

Massive Protest by residents of Swaraj Dweep against indiscriminate power cuts

John Wilbert
& Vikramaditya
Sheekha News Service

Port Blair, Dec 23: Hundreds of residents of Shyam Nagar and Govind Nagar and adjoining areas of Swaraj Dweep organized a massive protest in front of the Electricity Power House of Swaraj (See page 6)



N & M District Police Tough on Cannabis Plantations

Port Blair, Dec 23: Working towards its commitment to make the A & N Islands drug-free, N & MA District Police are conducting regular raids. Based on an intelligence, regarding culti-

vation of Cannabis plants. A police team headed by SI Basudev Baroi, I/c OP Rest Camp, PC/1428 Abdul Safique, PC/2614 Hemant Rao and PC/2732 Seema Tirkey conducted

raids on 21/12/2022 and recovered 02 Nos. Cannabis plants from possession of Rohit Kumar Bairagi R/o Tugapur-8. The accused was arrested and a case (See page 2)

Semi-RCC house at Lamba Line partially gutted in Fire Accident



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Sheekha News Service

that was reported this evening from the Lamba Line area.

Port Blair, Dec 23: A residential house was partially gutted in a fire accident

As per details, fire broke out from the Semi-RCC house around 7.15 PM (See page 6)

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Restriction of Movement of Commercial Vehicles, through Vehicle Ferry Vessels

Port Blair, Dec 23: In view of the manifold increase in the vehicular traffic in the route between Chatham and Bambooflat, the Directorate has decided to impose restriction on the movement/ transportation of commercial vehicles, through the vehicle

ferry vessels operating in the above route during the peak hours i.e between 07.30 AM to 09.45 AM and from 05.00 PM to 06.45 PM, on all working days except Holidays.

Similarly, movement/ transportation of non commercial four wheeler vehicles has

also been restricted to 2 Four Wheeler vehicles per trip, during the above peak hours in the above route. In order to clear the rush, especially during peak hours, the vessel once full to its capacity, instead of waiting for scheduled departure time, shall sail immediately.

'I wore mask longer than PM, his mask yesterday was...': Jairam Ramesh

Amid the BJP, Congress tussle over Covid rules in Bharat Jodo Yatra, Congress leader Jairam Ramesh on Friday launched an attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi and said PM Modi's mask is only for the television. "I wore a mask longer than the prime minister wore it yesterday. His mask is only for TV," Jairam Ramesh said at a press conference. Read: 'Rahul Gandhi can continue with Bharat Jodo Yatra but...', says union minister

The entire drama is orchestrated to put up a roadblock before Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra enters Delhi, the Congress leaders said. "I have been wearing a mask today since the morning. I wore it because I have a mask. We did not have 250-300 masks with us. From tomorrow, everybody will wear the mask," Jairam Ramesh said. Prime Minister Narendra Modi held a high-level meeting on Thursday to review the Covid-19 situation in the country, given a sudden surge of



cases in China. PM Modi and many other parliamentarians were seen wearing the mask on Thursday. "Any protocol based on scientific and medical advice that is uniformly implemented will be followed by the Congress party. We have always followed it. We were not the party which gave the solution that the Covid situation (after its outbreak in 2020) will be won in 18 days, like the Mahabharata war," Jairam Ramesh said. "There was one gentleman who said that we will win the Covid war in 18 days, and there was one gentleman who advised Indians to deal with the pandemic by

going to their balconies and bang 'thalis'. These were the remedies given for Covid, if you recall," the Congress leaders said. Union health minister Muskh Mandaviya recently wrote to Rahul Gandhi to consider stalling the yatra given the fresh Covid concerns triggered by the China surge. The BJP on Friday targeted Rahul Gandhi asking whether he was in isolation after Himachal Pradesh chief minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu tested positive for Covid. Rahul Gandhi was in close proximity to him and attended his swearing-in ceremony.

N & M District...

(From page 1)

was registered under relevant sections of NDPS Act at PS Mayabunder.

The entire trap was conducted under the supervision of Mr. Lakshya Pandey, DANIPS, SDPO, Diglipur and overall supervision of the undersigned.

The general public is requested to pass and share any credible information pertaining to any crime or illegal activities to their nearest Police Station or over phone No.100, 112 & 03192-273344. The identity of the informers will be kept secret and will also be suitably rewarded. The Editor, Bullet of Andaman, Port Blair.

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Death Mourned

Port Blair, Dec 23: The entire Mayabunder educational zone has mourned the sudden demise of Mr. Swapan Kumar Das, Retd, Assistant Supervisor (sports) (72 yrs) on 22/11/2022 at 02:00 PM in his residence Mayabunder.

He was a very hard working, energetic and noble person. The entire officials/staff of Mayabunder educational zone prayed to almighty for the eternal peace of the departed soul and strength to his family members.

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Entries Invited for A & N State School Chess Championship 2022

Port Blair, Dec 23: The 11th National School Chess Championship 2023 is scheduled to be held at Hosur, Tamil Nadu from 27th to 31st January 2023.

In this connection, Andaman Nicobar Chess Association (ANCA) will be conducting the A & N State School Chess Championship 2022 for various categories viz. Under 07, Under 09, Under 11, Under 13 and Under 15 Boys & Girls on 30th December 2022 at Govt. Girls Sr. Sec. School Auditorium.

Only school students are eligible to participate in this championship and the player should be a bonafide student of any school (any syllabus). Eligibility:

For Under – 07; player should be born on or after 1st January 2016, For Under – 09; player should be born on or after 1st January 2014,

For Under – 09; player should be born on or after 1st January 2012,

For Under – 13; player should be born on or after 1st January 2010, &

For Under – 15; player should be born on or after 1st January 2008

There will be a 50% concession in the entry fee for participants of North & Middle Andaman and Nicobar District and they will be provided free accommodation at Port Blair & their travelling expenses will be borne by ANCA.

AICF Registration for Year 2022-23 is compulsory for all the participants.

Interested Schools / Students / Players may register their names along with an entry fee @ Rs. 250/- at the Office of the Andaman Nicobar Chess Association, Dairy Farm, near Ganesh Temple, Port Blair between 9.30 am & 5.30 pm on or before 28th Dec 2022.

For more details, one may contact B Neelaiah, the General Secretary, ANCA @ 9434293379 or 9679593366 or email: a n c h e s s association@gmail.com or visit: www.anchessassociation.com

Invent Middle School organizes Science, Art & Craft Exhibition "Imagine Invent Inspire"

Port Blair, Dec 23: The Science, Art & Craft Exhibition "Imagine Invent Inspire" was organized by Invent Middle School Prothrapur, Port Blair to explore the mind of students in the presence of Chief Guest: Mrs. U. Kavitha Uday Kumar Chairperson P.B.M.C. and Guest of Honor Mr. Uday Kumar Ex-chairperson, South Andaman. A warm welcome is being done by cutting the ribbon and speech is given to encourage the children and taken an overview of the Exhibition.



dren and taken an overview of the Exhibition.

ICAR-KVK Organized Kisan Diwas & Awareness on Natural Farming

Port Blair, Dec 23: The ICAR-Krishi Vigyan Kendra celebrated Kisan Diwas-2022 and awareness programme on natural farming on 23rd Dec. 2022 at its three locations Sippighat, Nimbudera and Nicobar with main aim of creating awareness of the contri-

(See page 4)



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UK PM Rishi Sunak says 'reasonable' to review controversial Scottish gender law

Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said Friday it is "completely reasonable" for the UK government to review a newly-passed gender recognition law in Scotland, setting it on a potential collision course with Edinburgh. The contentious legislation -- passed Thursday by the devolved Scottish parliament -- will make it easier and faster for people to change their gender officially, dropping the requirement for a gender dysphoria medical diagnosis. The possible move to stop the law from coming into force could ratchet up already tense relations with Scotland's regional government, following stymied efforts by the ruling Scottish National Party (SNP) to hold an independence referendum.

"I think that lots of people have got concerns about this new bill in Scotland, about the impact it will have on women and

children's safety," Sunak told British news broadcasters.

"So I think it's completely reasonable for the UK government to have a look at it, understand what the consequences are for women and children's safety in the rest of the UK, and then decide on what the appropriate course of action is." Under devolution rules which led to the establishment of the Scottish parliament in 1999, London can block legislation if ministers believe it will conflict with UK-wide laws. But that power has never been yielded by successive British governments, and any attempt now would likely lead to a court challenge by Edinburgh. Scotland's Social Justice Secretary Shona Robison warned Friday it will "vigorously contest" any attempts by Westminster to "undermine the democratic will of the Scottish Parliament" and block the gender reform.

The legislation allows people aged 16 and 17 to change their gender, despite efforts by some Scottish lawmakers to keep the age at 18.

It reduces from two years to three months -- or six months for 16-17 year-olds -- the time needed for an applicant to live in their new gender before it is officially recognised. Opponents of the law fear it could be a danger to women and girls, particularly around the provision of single-sex spaces.

But the Scottish government insists it will not impact the UK's Equality Act, which allows for trans people to be excluded from single-sex spaces such as changing rooms and shelters.

Scotland's First Minister Nicola Sturgeon -- who has faced one of the biggest internal rebellions of her eight-year tenure over the issue -- said the previous system to change gender was "intrusive, traumatic and dehumanising".

(From page 3)

ICAR-KVK...

bution of farmers to the socio economic development of the nation. Every year the birth anniversary of Mr. Chaudhary Charan Singhji is observed as National Farmer's Day to recognize his contributions for the farmers. Dr Debasis Bhattacharya, Director (I/c), CIARI, Port Blair graced the occasion as Chief Guest at Sippighat. He congratulated and appreciated each and every farmer who is working continuously for feeding our growing population and economic growth of our nation. He shared that important innovation occurred in association with nature and farming. He motivated the farming community to lead their happy and healthy life in association with nature. Dr. P.K Singh, Principal Scientist & Head (I/c), Division of FC&IP, CIARI, Port Blair discussed the importance of pulses in different cropping systems which enriches micro flora and soil health. Dr. T. Subramani, Sr. Scientist & Head (I/c), NRM Division, CIARI, Port Blair briefed integration of livestock and crops under Natural farming



and advised the farmers to adopt climate resilient technologies and exclude the synthetic chemicals and external input. Dr B.K. Nanda, Head (I/c) KVK, South Andaman discussed the necessity of adoption of natural farming for the fragile island ecosystem of Andaman and Nicobar islands. Dr N. Bommayasamy, SMS (Agro./Agrl.Extn.), explained about promotion of alternative farming system free from externally purchased inputs, cost reduction and increasing farm income through natural farming, integrated agriculture and animal husbandry based with desi/indigenous cows and local resources, create awareness and up scaling of natural farming products and certification to compete with national and international markets. Dr. Pooja Kapoor, SMS (Home Science) discussed the

role of women in agriculture and sustainable livelihood.

At North and Middle Andaman district, the awareness programme was conducted at Basantipur gram panchayat. Sri Ramakrishna Roy, Pradhan, Basantipur Gram Panchayat graced the occasion as Chief Guest. Sri Ashim Dutta, Panchayat Samiti member, Sri Bibhuti Ranjan Biswas, PRI members of Basantipur Gram Panchayat attended the program. Sri Thanmay Paul, Technical Officer, KVK organized the program and discussed the importance and methods of natural farming and its suitability and necessity for the N & M Andaman. The awareness programme was conducted at Car Nicobar where Sri Paul David, 1st Headman, Perka village graced the occasion as Chief Guest.

Finland asks Russia to guarantee safety of Moscow embassy



Finland's Moscow embassy has asked Russia to guarantee the diplomatic mission's safety following an incident this week in which people wearing masks threw sledgehammers into the embassy yard. The incident caused no injuries or damage to the building, the Finnish foreign ministry said on Friday. But Finland's deputy head of mission had "asked Russia to guarantee the security of

staff and of the building, in keeping with the Geneva convention on diplomatic relations," a ministry spokesperson said.

A video posted on the Telegram app appeared to show a group of around 10 people running towards the building and throwing several sledgehammers over the fence.

Reuters could not immediately verify the timing or location of the video.

2 Indian-origin dairy owners' stores attacked by robbers in New Zealand: Report



Two dairy stores owned by Indian-origin business persons were targeted by armed robbers this week in New Zealand, according to media reports, nearly a month after a businessman of Indian descent was killed in a similar attack. Ajit Patel, who owns a dairy on Melrose Road said that five masked men with baseball bats came into his store for about 10 to 15 seconds early on Monday, a report by 1News said. In another attack, a group of people ram-raided Sandra Dairy on Marua Road in Ellerslie and stole several items before fleeing in a second vehicle, said a police spokesperson.

The two shops were among six stores across Auckland and Waikato areas that were targeted by robbers earlier

this week.

The country has seen increasing cases of violence and crime against small business owners among which Indian-origin businesses have been the target of many of them. Last Saturday, four men entered Indian-origin Puneet Singh's dairy store in Hamilton and cut off two of his fingers with a machete.

Last month, a 34-year-old Indian-origin dairy shop worker, Janak Patel was murdered in Sandringham following which the country erupted in protests.

Following the murder, the New Zealand government announced new measures to combat retail crime - including a fog cannon subsidy scheme open to all small shops and dairies.

16 army jawans killed, 4 injured in road accident in Sikkim



As many as 16 Indian army jawans were killed and four suffered injuries after the truck in which they were travelling fell off a mountain road in North Sikkim on Friday morning, the Indian Army said in a statement. Three of the deceased were junior commissioned officers while 13 were soldiers. The truck was part of a three-vehicle convoy. "En route, at Zema, the vehicle skidded down a steep slope while negotiating a sharp turn," Lt Col Mahendra Rawat, the public relations officer of the defence ministry, said in a statement.

"A rescue mission was immediately launched, and four injured soldiers have been air-evacuated. Unfortunately, three junior commissioned officers and 13 soldiers succumbed to the injuries sustained in the accident," the statement added. "Indian Army stands firm with the bereaved families, at this hour of loss," Lt Col Rawat said. The accident took place at Zema in North Sikkim after the vehicle skidded down a slope and fell into a gorge. The accident left four soldiers injured who have been air evacuated, the army said.

Officials said the truck which met with the accident left the Lachen army camp with 16 personnel and picked up four others on the way to Thangu, located around 15 km from Lachen. It was a ferry truck in which personnel from all regiments and companies usually travelled. "The truck was going uphill. It fell on the road around 40 metres below and tumbled downhill and part of the vehicle was torn apart by the impact. Roads in that area have sharp bends," an official said on condition of anonymity.

"The four injured personnel were rescued from the river bank and air-lifted to the army hospital at Bengdubi near Siliguri in West Bengal," he said. "The bodies will be sent to Mangan after official formalities," said Arun Thatal,

additional superintendent of police at Chungthang in Sikkim's Mangan district. Sikkim Governor Ganga Prasad and chief minister Prem Singh Tamang (Golay) expressed their condolences. "The nation is always thankful from the bottom of its heart for the service, commitment and dedication of India's brave sons. I wish for the speedy recovery of the injured and send my condolences to the families of the departed," Ganga Prasad said. Prem Singh Tamang, state chief minister said: "My heart goes out to the bereaved family, friends and relatives in this hour of grief and I pray that the departed souls rest in eternal peace. Similarly, I pray for the speedy recovery of those who have been injured and are currently receiving medical treatment." West Bengal chief minister Mamata Banerjee took to Twitter saying, "I am deeply saddened by the unfortunate road accident in North Sikkim, claiming the lives of 16 brave hearts of the Indian Army. Heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families. May God give them strength to bear

the irreparable loss. Praying for speedy recovery of the injured," she wrote. Expressing pain and grief to the loss of the lives of the soldiers, defence minister Rajnath Singh offered condolences to the bereaved families of the jawans. "Deeply pained by the loss of lives of the Indian Army personnel due to a road accident in North Sikkim. The nation is deeply grateful for their service and commitment. My condolences to the bereaved families. Praying for the speedy recovery of those who are injured," he wrote on Twitter.

"Pained by the loss of lives of our brave army personnel due to a road mishap in Sikkim. Condolences to the bereaved families. May the injured recover soon," the Prime Minister's Office wrote on Twitter. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi also expressed grief over the death of the soldiers. "Shocked to hear the news of the tragic road accident in Zema, Sikkim, which has cost us the lives of 16 brave Army personnel. My heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families. Wishing a speedy recovery to those injured," he wrote on Twitter.

Kerala govt tenders apology to HC for delay in confiscating properties of PFI

The Kerala government on Friday tendered unconditional apology in the high court for the delay in confiscating properties of the banned Popular Front of India (PFI) in connection with the state-wide shutdown called by the outfit on Sept 23. According to the state, public property worth ₹5.20 crore was destroyed during the strike called by the PFI.

Additional chief secretary (Home) V Venu appeared before the court and assured that the task will be completed by January 15 next year. Earlier, the government sought six months time for recovery proceedings but the court turned it down and summoned the chief secretary. The government also informed the court that they have appointed a former district judge as the claims commissioner and the recovery process has begun.

The division bench of justices Jayasankaran Nambiar and C P Mohammad Nias reiterated that the destruction of public property was a serious offence and those responsible for this should be dealt with sternly. During last week's



sitting, the court pulled up the government for the delay in recovering damages. "The government cannot adopt such a callous attitude when called upon to implement the directions of the court, especially in matters of public interest and involving destruction of property," it observed.

After the arrest of PFI national leaders and raids throughout the country on Sept 22, PFI state secretary Abdul Sattar gave the call for a state bandh which witnessed large-scale violence. Many government buses and shops were damaged during the shutdown. Following the incident, the high court registered a case on its own and directed police to make leaders of the PFI who made bandh call accused in all bandh-related

cases. It also gave instructions to all courts that the arrested should not be released on bail till they deposit damages incurred during the shutdown. Meanwhile, police registered 361 cases and arrested 2674 people in connection with the violence. Two days after the shutdown, the high court filed a contempt case against the PFI and ordered it to deposit ₹5.20 crore with the additional chief secretary (home). If the amount was not deposited, the court directed the government to confiscate its property and auction. The Union government banned PFI and its affiliates for five years on September 28 after accusing them of being involved in Islamic radicalisation and terrorist activities.

Road caves in Hyderabad, no injuries reported, investigation on



A road caved in the Goshamahal area of Hyderabad on Friday afternoon leading to chaos in the area, however, no one was reportedly injured in the incident, said the police. The police and Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) officials arrived at the spot and brought the situation under control.

Preliminary investigations have revealed the possible reason behind the

road caving in to be a waterline beneath the road. Police said that they reached the spot on receiving information that a road in Chaknawadi area in Goshamahal have suddenly caved in. "We immediately informed the matter to GHMC officials. Officials suspect that a waterline passing under the road might be the reason. No injuries were reported and police are on the spot. The exact reason is yet to be ascertained," said Goshamahal ACP Satish Kumar.

Kirti Azad says 'sorry' for 'neither male...' tweet on PM Modi after party's rap

Trinamool leader Kirti Azad on Friday apologised for his comment on PM Modi's Khasi tribal outfit and a day after defending his comment as praise for PM Modi's fashion sense, the Trinamool leader said his comment was misconstrued and hurt the sentiments of people.

"To them, I say sorry. Have immense respect and pride for our diverse cultures. I regret the hurt caused by my unintentional remark. I reiterate my pledge to work to uphold our constitutional values always," the cricketer-turned-Rajya Sabha MP tweeted after his party distanced from his comment.

"Upon reflecting on the concerns raised by the people, I reiterate my pledge to work towards upholding our constitutional values at every step. AITCofficial has



always respected people from varied backgrounds and I wholeheartedly espouse the values followed by our leaders," the Trinamool leader tweeted. "As a soldier of the party, I have always followed the path laid down by our Constitution which calls for respecting and honouring our diversity. Anything that appears like an inadvertent digression from that path is absolutely regrettable," Kirti Azad

added. The controversial tweet in which Kirti Azad wrote 'neither male nor female' juxtaposing PM Modi's photo with a woman's floral dress was also deleted. Meghalaya chief minister Conrad Sangma on Thursday posted a photo wearing the same traditional outfit in protest condemning Kirti Azad's comment. "Proud of our culture .. condemn those who disrespect us," the chief minister tweeted.

Massive Protest...

Dweep yesterday evening at around 07:30 PM, protesting against indiscriminate power cuts. As per report, the residents of these regions gathered and shouted slogans against the Electricity Department.

According to villagers, since 16 Dec 2022 they are witnessing continuous power cuts of two to three hours after gaps of some hours. "It is becoming intolerable. Tourism sector is the worst hit because this is the peak season for Tourism," said a villager of Swaraj Dweep. Later the Police officials of Swaraj Dweep and Official of Electricity department and other Officers of the areas reached the spot tried to convince the villagers but fuming residents continued the protest.

Mr. Ajit Kumar Roy Pradhan of Govind Nagar Panchayat said that the situation is pathetic and people are suffering heavily because of power outages due to a

huge gap between demand and supply. Due to the power crisis villagers and tourists are equally suffering, he added.

Further, Mr. Alok Mridha Pradhan of Shyam Nagar Panchayat said that a day before yesterday he along with some other residents met the Secretary Power at Port Blair and demanded to resolve the issue.

Mr. Mridha alleged that DG sets installed in Swaraj Dweep are unable to meet the power requirements of the Island due to increase in Tourist inflow.

He added that the private hiring company has two DG sets but only one is providing services and the other DG Set, which was installed a couple of months ago, is still unoperational because its agreement was not signed by the administration.

He claimed that if the second DG set starts functioning then most of the problem will automatically be resolved. "At present Swaraj

Dweep is witnessing a good tourist footfall but the power outages are causing a lot of distress to the tourists, especially at budget and mid-segment hotels. Although some hotels have backup generators most of the other small hotels do not provide back-up power and hence tourists suffer heavy inconvenience," he added.

When Andaman Sheekha contacted a senior official of the Electricity Department of Swaraj Dweep the official said that the power crisis was due to failure of one DG set out of four functional DG Sets (One private and three government run).

The official added that the problem was with the switch board and the information regarding that has been given to the Port Blair head office after which this morning technical team Swaraj Dweep reached the Island and began repair works.

(From page 1)

Semi-RCC house...

following which people informed the fire Services about the incident.

As soon as the information was received, the firefighting team reached the spot and controlled the

fire. By the time they reached, the house was partially gutted but as per reports no one was injured in the incident. The cause of the fire is still unknown.

The Fire Fighting

team, which controlled the fire was led by Station Officer Aberdeen Shaibal Sinha, Insp HQ J. Verma under supervision of DySp Fire Sandip Lamba and SP Fire Varsha Sharma IPS.

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HOLIDAY NOTICE

On the Occasion of Christmas the offset and Editorial units of Andaman Sheekha Daily will remain closed on 25 December 2022. Saturday being our weekly off, the next edition of Andaman Sheekha will be published on 27 December 2022.

EDITOR

Amid Covid spike in China, Anand Mahindra makes this appeal

As a fresh wave of the Covid-19 virus has gripped China, social media is flooded with visuals that hint towards a difficult period for the world's most populous country, in terms of its preparedness to fight the notorious virus. Reacting to one such picture reportedly of a hospital in China, business tycoon Anand Mahindra said Friday that this might be a good chance to once again set an example of how "good" India is towards its neighbours. In a tweet, Mahindra tagged Indian biotech companies Serum Institute of India and Bharat Biotech, and said, "Clearly their vaccines have not provided the necessary immunity. Can we demonstrate how to be good neighbours and @SerumInstIndia & @BharatBiotech? We currently have sufficient capacity to supply."

He was reacting to the post of a Twitter user who had shared a picture from a

hospital that seemed overwhelmed with patients that the user claimed was 'Chongqing Medical University Hospital'. "There are no more beds inside the #Chongqing Medical University Hospital, and the elderly are starting to lie on the floor. The machines that are on the chests are used to replace the human hand to press the heart," the user tweeted, along with hashtags such as "China Covid cases". The sudden Covid-19 spike in China is being attributed to its decision to end the lockdown following the anti-lockdown protests that had shaken the country. News agency AFP reported that several hospitals in China are overflowing with patients with the elderly being the most hit this time. Even as people queue up to under-prepared hospitals that rely on makeshift Covid wards, China has officially logged only a "handful" of deaths, the agency's report added.



QUIT SMOKING TODAY



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