Health is a wealth, an age old saying, told by many and believed by even more since time immemorial. Indeed, during these times of peril and despair being healthy and immunized is the only thing that is keeping everyone safe from the deadly COVID19 pandemic. No amount of money in the world has come in handy to save us from the deadly virus, however being healthy is the only shield which is keeping the population safe from the unseen enemy. The world has come to a standstill however, the only profession that has been on the constant move since the beginning of the pandemic are the health care professionals. Their services and dedication towards their duties are all over the internet and people have shown their gratitude towards the services of the health care professionals.

The medical team of the District Hospital at Gyalshing, West Sikkim headed by Dr. Anuata Lama as the Chief Medical Officer (CMO, West) along with Dr. Bikash Pradhan, Addl. CMO cum DTO and also the in-charge of Quarantine Centers (Medical Ground) have been active responders to the situations and have been on the constant move ever since they were directed to do so by the State Health Department. The CMO West along with her dedicated fleet of Doctors, Medical Officers, Staff Nurses and other officials have been engaged in keeping the district away from the harm’s way. The health officials comprises of a limited number of manpower however, they have managed to use every resource and engage every person to be stationed at their respective places of duties during the pandemic and lockdown.

The Sample Collection Team: Officials visit places and collect samples with their teams and send it to the testing facility located at Siliguri, West Bengal. Each day is a challenge as more returnees are coming back to the state and are stationed at the Quarantine Facilities located in parts of West Sikkim. A dedicated team headed by the ENT Specialists Dr. Ram R. Bhutia, Dr. Rachna Rai along with Dr. Laseque L. Lepcha, District Surveillance Officer (DSO) move to gather the samples at the Quarantine Facilities which are sent to Siliguri the same day in an emergency vehicle. The sample collection team are aided with the PPE suits, face shields and other necessary equipment. An intense routine to switch as they get ready to collect the samples of the returnees. Each medical personnel stationed at their respective locations do their jobs with utmost care. While encountering them in their routine procedure of taking the samples they seemed handy with the persons at the quarantine centers while trying their best to make them comfortable by sharing a light conversation and laughs along the way and ease the process altogether. They were released in the PPE suits which otherwise looks uncomfortable. They quickly take the samples and perform the routine SOP and move on to the next facility for similar exercises. A total of 374 samples from West Sikkim has been sent for testing by the team and are continuing to do so every day.

The scene at Melli: Border for South and West Sikkim returnees. As informed by the CMO West a total of 13 members of Doctors and other Medical Professional have been stationed at the Screening Station located roughly 2 km, from the Melli Check Post. The screening team comprises of South and West Sikkim Medical team, Police and Administration staffs who are stationed at their respective places of work and simultaneously working in an efficient manner amongst themselves. The mechanism of work shared by the two districts of Sikkim is noteworthy as they perform their duties amidst the heat, humidity, rain and other weather anomalies.

The returnees arrive in the buses from Siliguri, West Bengal who are screened by the teams at Melli, South Sikkim and later after proper file work is done they are sent to the next facility for similar exercises. The Sample Collection Team: Officials visit places and collect samples with their teams and send it to the testing facility located at Siliguri, West Bengal. Each day is a challenge as more returnees are coming back to the state and are stationed at the Quarantine Facilities located in parts of West Sikkim. A dedicated team headed by the ENT Specialists Dr. Ram R. Bhutia, Dr. Rachna Rai along with Dr. Laseque L. Lepcha, District Surveillance Officer (DSO) move to gather the samples at the Quarantine Facilities which are sent to Siliguri the same day in an emergency vehicle. The sample collection team are aided with the PPE suits, face shields and other necessary equipment. An intense routine to switch as they get ready to collect the samples of the returnees. Each medical personnel stationed at their respective locations do their jobs with utmost care. While encountering them in their routine procedure of taking the samples they seemed handy with the persons at the quarantine centers while trying their best to make them comfortable by sharing a light conversation and laughs along the way and ease the process altogether. They were released in the PPE suits which otherwise looks uncomfortable. They quickly take the samples and perform the routine SOP and move on to the next facility for similar exercises. A total of 374 samples from West Sikkim has been sent for testing by the team and are continuing to do so every day.

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