving scores of dead and over 100 missing in Mexico and Central America.

Eta hit land late Sunday on Lower Matecumbe Key, Florida. The system's slow speed and heavy rains posed and enormous threat to South Florida, an area already drenched from more than 14 inches (350 millimeters) of rain last month. Eta could dump an additional 6 to 12 inches (150 to 300 millimeters), forecasters said.

"In some areas, the water isn't pumping out as fast as it's coming in," warned Miami Dade Commissioner Jose "Pepe" Diaz.

Miami-Dade County Mayor Carlos Gimenez said he was in frequent contact with county water officials about the struggle to drain the flooded waters, which has stalled vehicles, whitewashed some intersections and even crept into some homes.

On Sunday night, authorities in Lauderdale, Florida, responded to a report of a car that had driven into a canal. Photos taken by fire units on the scene about 30 miles (48 kilometers) north of Miami showed rescuers searching high waters near a parking lot.

Firefighters pulled one person from a car and took the patient to a hospital in critical condi-



tion, according to a statement from Lauderdale Fire.

The U.S. National Hurricane Center in Miami said a tropical storm warning was in place for the Keys from Ocean Reef to the Dry Tortugas, including Florida Bay. Storm surge warnings were discontinued early Monday.

Eta had maximum sustained winds of 65 mph (100 kph) on Monday morning and was centered about 45 miles (70 kilometers) north-northwest of Key West, Florida, and 65 miles (100 kilometers) south of Naples. It was moving west-northwest at 13 mph (20 kph).

On the forecast track, Eta was expected to move out into the southeastern Gulf of Mexico and intensify into a hurricane late Monday or Tuesday.

In the Florida Keys, the mayor ordered mandatory evacuations for mobile home parks, campgrounds and RV parks and those in low-lying areas. Several schools districts closed, saying the roads were already too flooded and the winds could be too gusty for buses to trans-

port students. Several shelters also opened in Miami and the Florida Keys. "Please take this storm seriously," urged Palm Beach County Emergency Management Director Bill Johnson. "Please don't drive through flooded roadways." The storm swelled rivers and flooded coastal zones in Cuba, where 25,000 had been evacuated. But there were no reports of deaths. Authorities in Guatemala on Sunday raised the known death toll there to 27 from 15 and said more than 100 were missing, many of them in the landslide in San Cristobal Verapaz.

Local officials in Honduras reported 21 dead, though the national disaster agency had confirmed only eight. Eta initially hit Nicaragua as a Category 4 hurricane, and authorities from Panama to Mexico were still surveying the damages following days of torrential rains during the week.

In Guatemala, search teams first had to overcome multiple landslides and deep mud just to reach the site where officials have estimated some 150 homes were

devastated.

In the worst-hit village, Quejá, at least five bodies have been pulled from the mud. The Indigenous community of about 1,200 residents consisted of simple homes of wood and tin roofs clinging to the mountainside.

Rescue workers used a helicopter to evacuate survivor Emilio Caal, who said he lost as many as 40 family members and relatives. Caal, 65, suffered a dislocated shoulder when the landslide sent rocks, trees and earth hurtling onto the home where he was about to sit down to lunch with his wife and grandchildren. Caal said he was blown several yards (meters) by the force of the slide, and that none of the others were able to get out.

"My wife is dead, my grandchildren are dead," said Caal from a nearby hospital.

Firefighters' spokesman Ruben Tellez said at least one additional person died in Guatemala on Sunday when a small plane went down while carrying emergency supplies to the stricken area.

In neighboring Honduras, 68-year-old María

Elena Mejía Guadron died when the brown waters of the Chameleón river poured into San Pedro Sula's Planeta neighborhood before dawn Thursday.

In southern Mexico, across the border from Guatemala, 20 people died as heavy rains attributed to Eta caused mudslides and swelled streams and rivers, according to Chiapas state civil defense official Elías Morales Rodríguez.

The worst incident in Mexico occurred in the mountain township of Chenalho, where 10 people were swept away by a rain-swollen stream; their bodies were later found downstream.

Flooding in the neighboring state of Tabasco was so bad that President Andrés Manuel López Obrador cut short a trip to western Mexico and was flying to Tabasco, his home state, to oversee relief efforts.

Hurricane Eta's arrival in northeast Nicaragua Tuesday followed days of drenching rain as it crawled toward shore. Its slow, meandering path north through Honduras pushed rivers over their banks.

Mexico, Brazil leaders silent as world congratulates Biden

MEXICO CITY (AP): There were two notable holdouts among the world leaders who rushed to congratulate Joe Biden on his victory in the U.S. elections: the leaders of Latin America's two largest countries, both of whom have been seen as friendly to President Donald Trump.

President Jair Bolsonaro of Brazil, sometimes dubbed "the Trump of the Tropics" for his populist, off-the-cuff style, has kept silent on Trump's loss. And Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador refused to congratulate Biden at this point, saying he would wait until the legal challenges over the vote were resolved.

Trump and the two Latin leaders are united by some surface similarities: They dislike wearing masks during the coronavirus pandemic, and all three can loosely be described as populist and nationalist. But the motives of the two Latin leaders may differ.

Bolsonaro and his sons — who like Trump's children play a role on the political scene — seem to be actively uncomfortable with the outcome of the U.S. race. Bolsonaro, who previously expressed hope for Trump's reelection and whose son wore hats with the logo "Trump 2020," has kept largely silent this week, but his sons haven't. Congressman Eduardo Bolsonaro posted images on social media questioning how Biden's votes were rising so quickly in later counts, while Trump's weren't. The younger Bolsonaro also questioned networks' decision to cut away from Trump's speech on Wednesday alleging vote fraud, calling it an attack on freedom of speech.

A senior official of the Brazilian Embassy in the United States, who cannot identify himself for fear of reprisals, said Brazilian officials fear that loose talk by Bolsonaro or his sons could destabilize relations between countries. Officials in the office of the presidency, who were not authorized to speak on the record, said Bolsonaro has been adopting a more pragmatic tone, at least since Wednesday, following the guidance of

his advisers.

At the beginning of the week, some of the more ideological elements in Bolsonaro's office believed in a Trump victory, but since then, the diplomatic staff has made contact with Biden's campaign.

López Obrador's cordial relationship with Trump, meanwhile, was often seen as unusual for a left-leaning politician, but it had a workmanlike basis.

In part, that is political realism: In 2019, Trump threatened to apply crippling tariffs on Mexican products unless López Obrador cracked down on Central American migrants crossing Mexico to reach the U.S. border. Mexico complied, rounding up migrants and busing them back to their home countries.

But there were also moments of seeming real friendship between the two. On Saturday, López Obrador was one of the few world leaders still willing to heap praise on Trump.

"President Trump has been very respectful of us, and we have reached very good agreements, and we thank him because he has not interfered and has respected us," López Obrador said.

And López Obrador angered many at home and in the U.S. Democratic Party when he made his first — and so far only — trip abroad as president over the summer to meet with Trump to celebrate the enactment of the new U.S.-Mexico-Canada free trade agreement, which both leaders viewed as fixing problems with the old North American Free Trade Agreement of the 1990s.

López Obrador didn't meet with Biden or his campaign team during that trip, and the wounds are still apparently there, even though the Mexican president said he knows Biden and had "very good relations" with him.

Rep. Joaquin Castro, the Democratic congressman for Texas' 20th District, wrote in Spanish in his Twitter account that the unwillingness to congratulate Biden "represents a true diplomatic failure on the part of Andrés Manuel López Obrador, at a moment in which the incoming

Biden administration is seeking to start a new era of friendship and cooperation with Mexico."

Rep. Jesús García, a Democrat from Illinois' 4th District, wrote in a similar vein to López Obrador that "American voters have spoken and Joe Biden is our President Elect. He won fair and square. Don't miss the boat."

Democrats are unlikely to be as vindictive toward Mexico as the Trump administration once appeared to be, with its focus on building a border wall and threats of punishing tariffs. But a Biden administration that only quietly presses Mexico to limit migrant crossings could leave López Obrador in a more uncomfortable position.

Mexico was able to easily crack down on migrant caravans in 2019 and 2020 because appealing open U.S. pressure is fairly understandable if distasteful at home; but asking Mexico to do so without open threats would be more politically costly for López Obrador. The Mexican president might fear reprisals in the short time Trump has left in office, but his failure to patch up any hurt feelings with the Biden team is already exposing López Obrador to criticism at home. "To quote (Mexican singer) Juan Gabriel, 'What do you gain?'" the newspaper El Universal said in an editorial Sunday. "Donald Trump will be president for two more months, but Joe Biden will be president for four more years! And we have already started off this relationship on the wrong foot."

Former U.S. Ambassador to Mexico Antonio Garza disagreed.

"It seems a bit clumsy, and perhaps an early opportunity missed. But by inauguration day (it) will hardly matter," he said.

Garza, now a counsel to the White & Case law firm in Mexico City, wrote that he is "convinced that the Biden administration will be committed to solid relationships with the U.S.'s neighbors, and that given both Canada and Mexico's importance to trade, immigration and security that the focus will be on addressing those issues cooperatively."

Suu Kyi's party claims to have won majority in Myanmar polls

YANGON, MYANMAR (AP): Myanmar's ruling National League for Democracy party claimed Monday that it has won enough seats in Parliament to constitute an absolute majority and retain power. It made the claim even though the state Union Election Commission has not yet completed releasing results from Sunday's election.

"I can now confirm that we're now securing more than 322 seats," said Monywa Aung Shin, a spokesperson for the NLD information committee. There are 642 seats in Parliament. "We were aiming to secure 377 seats in total. But it would be likely more than that," said Monywa Aung Shin.

There were no reliable official figures available on voter turnout, and the Union Election Commission had earlier said that it might take as long as a week to release full results. A victory by the NLD had been widely expected, though it had been speculated that its deterioration of relations with ethnic minority-based parties, with whom it had cooperated in the last election in 2015, might cut its totals.

Much of the NLD's appeal is based on the popularity of its leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, who

became the head of government with the title of State Counsellor after the 2015 polls.

Her administration's record has been mixed at best, with economic growth falling short of expectations and no end to the decades-old armed strife with ethnic minorities seeking greater autonomy. But among her countrymen, she has managed to retain the appeal she built up during decades of fighting for democracy against the military dictatorships that preceded her.

Outside of Myanmar, her reputation took a dive in response to her failure to defend the human rights of the country's Muslim Rohingya minority. Her foreign supporters were shocked that she did nothing about the brutal 2017 counterinsurgency campaign of Myanmar's army that forced about 740,000 Rohingya to flee across the border to neighboring Bangladesh.

But the issue was a matter of little concern to most voters, due to deep-seated prejudice against the Rohingya, whom many consider illegal immigrants from South Asia despite their families having been settled in Myanmar for generations.

Japan's SoftBank back in the black as investments improve



TOKYO (AP): Japanese technology company SoftBank Group Corp. said Monday it bounced back to profitability in the last quarter as its investments improved in value.

The Tokyo-based company reported a 627 billion yen, or about \$6.1 billion, profit in July-September, compared with a loss of 700 billion yen in the same quarter of 2019.

SoftBank said its quarterly sales rose nearly 5% to 1.35 trillion yen, or \$13 billion, from 1.29 trillion yen.

SoftBank's Vision Fund also has become profitable recently.

SoftBank, which invests in an array of companies, has sold U.S. carrier Sprint, as well as British IoT company Arm. It has also sold some its stake in Chinese e-commerce com-

pany Alibaba to raise cash for more investments. Sprint merged with T-Mobile in April, which means Sprint is no longer part of SoftBank's group or earnings.

The company's chief executive, Masayoshi Son, has described hardships from the coronavirus pandemic to those of the Great Depression.

But the crisis has proven to be a plus for some technology companies as people stuck at home gear up to work remotely and shop online.

Son told reporters the company was sticking to its initial goal of delivering happiness to people through what he calls "the information revolution." He said profits or losses mean little to his business model. The critical thing for SoftBank is its net asset value, he said. Son said his invest-

ments will focus on AI, or artificial intelligence, which he said will prove vital to all the companies he's banking on, like robots doing deliveries and automated driving.

"We used to say whoever rules the mobile net will rule the net," he said. "We think whoever rules AI will rule the future."

Some startups SoftBank has banked on have played out better than others. Office-sharing company WeWork slammed earnings last year. But SoftBank still has hopes for WeWork's potential in some markets such as Japan, where interest remains even with the pandemic.

SoftBank also has investments in Yahoo! Japan and the Pepper companion robot, and in its SoftBank mobile carrier in Japan, the first to offer the iPhone in Japan.

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DRESSED IN BLACK! The actress, Famke Janssen heads out in New York in a cute black dress.

BTS, Lady Gaga win top awards at MTV Europe Music Awards



The South Korean pop group BTS won a leading four awards including best song for "Dynamite" and best group at the MTV Europe Music Awards Sunday night, while Lady Gaga took the best artist prize. BTS also picked up best fans and best virtual live for Bang Bang Con. The show honoring the best in global music aired Sunday on the network with performances from Alicia Keys, Sam Smith, Doja Cat and DaBaby. The girl group Little Mix hosted.

Gaga, who went into the event with the most nominations, beat out Harry Styles, Justin Bieber, Dua Lipa, Miley Cyrus and The Weeknd for the best artist prize. She lost out for best video, however, which went to DJ Khaled for "Popstar." The collaboration with Drake bested the likes of Cardi B and Megan Thee Stallion for "WAP."

Cardi B did pick up the best hip hop award,

however. Coldplay won best rock, Haley Williams got best alternative and Little Mix was named best pop. And the best Latin award went to Karol G, who also won best collaboration for "Tusa" featuring Nicki Minaj.

David Guetta, who won best electronic, also performed at the show from a stage in Budapest. Singer-songwriter YUNGBLUD won best push and Doja Cat took home the best new artist honor.

For a third year, the MTV EMAs handed out a generation change award, this time to five women fighting for racial and social justice around the world: Kiki Mordi, Temi Mwale, Catherhea Potjanaporn, Luiza Brasil and Raquel Willis.

Eddie Van Halen, who died last month, was also remembered in a tribute featuring Tom Morello and St. Vincent.

Kate Middleton and Prince William Take Part in Socially Distanced Remembrance Sunday Event

Kate Middleton and Prince William joined Queen Elizabeth to pay a solemn tribute to fallen servicemen and women.

It was a much different Remembrance Day for the royal family.

Kate Middleton and Prince William honored fallen servicemen and women during a Remembrance Day ceremony in the Cenotaph in London's Whitehall on Nov. 8. They were joined by Queen Elizabeth at the solemn event, as well as Prince Charles and his wife Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall.

Remembrance Day, which is also known as Armistice Day, is an annual holiday celebrated in the U.K. on Nov. 11. It was created to honor the 1918 armistice that ended World War I, but has since been used to pay tribute to all people lost in military service.

Typically the Remembrance Day event, which involves laying wreaths for the late members of the United Kingdom's military, is witnessed by more than 10,000 people, including members of the armed forces, veterans, and military families. However, in order to enforce social distancing measures due to the coronavirus pandemic, that was not

possible. Less than 30 veterans were invited to this year's scaled-back event and the annual military march was also cancelled.

The solemn event saw the royal family dressed in all black. As part of the holiday's tradition, the women pinned poppies to their tops, a symbol of

Meghan Markle.

Harry, who served as a captain in the army for 10 years and laid his first wreath at the Cenotaph in 2009, did not attend the ceremony.

In a Nov. 8 episode of the Declassified podcast, Harry explained that Remembrance Day holds a special place in



hope that stemmed from the fact that poppies grew over the battlefields of World War I.

While social distancing altered this year's ceremony, there was one other big change: The absence of Prince Harry, who stepped back from his royal family duties earlier this year alongside wife

his heart. "Remembrance Day for me is a moment for respect and for hope. I wear it [the poppy] to celebrate the bravery and determination of all our veterans," he shared. "These are the people and moments I remember when I salute, when I stand at attention and when I lay a wreath at the Cenotaph."

Gabriella Brooks and Liam Hemsworth Cozy Up as They Celebrate Luke Hemsworth's Birthday

Liam Hemsworth's girlfriend Gabriella Brooks made an appearance in a big group photo with the rest of the Hemsworth brothers and their wives.

Daisy and Gatsby, is that you? Liam Hemsworth and girlfriend Gabriella Brooks looked extra cozy as they transported from 2020 to 1920.

On Nov. 7, Chris Hemsworth shared a photo of his family dressed to the nines in Roaring '20s attire to celebrate brother Luke Hemsworth's 40th birthday.

In addition to Craig and Leonie Hemsworth, the brothers' parents, Chris' wife Elsa Pataky, Luke's wife Samantha Hemsworth and Liam's girlfriend Gabriella were in attendance. The Hunger Games alum and his model girlfriend looked particularly cozy in the group shot, as Liam pulled Gabriella in tight for the pic.

Chris wrote in the caption of the pics, "Happy 40th birthday @hemsworthluke you big legend!"

Samantha also shared pics from the festivities on Instagram, writing, "My favourite person in the world @hemsworthluke plus a couple of other bloody legends." Gabriella can be seen in the photos wearing a black flapper-style dress, sans Liam.

Liam and Gabriella have been together for nearly a year. The couple

was initially spotted kissing on the beach in January in Byron Bay, Australia. Soon after, they were seen getting lunch with Liam's parents.

Liam's relationship with Gabriella comes shortly after his divorce from ex-wife Miley Cyrus, whom he wed in December 2018 after a decade-long



on-off romance. They split in August 2019, less than a year after they tied the knot in a private ceremony in California. One thing that connects Gabriella and Liam is their love for their shared home country of Australia, a source told E! News in March. "She wants to be in Australia just as much as he does and they both really enjoy being there and spending time with family and friends."

Fortunately, it seems like Gabriella fits right in with Liam's very Aussie family!

Country singer Lee Brice to miss CMA Awards due to COVID-19



NASHVILLE, TENN. (AP): Country singer Lee Brice tested positive for COVID-19 and will not perform as scheduled at the CMA Awards on Wednesday. A representative for Brice told The Associated Press on Sunday that he is "in good spirits and not experiencing any symptoms."

Brice was tested ahead of the awards show, which will be broadcast on ABC from Nashville, Tennessee, where he had been scheduled to perform with Carly Pearce. Pearce and Brice are both nominated for their duet "I Hope You're Happy Now," in the categories musical event of the year and music video of the year. Brice, who is known for hit songs like "I Drive Your Truck" and "I Don't Dance," will be isolating at home until he's cleared by a doctor, according to a statement from his representative.

A CMA spokesperson said Brice was tested and received his result before arriving onsite for any of show rehearsals or activities. Although the show doesn't have a normal audience of fans because of the pandemic, CMA CEO Sarah Trahern had promised to bring country stars together in one room for the awards show, while still physically distanced.

"Lee would like to thank the CMAs and all of his incredible fans for his nominations and is wishing his fellow nominees an incredible evening celebrating the best of country music," the statement said.

Aries: We're all looking for love, or as Ms Bradshaw would describe it, "ridiculous, inconvenient, consuming, can't-live-without-each-other love"—and this is yours, Aries! What you're experiencing at this moment is nothing short of magical. So, surrender to the blessings and trust that only good things can come your way now. Yes, this means consciously letting go of the past narrative and remembering that your higher self is looking out for you, now and in every moment.

Tip: Allow yourself to believe in magic.

Taurus: Taurus, there was a time when you liked your money where you could see it—hanging in your closet, of course! But you no longer seek instant gratification. You're more invested in creating a reserve for yourself, one that can see you through the good and the bad days. The shift in your energy is helping you attract all the right opportunities. Notice the doors that are opening for you, and give yourself the permission to walk through them. Making the right moves will help you increase your finances over a period of time.

Tip: Act when the time is right.

Gemini: The trouble is, you tend to think your opinion is better than that of others. No wonder chaos and commotion seem to be constants around you. Today, you're being asked to listen more than you speak. Practice patience. Exercise compassion. Who knows? You may end up learning something new in the process. Geminis who are caught in the midst of a toxic work (or home) environment are being asked to play peacemaker. If the given situation is affecting your mental health, it's time to take necessary action.

Tip: Practice active listening. Bring forth the energy of peace and harmony.

Cancer: In her bestseller *The Secret*, Rhonda Byrne wrote, "The law of attraction states that like attracts like, and when you think and feel what you want to attract on this inside, the law will use people, circumstances, and events to magnetize what you want." Embodying what you want to invite into your experience is a big mood in the Cancer HQ. When you're looking and feeling "this" good, there is hardly a miracle that can escape your presence. You may also feel the need to push our own boundaries this week, and colour outside the lines in a way you never have before. Remember, the only rules you want to follow are the ones you write for yourself.

Tip: Like attracts like, Cancer.

Leo: Mercury retrograde may have passed us by, but we're still in the shadow period. In other words, issues related to communication are likely to throw you off your game. Instead of getting caught up in the ego space, rise above. Listen to what your higher self is telling you now and in every moment. And if all else fails, channel your inner beatnik and hum Plastic Ono's tunes: "Ev'rybody's talking about, Bagism, Shagism, Dragism, Madism, Ragism, Tagism, This-ism, that-ism, is-m, is-m, is-m... All we are saying is give peace a chance."

Tip: Give peace a chance, lovers!

Virgo: You're taking the self-love game to a whole new level this week, Virgo, and emanating a glow that comes from choosing the path of least resistance. Watch how your relationship with yourself transforms once you accept the very things you have been shaming yourself for. Your relationship with art, beauty, and creativity is also undergoing a shift. The secret to creating from a space of authen-

ticity is being present to the stream of consciousness and allowing the Universe to express itself through you. PS: Let go of the idea of perfection as you do.

Tip: Your relationship with art, beauty, and creativity is also undergoing a shift.

Libra: This is a magical time in the Libra HQ. Like your opposite sign, Aries, you're experiencing that "ridiculous, inconvenient, consuming, can't-live-without-each-other" kind of love. Remember, you have attracted each other into your lives for a reason. So get out of your head and listen to your heart. For Venusians who've been together for a while, this could be a turning point. You're recognizing the potential of this relationship and actively building a life together.

Tip: You have attracted each other for a reason.

Scorpio: Today, you're being asked to reflect upon Maya Angelou's words: "When somebody shows you who they are, believe them the first time." You're about to have a major reality check about who isn't playing on your team, Scorpio. Don't let your unruly emotions get the better of you when you find out. The more level-headed you are, the better your chances of tipping the scales in your favour. If you need to approach a higher authority in order to seek justice, so be it. There is no need to give yourself grief about standing up for the truth.

Tip: Approach a higher authority if you need to.

Sagittarius: So what if you failed the first time? So what if you've failed multiple times? You're onto something, Sagittarius, and the cards are urging you to honour the ideas that are coming through from your superconsciousness. Step #1: Get the business plan in order. The finances you need will be made available to you,

provided you make the right pitch.

Tip: Go forth and conquer.

Capricorn: The Tower in tarot is one of the most feared cards. It signifies not just endings, but sudden endings that shake the very foundation on which you have built your life. While rookies would fear its cataclysmic effects, seasoned practitioners understand the blessing in disguise that awaits on this journey. Word for the wise: look beyond the illusion. Recognise that things are happening for you, not to you. Nothing will liberate you like giving yourself the permission to fail.

Tip: Give yourself the permission to fail.

Aquarius: A rare opportunity is likely to knock at your door, Aquarius. Strike when the iron is hot. This will help you take your career to the next level. For some, this could translate into a drastic career move. Let fearlessness continue to be your superpower in your journey to greatness. Remember, you can move mountains alone, but there's no fun in that. Motivate your team to get in alignment with the grand plan and work in harmony with one another.

Tip: Motivate your fellow warriors.

Pisces: Let's talk about addictions and unhealthy coping mechanisms, Pisces. While we're at it, let's address the negative thought patterns that are sabotaging your growth. Where do you think they are stemming from, and what could you be running away from? Word for the wise: face your demons head on, instead of playing hide-and-go-seek. Turning to a healer or therapist to hold space for you through this catharsis may be a good idea.

Tip: Address the root of your addictive behaviour.